Politics of Terror in the Middle East

R. Joseph Huddleston
DIPL 6520: Politics of Terror in the Middle East
School of Diplomacy & International Relations, Seton Hall University
Tuesdays 2:00 – 4:10, Alfieri Hall 121 (ST 121)

Professor: R. Joseph Huddleston
Office Hours: Mon. & Tues., 12–1:30 via Teams. Here is the link.
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This syllabus is current as of August 25, 2020. You will be notified in class and/or by e-mail if the syllabus is updated.

Required Materials
Lee Jarvis & Michael Lister (editors). 2015. Critical Perspectives on Counter-Terrorism
Louise Richardson (editors). 2006. The Roots of Terrorism

You will also be assigned academic readings accessible through Seton Hall’s library.

Course Description
This course provides an overview of the study of terrorism, counter-terrorism, and political violence, viewed through the lenses of Middle East domestic and international politics. We will explore the most common causes and contexts of terrorism and attempt to answer questions about why groups use terrorist tactics, why terrorism is a unique kind of political violence, and the effects of international efforts to deal with terrorism on Middle Eastern political systems.

Grading
Regular Participation ................................................................. 10%
Debates ................................................................. 20%
Two position papers (choose 2 of 3) .................................................. 35%
Final Paper ................................................................. 35%

Course Grading Scale

Participation (10%)
Participation includes attendance and thoughtful engagement with all parts of the class. This course is taught around class discussion, debate, and activities. We are dependent on each other’s efforts to prepare for and engage in class activities and have a worthwhile learning experience. Each class session’s participation will be graded as following:

• 2 points: Active, thoughtful participation that demonstrates understanding of the assigned material and current events. Full participation in classroom activities and discussion of position papers.
• 1.5 points: Limited participation that demonstrates some understanding of the assigned material and current events. Limited participation in classroom activities and discussion of position papers.
• 1 point: Attendance with little or no participation in class.
• 0 points: Unexcused absence (beyond 1 allowable unexcused absence)

You are expected to **complete all assigned readings before the class** for which they are assigned, and to arrive in class prepared to discuss that material. You may also find it helpful to prepare notes and talking points before each session, including your thoughts, opinions, analysis, and questions about the week’s materials.

**Debates (20%)**
Debate is both the engine and fuel of knowledge. Each day that a position paper is due, we will run a mini-debate between the “for” and “against” sides of that day’s position. If the balance is uneven, I may assign you a position (for both the paper and the debate). Generally, debates run for about 70 minutes, but occasionally, they take up the whole class. During a debate, you should use ideas from the course, articulate how they apply to the topic, carefully listen and respond to the other side’s position. I will post a rubric to Teams.

**Position Papers and Final Paper Assignments**
**Position Papers (35%):** 800-1200 words, excluding references
You will write two position papers throughout the semester, together worth 35% of your grade. You may **choose which two of the three highlighted topics** you want to write about. They are listed in the course schedule below in the week they are due. Position papers should be at least 800 words and at most 1200 words (usually 3-4 pages). They should begin with a short introduction that gives an overview or context for the topic. The paper should then state its primary argument (either for or against the position assigned) and provide supporting arguments and evidence. Alternative arguments should be explored and refuted using evidence. A short conclusion should briefly summarize the student’s position on the issue. All students should come prepared to class to actively discuss and debate the position paper topic each week they are due. You may choose to write all three position papers, in which case I will drop your lowest.

Position papers are **due electronically at the beginning of class**. Late assignments are docked 10% for each 24 hours following their respective deadlines. Assignments more than one week late will be given a 0.

**Final Paper:** 3500-5000 words, excluding references
There are three options for final research projects.
1. Write a conventional research paper exploring a key issue or question related to terrorism or political violence, preferably in the Middle Eastern context. This conventional research paper should be similar to the academic articles we read in class, exploring a key research question, testing a hypothesis or set of hypotheses, and/or applying a theoretical lens to the topic.
2. Do a comprehensive historical paper on a terrorist, rebel, or insurgent organization or set of organizations. In addition to a historical timeline of organizational behavior and
government response, this project will review the literature on the group and theoretical findings that have been made about this group.

