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Spring 2010

DIPL 4280 NA The Politics of Terrorism in the Middle East

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The Politics of Terrorism in the Middle East – Spring 2010

DIPL 4280 NA: Politics of Terrorism in the Middle East

Wednesday 5:45 – 8:15 PM

Instructor: Ambassador Maureen Quinn

Email: maureenquinn356@aol.com

Course Description and Objectives

This course will investigate the use of terrorism for political purposes. Areas covered include the debate about who/what constitutes a terrorist movement or organization, the connection between fundamentalism, religion and terrorism, the financing of terrorism, the exploitation of/by the media, and the abilities of security services and intelligence agencies to effectively monitor and combat terrorism.

The course will begin with a discussion and debate of the definition of terrorism. The course will provide basic knowledge on the politics of terrorism in the Middle East: its modern origins, its significance, and its costs and consequences. Students will develop an understanding of Islam and political Islam in the Middle East. Key topics will include terrorist groups in the Middle East, state-sponsored terrorism in the Middle East and terrorist financing. Case studies of specific country situations and/or terrorist incidents in the Middle East will be analyzed for their origins, politics, and impact on the region and international relations. Policy makers' rhetoric, responses and the tools to combat terrorism will be covered as well

Students are expected to participate actively throughout the course. Thus, students need to complete assigned readings before class, attend and participate in class discussions.

Course Materials

Inside Terrorism by Bruce Hoffman

The Crisis of Islam by Bernard Lewis

Understanding Terror Networks by Marc Sageman

The above books are required reading for the course. Additional reading assignments are listed below or will be made during the course of the semester.

Student Responsibilities

Class Participation (25% of grade): Attendance and participation in class discussions are essential. Students will bring to classes listed below a very brief (two to three paragraph/less than one page) type written summary of the assigned reading that outlines what was read, what the student learned from the reading or what question(s) it raised. Class participation also means actively contributing during class and respecting the participation of others. Any student missing four classes will be required to report to Ms. Susan Malcolm.

Research Proposal and Paper (25%): Students will pick a topic of their choice related to the course and prepare a 12-15 page (not including cover page and bibliography) original research paper. The paper will provide an in-depth analysis of the topic selected. Proposals (one paragraph abstract and list of 3-5 sources) are due Feb. 24. Papers are due April 28. Only paper copies of the Research Paper are acceptable. Papers will be presented in class on April 21st and 28th.

Book Report: 4-5 Page Type Written Summary of Book (25%): Possible book selections are listed below. The Book must be approved in advance. All book reports will include a discussion of why the book is relevant to the course material. Books must be chosen/assigned before spring break. Written Book Reports are due March 24. Time permitting, the book reports will be presented/discussed in class..

Final Exam (25% of the grade): There will be a final exam of essay questions.

Grades will be lowered on any materials that are submitted late. Grades will be lowered one half a letter grade per day.

Possible Books for Book Reports/Students can suggest a book for consideration

The Reluctant Fundamentalist – Mohsin Hamid
A Mighty Heart – Marianne Pearl
Ghost Wars – Steve Coll
Islam – Karen Armstrong
Commander of the Faithful – John Waterbury
The Media Relations Department of Hizbollah Wishes You a Happy Birthday - Neil MacFarquhar

Course Topics and Readings

January 20 Course Introduction – Politics of Terrorism in the Middle East

January 27 (written summary required)
Definitions of Terrorism
Inside Terrorism Pages pg 1-62

February 3 (written summary required)
Islam, Islamic Law, Islamic Politics
The Crisis of Islam - Introduction and Pages 1 – 100
Inside Terrorism, pages 63-80

February 10 (written summary required)
Islamic Activism, Islamic Fundamentalism, Islamic Extremists, Terrorism
Inside Terrorism Page 81—130

The Crisis of Islam Pages 103 - 165

February 17 (written summary required)
Terrorism in the Middle East and the Media
Inside Terrorism Pages 174-288

February 24
Case Studies
Egypt, Islam and Democracy Critical Essays by Saad Eddin Ibrahim
Pages 35-48 and Pages 201-224

March 3 – Terrorism in the Modern Middle East (written summary required)
Inside Terrorism – Pages 131-171

March 10 – no class/spring break

March 17
State Sponsored Terrorism
Terrorist Groups in the Middle East (Hamas, Hizbollah, Al Qaeda)
Additional reading to be assigned

March 24
State Sponsored Terrorism and Terrorist Groups Continued
Understanding Terror Networks Pages 1-98

March 31 (written summary required)
Terrorist Groups Continued
Understanding Terror Networks pages 99-135
Financing Terrorism in the Middle East
Additional reading to be assigned on terrorist finance

April 7 (written summary required)
Governments and Terrorism (Threats, Incidents, Responses)
Inside Terrorism Pages 229 – 256

April 14 (written summary required)
Governments and Terrorism (Threats, Incidents, Responses)
Inside Terrorism Pages 257 – 295
Understanding Terror Networks pages 157-184

April 21 – Research Presentations
April 28 – Research Presentations
May 5 – Review of Material/Questions and Answers
May 12 – Final Exam