

**University of Utah**  
**Political Science Department**

**Political Violence and Terrorism**  
**POLS 5450-01 (MID E 5645-01)**

**Summer 2008**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:00-9:00 PM**

**OSH 237**

(Class meets: 05/12/2007-06/18/2007)

Instructor: Kristian Alexander

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Office hours: Tues./Thurs. 5:00-6:00 PM  
and by prior appointment

**Course Description and Objectives**

Given the controversial nature of the subject matter, and the events of September 11, 2001, much of the public discourse is often emotionally charged and lacking factual grounding and objective analysis. This course will attempt to get at the roots of terrorism and analyze the various facets associated with this phenomenon. We will examine questions such as: Why does terrorism occur? What are its international and domestic sources? How do scholars in the field of terrorism research explain this phenomenon? How can we best explain the organizational structures and methods of certain actors that employ terrorism as a means of political action? What can be done to prevent terrorism? Students will be introduced to different examples of contemporary terrorism, with a particular focus on religious fundamentalism in the Middle East and the post 9/11 security environment. In the first couple of weeks we will focus mainly on conceptual issues as well as on Al-Qaeda and Bin Laden as the prototype of a contemporary Islamic terrorist group. During the latter part of the semester we will embark on various case studies. We will examine such groups like Hizbullah in Lebanon, the Palestinian Hamas and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

The course will be taught in a seminar style, with a combination of lecture and discussion. This is a reading intensive class and will demand a critical examination of a wide variety of issue areas.

## **Course Requirements**

This is a lecture and discussion course, the success of which depends heavily on your preparation for each class meeting and your enthusiasm you bring to class discussion. Lectures and discussions will be supplemented by several Video/DVD documentaries. I will be asking you questions during each class and expect you to participate actively. Occasionally, I will ask you to form small groups and have you discuss certain pertinent concepts, issues or questions. Engage respectfully with your peers who may not share your opinions.

I reserve the right to make minor changes to the syllabus during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class in advance.

Grades are based on the requirements below. Final grades are based on standard scoring

- Attendance and Active Participation (15%)
- Book Review (30%)
- Midterm Exam (30%)
- Final Exam (25%)

**Attendance and Class Participation (15%):** Your participation grade will consist of your active involvement in class discussion (thoughtful comments, answering questions posed by the instructor, raising critical questions) and in-class exercises (group discussions). In order to get the most out of this course, you must be prepared when you come to class. You are required to complete the readings prior to class meeting and to be ready to discuss them. Attendance will affect your participation, and excessive absences will result in a lower grade. An excused absence means you have a medical excuse or documented emergency. Since the summer semester is fairly short and condensed, make sure to plan ahead of time. Do not wait until the very last moment to start on your assignments (readings, book review and studying for the midterm and final)!

**Book Review (30%):** There are several academic books from which to pick. All five of the books listed below are available at the University of Utah bookstore (under 'Optional' for this class). You are required to choose only **one** of the following books. You need not purchase them all. Make sure you make up your mind sooner than later and start reading, taking notes and working on your review early on in the semester.

Graham Allison (2005) *Nuclear Terrorism. The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe.* Henry Holt & Co.

Daniel Byman (2007) *Five Front War: The Better Way to Fight Global Jihad.* Wiley, John & Sons Co.

Mohammed M. Hafez (2007) *Suicide Bombers in Iraq. The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom.* United States Institute of Peace Press: Washington, D.C.

Jerrold M. Post (2007) *The Mind of the Terrorist: The Psychology of Terrorism from the IRA to Al Qaeda*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Mark Sageman (2008) *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

After making your selection, you will be required to read the complete book and write a book review which should not exceed 10 pages but should be at least 8 pages in length (double spaced, use 12-inch font). A good review gives a short overview of the book's contents and then highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the book. The majority of the review should be devoted to providing details that illustrate why an aspect of the book is interesting and/or useful. **Do not** list each chapter with its contents. Evaluate the text, don't just summarize it and don't use too many quotes from the book. It is best to paraphrase or use short telling quotes within sentences. I am interested in **your opinion/perspective** of the book. This goes without saying but **do not** plagiarize from already published material. I am familiar with all of the book reviews that are already out there (online as well as in academic journals). If you wish to refer to other people's intellectual property, you will need to clearly cite your sources.