3. Choose and evaluate a current or historical policy (of a state, alliance, or international organization) designed to combat domestic or international terrorism. What are/were the major policy goals? What strategies are/were used to achieve those goals? How is/was success measured and evaluated (if at all)? Was it/has it been a successful policy? Did it/has it had spillover effects or negative externalities?

The Final Paper is due electronically on **Tuesday, Dec 15 at 11:59pm. Upload PDF to Teams.**

**Guidelines for Position Papers and Final Paper**

These assignments should be turned 12-pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-in margins. Include a word count on the first page. Papers should utilize one of the *Chicago Manual of Style* citation formats: Author-Date or Notes and Bibliography.

Your assignments should be turned in to Teams as PDF documents. (If you need help generating a PDF, see [here for Word](#), and [here for Pages](#).) You will turn all assignments in through Teams, due electronically at the beginning of class on the listed date.

I will grade your work, give you feedback, and assign your grades digitally. Hard copies are for reference during class.

**Primary Student Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the semester, students should have acquired knowledge and understanding of: key concepts, theories, and debates involved in the study of terrorism and political violence in the Middle Eastern context; the complexity involved in defining and studying terrorism and evaluating the effectiveness and political repercussions of international efforts to deal with terrorism; a particular region of the world (the Middle East and North Africa); and prevailing global issues. Students should also have developed the skills to: analyze complex international systems; find and synthesize empirical information; and develop, articulate, and defend policy positions.

**Additional Notes**

This course is about violence. We will be examining content that is that emotional, controversial, and graphically violent in nature. Still, we will maintain the goal to foster a safe learning environment for everyone here. We are in this course because we want to understand terrorism and the mindset of terrorists themselves, through the lens of the contemporary Middle East. **Note that understanding terrorist actions should not be construed as condoning or legitimizing terrorist actions.** Along these lines, assigned readings and position prompts may not represent the views of the instructor. Instead, they serve as a framework for discussion, different lenses to ensure we understand multiple perspectives.

I want us to maintain a sense of community in our HyFlex model. So, I expect you to keep your camera on during class. If you need an exception, contact me. See p. 15 for other instructions and provisions specific to HyFlex.
Meetings and Materials

Week 1 (8/25)  Introduction

Week 2 (9/1)  Lenses of Terrorism and Political Violence
Required:
- Jeffrey Kaplan (2016) “Waves of Political Terrorism”, Oxford Research Encyclopedia
- Or Honig and Ido Yahel (2017). “A Fifth Wave of Terrorism? The Emergence of Terrorist Semi-States”. Terrorism and Political Violence

Recommended:

**** Add/Drop Deadline September 2 ****

Week 3 (9/8)  Defining Terrorism
Required:
- Louise Richardson, Ch.1 in The Roots of Terrorism (16 pages)
- Catherine Goodall, 2013, “Defining Terrorism” in E-IR
- Debate on “Stagnation” (Don’t worry, they’re all short)
  - McCauley, Clark and Sophia Moskalenko. “Some Things We Think We’ve Learned Since 9/11:” A Commentary on Marc Sageman’s ‘The

Recommended:

### Week 4 (9/15) Contexts of Terrorism

**Required:**
- Ted Robert Gurr, Ch. 7 in *Roots* (14 pages)
- Mark Juergensmeyer, Ch. 10 in *Roots* (10 pages)
- Mohammed Hafez, 2004, “From Marginalization to Massacres” in *Islamic Activism*, on Teams

**Recommended:**
- Daron Acemoglu, James Robinson. 2012. “10 Reasons Countries Fall Apart.” *Foreign Policy*
- Atanas Gotchev, Ch. 8 in *Roots*

### Week 5 (9/22) The Tactic of Terror

**Position Paper #1:** Terrorist tactics used by anticolonial and national liberation movements should be defined, evaluated, and judged differently from terrorism employed by international terrorist organizations.
- Laura Zahra McDonald et al., Ch.4 in *Critical Perspectives* (11 pages)
• Rabasa et al. 2006. Beyond al-Qaeda Part I, pp. 34-55, (on Teams)
• Arie Perliger. 2015. “Comparative Framework for Understanding Jewish and Christian Violent Fundamentalism.” Religions 6(3)

