This course examines the politics of terrorism, with a focus on theoretical and empirical studies of its causes and consequences. We will look at both domestic and transnational forms of terrorism. We begin with issues of definition, and theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of terrorism. We address the causes of terrorism, considering questions such as when, where, and why terrorism occurs, which individuals and which groups resort to terror and why, and who are the targets of terrorist attacks. We then turn to the consequences of terrorism, both for the outcome of conflicts, and for domestic politics.

Prerequisites:

This is an upper level graduate course that assumes a general familiarity with theories and literatures of international relations. Students who have not taken, or are not currently taking, the International Relations Field Survey (6801) should discuss with the instructor whether this course is appropriate.

Course Requirements:

- Students are expected to come to class ready to discuss critically the week’s readings. (Reading load averages ~200-250pp/week)

- Short memo (2-4 pages double-spaced) on one week’s readings briefly outlining the major themes of the session, raising questions for discussion in class, and suggesting a few testable hypotheses on the week’s topic. These are due (to be posted to CourseWorks) no later than 5pm, the Tuesday before the relevant class.

- Coding assignment: measuring the use of terrorism by a non-state actor in the Armed Conflict Dataset. Due February 16.

- Research paper: publishable-quality original research on a topic related to terrorism. A statement of your proposed research question and hypotheses is due February 23. Presentations will take place on April 12, 19, and 26. The final paper is due Thursday, May 10.
Policies:

- Grades: Research paper = 40% of the grade; presentation in class = 20%; memo and coding assignment = 10% each; participation in class = 20%.

- Late assignments, including the memo and coding assignment, will be penalized by one third grade per day (i.e., an A paper or memo turned in 1 day late is an A-, 2 days late a B+, etc.), except in cases of medical or family emergency.

- Incompletes will be allowed only under exceptional circumstances (e.g., family or medical emergency).

- Requirements for R credit and auditors: the memo and coding assignment and participation in class discussion (which requires doing the reading).

Readings

The following books have been ordered at Book Culture Bookstore (112th St., btw Broadway & Amsterdam) and are on reserve at Lehman. Journal articles are available through e-journals and/or e-reserves. Unpublished papers will be posted to CourseWorks.

Recommended for Purchase:


Optional:


Session 1. January 19. Introduction and Course Logistics

No assigned readings

I. What is Terrorism and How Should we Study it? Definitions and Approaches

Session 2. January 26. Defining Terrorism


☐ Schmid, Alex “The Response Problem as a Definition Problem” in H&B Chapter 6 pp.91-96. Originally published in Schmid & Crelinsten *Western Responses to Terrorism* (Frank Cass 1993), pp.7-13

Session 3. February 2. Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Terrorism


☐ Hoffman *Inside Terrorism* Chapter 4 “Religion and Terrorism” pp.81-130

Further Reading:


Session 4. February 9. No Class

[Alternative Session TBA]

Session 5. February 16. Data and Information Sources on Terrorism

**Coding Assignment Due**


☐ Browse datasets & codebooks:
  • Global Terrorism Database (GTD): [http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/)
  • RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorist Incidents (formerly known as MIPT) [http://www.rand.org/nsrd/projects/terrorism-incidents.html](http://www.rand.org/nsrd/projects/terrorism-incidents.html)
  • Terrorist Organization Profiles (TOPS) [http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/](http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/)
  • International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE) [http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/07947](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/07947)
II. The Causes of Terrorism

Session 6. February 23. The Causes of Terrorism: Motivation and Capability

**Research Statements Due**


☐ Wood, Reed M. 2011. The Strength to Kill or the Power to Protect? Power Resources and Violence against Civilians in Civil Conflict. Presented at American Political Science Association. Seattle, WA.


Further Reading:


Session 7. March 1. Strategies of Terrorism


Further Reading:


Session 8. March 8. The Effects of Democracy on Terrorism


Further Reading:


Blomberg & Hess “Lexus and Olive Branch” in Keefer & Loayza, eds.

Session 9. March 15. Spring Break

Session 10. March 22. The Effects of Economics on Terrorism


Further Reading:


III. The Consequences of Terrorism

Session 11. March 29. Terrorism and Conflict Outcomes


Further Reading:


Further Reading:


And other articles in this special issue on the Economic Consequences of Terror. 20 (2) 2004.

IV. Presentation of Research Papers

Session 13. April 12. Presentations
Schedule TBA
Reading: draft papers

Session 14. April 19. Presentations
Schedule TBA
Reading: draft papers

Session 15. April 26. Presentations
Schedule TBA
Reading: draft papers

**Final Paper Due Thursday, May 10, 5pm.**