The Challenges of Terrorism  
INTA 3103/8803  

Georgia Institute of Technology  
Fall 2023  

Dr. Jenna Jordan

Course Information

Tuesday and Thursday: 9:30-10:45

Contact Information

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Office Hours: Wednesday 11-12:30 and by appointment

Course Description

This course will explore the history, causes, and responses to domestic and international terrorism. Students will be introduced to the major theoretical approaches to studying terrorism. The course will be structured around six main topics: (1) Definitional issues (2) Causes/Explanations (3) Suicide terrorism (4) Groups dynamics (5) al Qaeda and ISIS, and (6) Counterterrorism Strategies.

Course Requirements

- Class participation: 10%

Students are expected to actively participate in discussion and have the completed the assigned readings prior to class. Course grades and value derived are directly proportional to student attendance, reading, and engaged participation. The participation grade, which will reflect your regular, thoughtful, informed participation in class discussion, it will be impossible to earn full participation marks while not attending class and participating routinely. I will call on students regularly during class discussions as well as solicit questions and perspectives based on the reading materials throughout. If I get the sense that students are not reading and learning the assigned material, I will resort to pop quizzes that will count as part of the participation grade.

- Midterm: 25%

This will be an in-class, closed book exam. The exam will be a combination of short answer and essay questions. **October 3, 2023**
• Op-Ed 15%

Students will write an op-ed on a current policy problem related to terrorism or counterterrorism. Students should draw on empirical research and course materials to support their analysis. References must be included but do not count against the word limit. The op-ed should be approximately 750-1000 words in length, excluding endnotes or footnotes. Op-eds will be evaluated on the basis of persuasiveness, use of the course material and readings, clarity, bibliographic thoroughness, and organization. Due: November 9, 2023 by 5:00pm (submit electronically via canvas)

• Simulation 20%

Students will participate in an in-class simulation. Students will be assigned to teams and will engage in a path game which is a competitive exercise performed by students organized into teams in which the participants attempt to fashion domestic and international policies while negotiating treaties and agreements amongst all teams involved. Teams will be expected to submit a paper of no more than 6 pages (double spaced with 12 point font) and will prepare a presentation of the simulation on the final day of class. The presentation should include a slide deck and should be approximately 15 minutes.

• Final Exam (Undergraduate only): 30%

The final exam will be an open-book take home exam. You will receive the exam questions on the last day of class.

• Research paper (Graduate only): 30%

Graduate students will complete a 20 page research paper. Topics will be chosen in consultation with Dr. Jordan. A short proposal (1 page) is due by October 17, 2023, including an initial bibliography of sources you plan to consult.

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A 90-100%
B 80-89%
C 70-79%
D 60-69%
F 0-59%

Subject to Change Statement

The syllabus and course schedule may be subject to change. Changes will be communicated via email and/or Canvas announcement tool. It is the responsibility of students to check email messages and course announcements to stay current in their online courses.
**Late Work**

Late assignments will lose a full grade for each day after the deadline. There are only two exceptions to the late-assignment policy: illness or family emergency. If either of these circumstances applies, you must provide written documentation (such as a doctor's note if you are ill), and you must communicate with me before the assignment is due (i.e., emailing me on the morning the assignment is due and saying you are sick is not acceptable for avoiding a penalty). I am willing to accommodate documented requests, but you must communicate with me before the assignment is due.

**Academic Integrity**

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. All students enrolled at Georgia Tech, and all its campuses, are to perform their academic work according to standards set by faculty members, departments, schools and colleges of the university; and cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/ or Academic Honor Code.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404)894-2563 or http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

**Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/ for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

**University Use of Electronic Email**

A university-assigned student e-mail account is the official university means of communication with all students at Georgia Institute of Technology. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their university-assigned e-mail account. If a student chooses to forward information in
their university e-mail account, he or she is responsible for all information, including attachments, sent to any other e-mail account. To stay current with university information, students are expected to check their official university e-mail account and other electronic communications on a frequent and consistent basis. Recognizing that some communications may be time-critical, the university recommends that electronic communications be checked minimally twice a week.