Recommended:
- Gilmour, 2016, “Terrorism and the PLO,” in E-IR
- Rabasa et al. 2006, whole thing (for understanding terrorist strategy)
- Stern, Ch. 7 in Terror in the Name of God
- Examples:
  o Vox: “Trump’s 2nd Amendment wasn’t a joke,” 2016
  o CNN: “ISIS has mastered the art of creating lone wolves.” 2017

Week 6 (9/29) The Psychology of Terrorism

Required Materials:
• Jerrold Post, Ch.2 in Roots (12 pages)
• Nasra Hassan, Ch.3 in Roots (16 pages)
• Stern, Ch.2 in Terror in the Name of God (29 pages)
• Caliphate podcast, Ch. 2, 2018

Recommended:
- Ch.1-5 in Terror in the Name of God
Week 7 (10/6) Revolution and Decolonization: Middle Eastern Cases

Required Materials:
- Ignacio Sanchez-Cuenca, Ch.6 in Roots (14 pages)
  - Efraim Karsh and Inari Karsh. 1996. “Reflections on Arab Nationalism,” Middle Eastern Studies, 32(4), read pp. 382-388

Recommended:

Week 8 (10/3) Insurgency and Civil War: Middle Eastern Cases

- Katerina Dalacoura. 2006. “Islamist terrorism and the Middle East democratic deficit: Political exclusion, repression and the causes of extremism.” Democratization 13(3)
- Bogumila Hall. 2018. “Yemen’s Failed Transition,” Ch.5 in Social Movements and Civil War (On Teams)
  - Also helpful: McFarland 2018, “Yemen: Understanding the conflict” in The Conversation
• Fred Lawson. 2014. “Syria’s mutating civil war and its impact on Turkey, Iraq, and Iran,” *International Affairs* 90(6)

Recommended:

**Week 9 (10/20) Al-Qaeda and 9/11: Causes and Consequences**

Required:
- Tricia Bacon. 2014, “Alliance Hubs: Focal Points in the International Terrorist Landscape,” *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8(4)
- Stern, Ch.9 in *Terror in the Name of God* (44 pages)

Recommended:
- Ch. 8 in *Terror in the Name of God*
- Peter Bergen et al. 2011. “Assessing the Jihadist Threat to America and American Interests.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 34(2)
Week 10 (10/27) State Sponsors of Terror

Position Paper #2: Targeted killing of terrorists, most prominently through the use of drone strikes, is an effective and ethical tool in combating terrorism that should continue to be used by the United States, including against American citizens who have joined foreign terrorist organizations overseas.

Required Materials:
- Gabriel Sheffer. Ch. 9 in Roots (11 pages)

Recommended:
- US State Department. 2017. “State Sponsors of Terrorism” in Country Reports on Terrorism. 2017 (see also the full report)

Week 11 (11/3) Religion, Fundamentalism, and the Global Reach: The Islamic State

- John Esposito, Ch.11 in Roots (14 pages)
- Tamar Mitts. 2019. “From Isolation to Radicalization: Anti-Muslim Hostility and Support for ISIS in the West.” American Political Science Review 133(1)

- 3 Podcast Discussions with Sam Harris
  - Making Sense Podcast #83 (starting at 00:47:50)
  - Making Sense Podcast #144 (00:41:52 to 00:51:30)
  - Making Sense Podcast #144 (01:09:50 to 01:23:10)

Recommended:
- “Why We Hate You & Why We Fight You,” Dabiq (on Teams)
- *Guardian*, “Trump: EU must take back 800 Isis fighters captured in Syria” [link](#)
- *NBC News*, “What Should the West do with Fighters Returning from Syria and Iraq?” [link](#)
- *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Special Issue on Islamic State’s Online Activity and Responses
- Making Sense #144, Whole Podcast, (esp. starting at 00:34:30)
- Riada Asimovic Akyol, 2019, “Want to Cultivate a Liberal European Islam? Look to Bosnia”, *The Atlantic*