**This book review is due latest by Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2008 in my office (OSH 325) or in my mailbox at the main Political Science Department (OSH 252) by 5:00 PM!**

Here are some questions you should consider while reading the book and formulating your argument:

- Who is the book's author? Does he/she seem qualified to be writing such a book?
- What is the book's overall argument? What is the writer of the book trying to communicate? You should **concisely** restate the central claims of the author. In this section, make sure to remain faithful to the ideas of the author. At the same time, aim for the essence of the book. As previously stated: **do not** summarize the content of each and every chapter; instead, highlight some issues covered in particular chapters.
- Is the book a contribution to a particular academic field or discipline? (e.g., Security studies, Middle East Studies, Political Science, etc. Does the author apply particular concepts or theories in order to frame his argument in a certain way? If not, how would you categorize this particular genre of the book under review?)
- How accurate is the information (e.g., the footnotes, bibliography, dates etc.)?
- How effective is the book's methodology (e.g. interviews, analysis of speeches, primary sources, personal observation, historical accounts etc.)?
- What is the quality of the writing? Is it clear, precise, and interesting? How is the author's style distinctive?
- How persuasive is the evidence?
- What are the book's strengths and limitations?
- Who will enjoy or benefit from these books? (e.g., Policymakers, counterterrorism experts, researchers etc.) Why so? Briefly explain!

**Midterm Exam (30%):** The in-class midterm exam will consist of several short answer questions or ID's as well as a couple of essay questions that deal with concepts, issues and authors that we have discussed throughout the first part of the semester. A review sheet containing important terms and sample exam questions will be handed to students several days prior to the midterm. The in-class midterm is set for Tuesday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008.

**Final Exam (25%):** The in-class final exam will consist of several short answer questions or ID's as well as a couple of essay questions that deal with concepts, issues and authors that we have discussed throughout the first part of the semester. A review sheet containing important terms and sample exam questions will be handed to students several days prior to the final exam. The in-class final is set for Tuesday June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

**Student Academic Conduct:** The University of Utah's policies pertaining to Academic Misconduct and Dishonesty will be carefully observed and strictly enforced in this class. This policy appears on pages 11-13 of the 2000-2002 General Catalog and in the electronic Policy and Procedures Manual at <http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>

### **Plagiarism Note**

Any instance of plagiarism, or other forms of academic misconduct, will result in a failing grade for that assignment and may also result in a failing grade for the course. The University's definition of plagiarism is as follows:

*“Plagiarism” means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual's words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.*

**ADA Statement:** The University of Utah, Department of Political Science seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services, <http://disability.utah.edu/> 162 Olpin Union Bldg, 581-5020 (V/TDD) to make arrangements for accommodations. This information is available in alternative format with prior notification.

### **Course Materials and Readings**

Gus Martin, *Essentials of Terrorism. Concepts and Controversies* (Sage Publications: Los Angeles, CA, 2008).

Monte Palmer and Princess Palmer, *Islamic Extremism. Causes, Diversity, & Challenges* (Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc: Boulder, Colorado, 2008).

These books are available for purchase at the University bookstore. In addition, several articles, necessary for assignments, will be placed on electronic reserve (as well as regular reserve) at Marriott Library. They can be viewed, printed or downloaded at (<http://ereserve.lib.utah.edu/webpac-1.2-bin/DoReserve>). To access material on e-reserve:

- Through the Marriott Library:
- Log-in to My.Utah.edu, or
- Click on Course Reserves on the Marriott Library home page and authenticate through the My.Utah.edu
- Directly through My.Utah.edu: Click on the *Academics* option from the left menu

Should you encounter problems logging on or accessing the online articles, please call the *Campus Help Desk* at 581-4000 or the *Reserve Desk* at 581-6049. It is the students' responsibility to obtain a copy of these articles. They are indicated with an asterisk (\*) in the course outline.

## **Course Schedule**

Week 1: Tuesday May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: Introduction to the course: requirements, expectations, and general content of the course**

Week 1: Thursday May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: Academic Research and Defining the Issue**  
Martin, Chapters 1-2, pp.1-21 and 22-43

Andrew Silke, "An Introduction to Terrorism Research," in: Andrew Silke, ed. (2004) *Research on Terrorism. Trends, Achievements & Failures*. London: Frank Cass, pp.1-29\*

Monica Czwarno, "Misjudging Islamic Terrorism: The Academic Community's Failure to Predict 9/11," in: *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 2006, Vol.29, pp.657-678\*