*Very important: Make sure your email is set up to receive announcements through Canvas.

**CARE Center, Counseling Center, Stamps Health Services, and the Student Center**

These uncertain times can be difficult, and many students may need help in dealing with stress and mental health. The CARE Center and the Counseling Center, and Stamps Health Services will offer both in-person and virtual appointments. Face-to-face appointments will require wearing a face covering and social distancing, with exceptions for medical examinations. Student Center services and operations are available on the Student Center website. For more information on these and other student services, contact the Vice President and Dean of Students or the Division of Student Life.

**Learning outcomes:**

Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of theories of international relations and apply them in analyzing events and outcomes in world affairs.

Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of principal contemporary global challenges in the field of international security.
**Week 1**

August 22: Introduction

August 24: Defining Terrorism

*What is terrorism? How should we define it? How and why should we study it*


**Additional Reading**


**Week 2**

August 29: Historical Context

*Is terrorism a new phenomenon? What makes it new or modern?*


**Additional Reading**


August 31: Strategic Explanations I

**Week 3**

September 5: Strategic Explanations II


September 7: Psychological Approaches I


**Week 4**

September 12: Psychological Approaches II


**Additional Reading:**


September 14: Organizational Theories


Additional Reading:


**Week 5**

September 19: Structural Explanations


Additional Reading


September 21: Ideological Explanations

• Gary Ackerman and Michael Burnbaum, “Towards a Definition of Terrorist Ideology,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* (April 2019)

Additional Reading

• People of Shining Path (BBC documentary, 1992), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--HnH-MguElU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--HnH-MguElU)
Week 6

September 26: Radicalization, Recruitment, Deradicalization

- *The Battle of Algiers* (on-line and through the library)

Additional Reading:

- Donatella Della Porta, “Recruitment Processes in Clandestine Political Organizations: Italian Left Wing Terrorism.” *International Social Movements Research*

September 28: New Left Groups

Who are the “New Left” Groups? Where did they come from? Why did the rise and fall? What are some of the similarities and differences? Are any of them still around?

- BBC Documentary, *Baader Meinholf Gang*
- Leila Khaled (in her own words), *Maxist-Leninism& PFLP*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rxdB65S_dQ
- PFLP Ghassan Kanafani, Richard Carleton interview, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3h_drCmG2iM

Week 7

October 3: Midterm

October 5: Foreign Fighters


Additional Reading:

Week 8

October 10: No class – Fall Break

October 12: Suicide Terrorism


Additional Reading:

WEEK 9

October 17: New trends in Terrorism: Lone wolf and home-grown terrorism

What is a lone wolf? How should we understand this type of terrorism? What are incels? Are incels terrorists? What is home-grown terrorism? Why are all these trends important?

• Lonewolf podcast, Boaz Ganor and Bruce Hoffman (~16min), August 3, 2017: https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/the-washington-institute/near-east-policycast/e/51015750
October 19: Terrorist Financing

Additional Reading

- Lindsay A. O'Rourke, “What's Special about Female Suicide Terrorism?” Security Studies, Vol. 18, No. 4 (December 2009), pp. 681-718

October 26: Movie

Week 12

October 31: Movie

November 2: Counterterrorism


Week 13

November 7: Decapitation

November 9: State Sponsorship – Oped Due


Week 14

November 14: The Rise of ISIS and al Qaeda

- Daniel Byman, Chapter 4, 8
- Hoffman, 282-295
- Frontline: “The Rise of ISIS”
  https://www.pbs.org/video/frontline

  Additional Reading

- Gregory Gause, *International Relations of the Persian Gulf*, 136-183

November 16: How Terrorism Ends

- Seth Jones and Martin Libicki, “How Terrorist Groups End” RAND 2008. SKIM

Week 15

November 21: Non-Violent Protest


November 23: No class - Thanksgiving
Week 16

November 28: Simulation

November 30: Simulation

Week 17

December 5: Simulation – Presentations and Wrap-up