**Week 12 (11/10) The Global War on Terror**

**Required Materials:**

- Bob de Graaff, Ch.1 in *Critical Perspectives* (17 pages)
- Laura Zahra McDonald et al., Ch.4 in *Critical Perspectives* (11 pages)
- Smith, Megan and James Igoe Walsh (2013). “Do Drone Strikes Degrade Al Qaeda? Evidence from Propaganda Output.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25(2)

**Recommended:**

- Johnsen, Gregory. 2014 “60 Words And A War Without End: The Untold Story Of The Most Dangerous Sentence In U.S. History.” Buzzfeed News. (30 pages)
- Johnsen. 2013 “How We Lost Yemen,” Foreign Policy

**Week 13 (11/17) The War on Terror Evolving**

Position Paper #3: The risk posed by right-wing extremism and ethnonationalism has surpassed those of international terrorist organizations and lone-actor jihadist terrorists. National governments should reorient their counter-terrorist strategies to combat this growing threat.

Required Materials:
- Michael Stohl, Ch. 5 in Roots (11 pages)
  - Optional but relevant: Byman, 2017, “Can lone wolves be stopped?” Brookings

Recommended:
- Koehler, Daniel. 2016. “Right-Wing Extremism and Terrorism in Europe: Current Developments and Issues for the Future.” PRISM 6(2)
  - https://www.e-ir.info/2013/07/18/the-delegitimizing-power-of-the-terrorism-label/
- Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 2017 40(12) special issue, “Community-Based Counterterrorism”
- Karlin and Wittes. 2019. “America’s Middle East Purgatory,” Foreign Affairs
- Janet Reitman, 2018, “U.S. Law Enforcement Failed to See the Threat of White Nationalism. Now They Don’t Know How to Stop It.” New York Times Magazine

**Week 14 (11/24) Towards a Stable Middle East**

Required Materials:
- Stern, Ch. 10 in Terror in the Name of God (15 pages)
- Also: Tarik Ramadan. 2011, “Democratic Turkey Is the Template for Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.” New Perspectives Quarterly, 28: 42-45
- Nick Danforth. 2013. “Stop Blaming Colonial Borders for the Middle East’s Problems,” The Atlantic

****Last Day of On Campus Classes****
Week 15 (12/1)  **How Terrorism Ends**

**Required Materials:**
- Neil DeVotta, Ch.11 in *Critical Perspectives* (18 pages)
- Darnell, 2010, “Deterrence in Counter Terrorism” in *E-IR*

**Recommended:**
- Mironova, 2019, “The New Face of Terrorism in 2019”, in *Foreign Policy*
- Roy, 2017, “Political Islam After the Arab Spring,” *Foreign Affairs*
- Agata Serranò. Ch. 5 in *Critical Perspectives*

(12/7 – 12/12)  **Finals Week**

Final Paper due Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 11:59pm

Upload to Teams

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**Policies and Resources**

- **Plagiarism, Cheating and Academic Integrity.** Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the administration, and may result in a lowered or failing grade for the course and up to possible dismissal from the School of Diplomacy. See university and school standards for academic conduct here:
  - [http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm](http://www.shu.edu/academics/diplomacy/academic-conduct.cfm)

- **Counseling:** As part of our commitment to the health and well-being of all students, Seton Hall University’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers initial assessments, counseling, crisis intervention, consultation, and referral services to the SHU community. The CAPS office is located on the second floor of Mooney Hall, room 27. Appointments can be made in-person or by calling 973-761-9500 during regular business hours, Monday-Friday, 8:45 a.m. - 4:45 p.m. In case of a psychological emergency, call CAPS (973-761-9500) at any time to speak to a crisis counselor. For more information, please visit: [https://www.shu.edu/counseling-psychological-services/index.cfm](https://www.shu.edu/counseling-psychological-services/index.cfm)

- **Absences.** Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in discussions. If a medical situation or other emergency arises students should inform the professor via email
at the earliest possible opportunity as to the reason for their absence. Unexcused absences will bring down your participation grade.

