

Syllabus for the Course
Understanding Terrorism and the Terrorists
BLHV41301

Dr. R. Nicholas Palarino

Fall Semester: September 1-December 8, 2010
Wednesdays 6:15-8:55 pm
Room To Be Determined

Purchase text at bookstore—“Inside Terrorism” by Bruce Hoffman

The purpose of this course is to examine the issue of terrorism by addressing the following questions:

- Which perspective of international relations theory do you consider more applicable for today’s international environment—Francis Fukuyama’s end of history, Samuel Huntington’s clash of Civilizations, Thomas Friedman’s globalization or some other appropriate theory?
- What is a terrorist, and how should terrorism be defined?
- Who are the terrorists, and what motivates a terrorist?
- How do terrorists operate, and what is the anatomy of terrorist attack?
- What is the policy of the United States toward terrorism?
- What is the policy of other countries, and the United Nations, toward terrorism?
- How do countries protect their citizens and homeland from terrorist attacks?
- What international agreements are in force to prevent terrorism?
- What is the future of terrorism?

Course Outline

Week 1: Course introduction.
9/1

Week 2: Several perspectives of international relations are examined.
9/8
Francis Fukuyama argues the fall of communism and continuing rise in democratic regimes signifies humankind has reached a historical milestone. Huntington has written civilizations are at odds with each other, and there is a continuing threat of violence arising from renewed conflicts between countries and cultures that base their traditions on religious faith and dogma. Friedman believes globalization (process of interaction and integration among people, companies, and governments of different nations, a process driven by international trade and investment and aided by information technology) is what helps us understand our environment.

Assignment: Conduct appropriate research on theories of international relations, especially those explained above. Develop a paper on your perspective of the international environment. The question that should be answered in the paper is, “Which perspective of international relations’ theory is more applicable for today’s environment?”

Using appropriate reference citations, the paper should be at least 5 pages, but no longer than 6 pages, double-spaced, with page numbers and your name on each page.

Week 3: There are many definitions of terrorism. A number of these definitions will be discussed, both from a domestic and international perspective.
9/15

Required readings and Assignment:

Bruce Hoffman. “Inside Terrorism,” read Chapter I.
Conduct research and compile a list of all US definitions and the United Nations’ definitions of terrorism. Come to class prepared to discuss your list.

Week 4: There are scores of terrorist groups. The focus of week 4 will
9/22 be to identify selected terrorist organizations and their institutional and personal motivations.

Required reading:

Review US Department of State “Country Reports on Terrorism,” list of terrorist organizations found at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2008/index.htm>

Read Fareed Zakaria, “The Politics of Rage: Why Do They Hate Us?” *Newsweek*, October 12, 2002, found at http://www.fareedzakaria.com/ARTICLES/newsweek/101501_why.html

Bruce Hoffman. “Inside Terrorism,” read Chapters 2-5.

Week 5: The focus of this class will be on two questions—How do
9/29 terrorists operate? What types of targets do terrorists attack? Although many terrorist groups use violence some use it more effectively than others.

Required reading:

Bruce Hoffman. “Inside Terrorism,” read Chapter 8.
Read “The National Counterterrorism Center Report on Terrorism” found at <http://wits.nctc.gov/ReportPDF.do?f=crt2008nctcannexfinal.pdf>

Weeks 6/7: Presentations: Students will provide a 30 minute briefing to the
10/6 and Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (represented by
10/13 the instructor) on terrorism, including the international situation, definitions of terrorism, and a selected terrorist group and their motivations and operations.

Week 8: 10/20 In class exercise. The class will be broken into groups and each group, during the first hour, will develop a terrorist organization, a target and a plan, including the appropriate weapon to attack the target. During the second hour students will present the terrorist organization motivation, their target and plan of attack.

Week 9: 10/27 What was/is the policy of the United States Government toward terrorism? Week 9 will examine, from a historical perspective, the terrorism policies of various Administrations.

Assignment: Each student is required to go to the following web site <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB55/index1.html#V> and conduct historical research on terrorism and US policy. Students will be selected to present their research findings on the policies of the Reagan, Clinton and Bush Administrations to counter terrorism.

Week 10: 11/3 What is the policy of other countries, and international organizations toward terrorism? Week 10 will examine the stated policy of selected countries comparing these policies with US policy toward terrorism.

Assignment: Each student is required to conduct an internet search and find the stated terrorism/counterterrorism policy for the following countries—Pakistan, Israel, the United Kingdom and India. Students will be selected to present their research findings on one of the selected countries and compare that policy to US policy.

Note: A portion of this class will be devoted to a review of research paper proposals. Students should have an outline prepared.

Week 11: 11/10 How are governments organized to protect their citizens and infrastructures from terrorist attacks? This session will focus on domestic and international efforts to counter terrorism.

Assignment: Read *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, conduct an internet search and find and read the Bush and Obama Administration strategies. Read *Securing the Homeland and Strengthening the Nation*, conduct an internet search and find and read the Bush and Obama Administration homeland security strategies.

Read General Accounting Office, *Combating Terrorism: How Five Foreign Countries Are Organized to Combat Terrorism*. NSIAD-00-85, April 7, 2000.

Note: A portion of this class will be devoted to a review of research paper proposals. Students should have an outlined prepared.

Week 12: 11/17 What international agreements are in place to prevent and combat terrorism? There are a number of multilateral conventions related to states' responsibilities for combating terrorism. The United States is party to each of these conventions. This session will focus the conventions and assess their adequacy and the need for additional conventions.

Required reading:

United Nations Treaty Collection, "Conventions on Terrorism" found at http://treaties.un.org/Pages/DB.aspx?path=DB/studies/page2_en.xml&menu=MTDSG.

Note: If required a portion of this class will be devoted to a review of research paper proposals. Students should have an outlined prepared.

Week 13: 11/24 What is the future of terrorism? This session examines the future of terrorist groups, their operations and motivations, and how countries are dealing with this threat.

Required reading:

Find the answer to this question when reviewing the following, Where the experts correct in their assessments about the future of terrorism?

Bruce Hoffman. "Al-Qaeda, Trends in Terrorism and Future Potentialities: An Assessment" found at <http://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P8078/P8078.pdf>

"Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States" found at <http://www.9-11commission.gov>.

Bruce Hoffman. "Inside Terrorism," read Chapter 9.

Student Responsibilities

The course is designed to help students gain insights into terrorism. It considers the international context of the issue, definitions of terrorism, terrorist groups including their motivations and tactics, policies of countries toward terrorism, and the future of the terrorism. After completing this course students should have a background and understanding of terrorism and related issues.

Students are required to complete a research paper of 20 pages, typed, double-spaced on a topic approved by the instructor. This paper is worth 50 % of the student's final grade. The paper is due at the beginning of the Week 13 class.

Another 30 % of the final grade is based on the student's presentation during weeks 6 and 7.

The remaining 20 % is based on attendance and participation (including required presentations) during class sessions. Student attendance is expected at all course meetings. If a student misses a class the student is expected to explain the absence to the professor.

The semester will not be spent with the instructor talking at students; instead, the class will learn by discussing, analyzing and evaluating the issues together. Class sessions will be divided into two parts.

Required assignments/readings are listed for each week. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the week's topic and prepared to present their research findings.

If a student cannot submit their work on the required due date, the professor should be notified as soon as possible. Incomplete or late work may receive a lower grade.

If you believe you have a disability you should contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 located at the Leavey Center, Suite 335.

Please go to the web site

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53516.html>

And read Georgetown's honor code policy.

All papers for the class should adhere to Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 6th ed.*