Week 2: Tuesday May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: Causes and Explanations of Terrorism**  
Martin, Chapter 3, pp.44-63  
Palmer and Palmer, Chapter 2 and 11, pp.7-35; 197-223

Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Maleckova, "Seeking the Roots of Terrorism," in: *The Chronicle Review* (The Chronicle of Higher Education), Vol.49, Issue 39, Page B10\*

Edward Newman, "Weak States, State Failure, and Terrorism," in: *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol.19, no.4, 2007, pp.463-488\*

Week 2: Thursday May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008

**Topic: State Terrorism**

Martin, Chapter 4, pp.66-89

Daniel Byman, "Why do states support terrorism?," in: Daniel Byman (2005) *Deadly Connections. States that Sponsor Terrorism*. Cambridge University Press, pp.21-52\*

Louise Richardson, "State sponsorship: a root cause of terrorism?," in: Tore Bjorgo ed.(2005), *Root Causes of Terrorism. Myths, reality and ways forward*. Routledge Press, pp.189-197\*

Noam Chomsky, "America is a serious Terrorist Threat," in: Laura K. Egenorf ed., (2004) *Terrorism. Opposing Viewpoints*. Greenhaven Press, pp.43-51 (Monthly Review, vol.53, November 2001)\*

Week 3: Tuesday May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: The Advent of 'New Terrorism'?**

Martin, Chapters 6-7, pp.111-153

Palmer and Palmer, Chapters 8 and 10, pp.119-153; 171-196

Matthew Morgan, "The Origins of the New Terrorism," in: *Annual Editions. Violence and Terrorism 06/07*, pp.9-15\*

Bruce Riedel, "Al Qaeda Strikes Back" in: *Foreign Affairs*, 2007, Vol.86, No.3, pp.24-40\*

Week 3: Thursday May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Case Studies: Hizbullah in Lebanon, Hamas in Palestine and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt**

Palmer and Palmer, Chapters 3-4, pp.37-71

Palmer and Palmer, Chapter 5, pp.73-91

Daniel Byman and Steven Simon: "The No Win Zone. An After-Action Report from Lebanon", in: *The National Interest*, No.86, Nov./Dec.2006, pp.55-61\*

**REVIEW SHEET WILL BE HANDED OUT!**

Week 4: Tuesday June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008

**\*\*\*In-Class Midterm Exam 6:00-8:30 PM\*\*\***

**BRING BLUE BOOKS!**

Week 4: Thursday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: Strategies and Tactics of Terrorism**

**Focus: Suicide Terrorism**

Mohammed M. Hafez, "Rationality, Culture, and Structure in the Making of Suicide Bombers: A Preliminary Theoretical Synthesis and Illustrative Case Study," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, no.29, 2006, pp.165-185\*

Adam Dolnik, "Learning to Die: Suicide Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century," in: James F. Frost ed. (2006) *The Making of a Terrorist. Recruitment, Training, and Root Causes*. Praeger Pub., Vol. 2, pp.152-171\*

Robert Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review*, Vol.97, No.2, 2003, pp.1-19 (Reprinted)\*

Mia Bloom, "Female suicide bombers: a global trend," *Daedalus*, Vol.136, No.1, 2007, pp.94-102\*

Week 5: Tuesday June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: The Role of the Media**

Martin, Chapter 9, pp.180-196

Hugh Miles, "Think Again: Al Jazeera," in: *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2006, pp. 20-24\*

Gabriel Weimann, "www.terror.net. How modern Terrorism uses the Internet," Special Report 116, March 2004, *The United States Institute of Peace*, pp.1-12\*

Week 5: Thursday June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**Topic: Approaches for Combating Terrorism**

Martin, Chapter 11, pp.219-248

Palmer and Palmer, Chapters 13-14, pp.247-285

Patrick D. Buckley and Michael J. Messe, "The Financial Front in the Global War on Terrorism," in: Russell D. Howard and Reid L. Sawyer (2004) *Defeating Terrorism. Shaping the New Security Environment*. McGraw Hill Pub., pp.51-61\*

Robert Singh, "The Bush Doctrine," in: Mark Buckley and Robert Singh (2006) eds., *The Bush Doctrine and the War on Terrorism. Global responses, global consequences*. Routledge, pp.12-31\*

**REVIEW SHEET WILL BE HANDED OUT!**

Week 6: Tuesday June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**\*\*\*In-Class Final Exam 6:00-8:30 PM\*\*\***

**BRING BLUE BOOKS!**

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