- **Grade Appeals.** Grades in this course are not negotiable. If you think an error has been made, you may contest the grade on an assignment up to one week after it is returned. Clerical errors and outright mistakes will be corrected; other grading decisions will not be revisited.

- **Late Assignments.** Students who anticipate not being able to turn in an assignment on time should let me know as soon as possible. Without prior communication, failure to turn in a paper on its due date will result in a grade penalty. All late papers (anything submitted after the deadline) will be penalized by 10% per 24hrs (i.e., a 100% A paper turned in one day late is an A- at 90%, two days late a B- at 80%, etc.). Assignments more than one week late will be given a 0. There may be exceptions made in cases of medical or family emergency or COVID-related issues.

- **Technology.** Students will be allowed to use laptop computers during class for the purposes of note taking only. All other activities (email, internet, Facebook, etc.) are prohibited during class. Students who violate this policy will forfeit their laptop privileges.

- **Accommodations.** It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973)-313-6003 or by e-mail at DSS@shu.edu.

- **Policy on Incompletes.** Incompletes will be given only in exceptional cases for emergencies. Students wishing to request a grade of Incomplete must provide documentation to support the request accompanied by a Course Adjustment Form (available from the Diplomacy Main Office) to the professor before the date of the final examination. If the incomplete request is approved, the professor reserves the right to specify the new submission date for all missing coursework. Students who fail to submit the missing course work within this time period will receive a failing grade for all missing coursework and a final grade based on all coursework assigned. Any Incomplete not resolved within one calendar year of receiving the Incomplete or by the time of graduation (whichever comes first) automatically becomes an “FI” (which is equivalent to an F). It is the responsibility of the student to make sure they have completed all course requirements within the timeframe allotted. Please be aware that Incompletes on your transcript will impact financial aid and academic standing.

- **Academic Resources.** If you need support during this course, Seton Hall has resources for you. The Academic Resource Center is the general support place for students. The Online Writing Lab provides students with comments on papers via email within 48 hours. The Writing Center and the Math Learning Lab offer appointments for one-to-one tutoring. More information is available here:
  - [http://www.shu.edu/student-services/toolkit.cfm](http://www.shu.edu/student-services/toolkit.cfm)
COVID and HyFlex/Remote Learning Provisions:

• **Ground rules:** We’re in a pandemic. It’s scary, it’s uncertain, and we are all struggling with personal and professional problems we have never faced before. If you need an exception, I will not judge you, and I will not think less of you. You do not owe me personal information about your health or living circumstances. If you need to miss class, need extra help, or need extensions on assignments, just ask. I will work with you. If I can’t help you, I will help you find someone who can. There are lots of resources on campus. This is an ongoing crisis. I will do my best as your instructor, and I hope you will do your best to work with me. I will cut you some slack, as long as you stay in communication with me. And I hope you will cut me some slack too.

• **Coronavirus Safety:** In accordance with the Seton Hall pledge, students must wear a mask in class, maintain required social distancing, and not come to class if you are ill. No mask, no class. The pledge can be found here: [https://www.shu.edu/health-intervention-communication/seton-hall-pledge.cfm](https://www.shu.edu/health-intervention-communication/seton-hall-pledge.cfm)

• **Attendance** is mandatory, whether you’re taking the class in person, in HyFlex, or remotely. If you are unable to comply with the attendance plan on the syllabus, please speak with me immediately.
  
  • If you are not going to be in class on any given day, whether in person or in Teams, I expect an email from you.
  
  • We are trying to continue a sense of community. Unless you are ill or have cleared it with me, you are expected to be in the Teams classroom.
  
  • Please don’t show up in person any days that you’re not assigned to be there. I may not be able to let you in—the classroom capacity is fixed and cannot accommodate extra students.

• **HyFlex:** You will be assigned to a class meeting based on your ID#. Unless you have let me know that you will be attending remotely that day, you are expected to be in the classroom during the class session. If, for reasons of health, self-quarantine, or some other obstruction, you need to attend remotely on a day you’re scheduled to be in class, I expect you to attend in Teams—please inform me beforehand if possible. The Teams session will begin and end at the same time as the in-person meeting of the class. Remote students must follow my guidelines regarding cameras and microphones. If you cannot follow that policy, please meet with me ASAP to discuss accommodations.

• **Fully remote (synchronous):** You are expected to attend class via Teams. As with an in-person class, you will be expected to arrive on time, stay for the entire class, and participate as designated by me. If you are expected to participate via the chat, discussion board, or any other electronic means, that participation must take place during class hours to count as attendance.

• **Fully remote (asynchronous):** I will post due-dates for specific work. Your attendance will be counted based on your ability to meet those deadlines. Attendance may include participating in discussion board, posting video summaries on Teams, completing exercises or assignments, or activities using technologies outside of the Teams Course. If you live in another time zone and cannot therefore attend your HyFlex course at the hour it’s scheduled, you will do the course this way. However, you will need to work out what constitutes attendance with me, so please be in touch ASAP.

• If you have used up your allowed absences and need to be out more than that, excused absences will be considered due to extenuating circumstances; however, I need to receive
communication from you beforehand. I can’t help you if you’re not in touch with me. “Excused” means that I must receive a phone or email message or written note before the absence occurs. Please contact Dr. Edwards if you expect to be out more than 3 consecutive classes.

- **Communication:** You must check your SHU email account, notifications on Microsoft Teams, and Blackboard regularly—at least once a day—to keep regular pace with the class. Please check before each class and before leaving your house/dorm to attend class, in case I need to run the class remotely (via Teams) on any given day. I will make every effort to respond to you quickly; you can expect to hear back within 48 hours, unless an emergency arises.

- **Participation**
  - **HyFlex:** On the days you join class from the classroom, participation will follow the traditional model, although it may also include other activities in Blackboard and Teams. On the days you join the class remotely, participation may include participating in the conversation “live,” (that is, speaking from the screen), contributing to the discussion board in Blackboard or the Chat in Teams, responding to Polls in Teams, and other activities. Please make yourself familiar with the basic expectations for participation as specified above.
  - **Remote (Synchronous):** Participation will include participating in the conversation “live,” (that is, speaking from the screen), contributing to the discussion board in Blackboard or the Chat in Teams, responding to Polls in Teams, and other activities. Synchronous participation will follow the same standards as in-person.
  - **Remote (Asynchronous):** participation may include participating in the conversations on discussion board in Blackboard or the Chat in Teams, and other engagement activities. Please make yourself familiar with the basic expectations for participation and be attentive to what is asked of you in order to keep this part of your grade healthy.

- **Office Hours**
  - Office Hours are an opportunity to meet with your professor to discuss your work, your class performance, your academic goals, and the meaning of life. Please feel free to attend them whenever you need help, have a question, or would like to talk more about the class and its relationship to your program. Office Hours in Fall 2020 will be remote. However, that doesn’t mean that I am available 24 hours a day. Specific hours for your class are posted above. You can expect to drop in on my Teams hours at any point during the specified time, and you can also schedule a time with me. It may be occasionally possible to meet with me on campus, as long as proper social distancing is observed and masks are worn. If you feel you need an in-person meeting, please contact me beforehand.

- **Camera and Microphone Policy:**
  - In class, we want to build community, which means seeing one another. And I need to be able to read your visual cues to do my best instruction, and to know if you want to participate on your remote days. I need to be able to see your face.
  - Unfortunately, video conferencing is a part of our lives indefinitely. I expect you to have your camera turned on during class time. Feel free to blur your background or use one of the backgrounds provided by Teams or a photograph you upload yourself. **Seton Hall offers several views of campus to upload if you’re feeling the school spirit.**
• Please be sure to turn your microphone on when you’re trying to speak. Use the “Hand Raise” function, or the chat box to indicate that you would like to speak. Otherwise, while class is going on, please mute your microphone so that any background noises don’t interrupt the class discussion.

• **If you are unable to comply with any of these policies, please speak to me, and we will work out an accommodation.** This can happen on a semester-long or one-time basis.