

Sociology of Terrorism

Sociology 3315; Spring 2017

Wednesday/Friday, 9:35 a.m. to 10:55 a.m., Arps Hall 012

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Course Description

This course is divided into four units that will use sociological theories and tools to analyze terrorism. We will begin by defining terrorism and situating it in modern history. We will then explore key theories about the causes of terrorism, spanning from social-psychological theories about the individual to macro-level theories about which countries experience terrorism and why. Although there is not time to cover all types of actions that are labeled terrorism, we will also analyze a few forms in detail, including suicide terrorism, state terrorism, ecoterrorism, and revolutionary terrorism. Lastly, we will turn our attention to responses to terrorism, including the law, media representations of terrorism, and human rights repercussions.

Course Objectives

This course will introduce you to the sociology of terrorism. We will take a broad view of terrorism and discuss how terrorism differs from and is similar to other forms of violence. As such, many of the theories we will cover are applicable to other social phenomena, including other forms of crime and human rights abuses. We will also connect course content to your lives outside of the classroom and, in particular, to current events. Furthermore, several guests will visit our class, including people who respond to terrorism at local and national levels.

I have designed the course with the following goals in mind for each of you:

1. Gain a basic understanding of the difficulties in defining violence and terrorism.
2. Develop a broad base of knowledge about the history of terrorism and how it has changed over time.
3. Identify key theories about why terrorism occurs.
4. Improve your ability to articulate thoughts about course material during class discussions and in written assignments.
5. Develop analytical skills that allow you to frame and answer intelligent and timely sociological questions about terrorism.

Required Texts

Mahan, Sue and Pamala L. Griset. 2013. *Terrorism in Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

All other readings are posted on Carmen. **Please bring the readings to class each week. All readings should be completed prior to the class period under which they are listed.**

Classroom Procedure

Although this course will examine terrorism from a sociological perspective, students from all majors are welcome. In fact, our class discussions and work will be richer if students from different perspectives and backgrounds contribute, and we will often draw on material from other disciplines. Our diversity of experiences and values will allow all of us to better understand the topics at hand. In line with this, it is vital that our classroom be an open-minded, productive place for dialogue where we respect each other's viewpoints and ideas.

Course Requirements

During this course, you will complete in-class group work, write an in-depth case study of a terror organization, complete two quizzes, write a fictitious scenario about a terror attack, and complete a briefing (presentation) about the threat posed by a fictitious terror attack. The fictitious scenario and the briefing will be completed in groups, and everything else will be done alone. Assignments are briefly explained below, and you will receive handouts with additional information and rubrics as well. **Rubrics will always be located in the "Key Documents" folder on Carmen.**

In-Class Writing and Group Work (10% of grade)

You are expected to attend class and participate in each class session. Participation points will be awarded for completing mini in-class writing assignments or group work based on the readings or the day's topic. I will randomly choose the days that we have in-class writing assignments based on the readings and/or group work that will count for points, and if you are in class that day, you will receive participation points for the day.

I expect each of you to contribute to class discussion (either large group or small group discussion, though hopefully both). Overall, effort is much more important than correct answers, which often do not exist when dealing with complicated issues. **If you are unable to attend**

class, please let me know beforehand; if you have a valid reason, you will be able to make up the points missed in class if you choose to do so.

Terrorism Case Study (25% of grade)

Your first major assignment will be an in-depth case study of an active terror organization. This will enable you to learn about a terror organization of your choosing, and it will also provide you with practice summarizing relevant information about a current threat to global security.

Specifically, the case study should include the following information: (1) an overview about the organization's history; (2) where the organization is active; (3) the organization's current goals; (4) the typical tactics the organization employs; (5) the organization's funding stream and current financial situation; (6) the organization's structure; (7) the organization's current leaders; (8) prominent allies and/or enemies; (9) and any notable attacks. A more detailed discussion of this assignment, which should be approximately five to six pages, is found on the rubric on Carmen. This rubric also provides a list of potential terror organizations to consider, and this assignment is due on **February 8th** on Carmen.

Two Quizzes (15% each; 30% of grade)

Instead of midterms and a final, there will be two quizzes throughout the semester. We will review for the quizzes in class, and if you come to class and complete the readings, nothing will be a surprise. These will be on **February 24th** and **April 7th**.

Terrorism Scenario and Briefing (35%)

The other main component of this course is a collaborative project. You will be working in groups (that I assign based in part on interests expressed through your case study) to do two main things. First, you will create a fictitious scenario about a terror attack. Second, your group will be assigned *another* group's scenario, and you will be asked to complete a briefing of the level of threat posed by the scenario.

Written Scenario (20%): Due March 24th on Carmen

Working as a group, you will be tasked with writing a scenario in which a select terror organization commits a terror attack. This is a fictitious activity. Nevertheless, by creating a fictitious scenario, you will be able to apply and expand knowledge that you have learned throughout the semester. Additionally, this exercise will enable you to consider the threat of a terror attack from a specific organization and the possible ways in which such an attack could unfold. By understanding how such an attack is carried out, you will further enhance your appreciation for how terror attacks might be thwarted or how their impact could be mitigated. Your understanding of how various actors could respond will also be significantly enhanced. You will receive much more information about this assignment, including your group and specific assignment expectations, in February. You will also be provided with a rubric and written instructions. Finally, note that you will have the opportunity to provide a peer assessment of other group members and of yourself. This assessment should be completed using the peer-assessment rubric (located on Carmen) and must be uploaded (by *each* individual) to Carmen by the start of class on the 24th as well. Again, only I will see these assessments.

Scenario Briefing (15%): Due April 14th or April 19th

Upon completion of the written scenarios, I will assign your group a scenario that was written by another group. At this point, your task will be to read the scenario and assess the risk that it poses. You will receive a rubric with additional information, and your task will be to create a five-minute presentation that provides a risk assessment of the scenario. You will then present these risk assessments to panels of experts who will be invited to class and who will be given five minutes to ask your team questions following your presentations. Approximately five teams will present during each class period (April 14th or April 19th). Again, additional information will be provided in a rubric, though please note two important things. First, one member of your team must upload your presentation to Carmen at least one hour prior to the class period of your scheduled presentation. Second, as with the written scenario, each member of your team must complete a peer assessment of the other group members (and yourself). The peer assessment rubric is on Carmen, and it must be uploaded within 48 hours of the time your group presents.

Recap of All Course Deadlines:

February 8 th :	Terrorism Case Study Due on Carmen
February 24 th :	Quiz 1
March 24 th :	Terrorism Scenario Due on Carmen <small>*Only one scenario uploaded per group, but each group member must upload a peer assessment by 9:35 a.m. as well.</small>
April 7 th :	Quiz 2
April 14 th or 19 th :	Scenario Briefing Due on Carmen and in Class <small>*Only one PPT uploaded per group, but each group member must upload a peer assessment within 48 hours of your presentation. Notably, the PowerPoint must be uploaded by at least one hour prior to class time (8:35 a.m.).</small>

Writing

I expect all papers to be written in 12-point font with 1-inch margins. Everything should be double-spaced (unless noted otherwise) and should always include a title, your name, the date, and the course. Writing is a tool that allows us to express ourselves throughout our lives. If you need assistance, do not be afraid to ask me or consult a university resource, such as the Writing Center.

Differing Abilities and Other Useful Information

Students requiring accommodations due to differing abilities should contact me directly. You should also register with the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 or sids@osu.edu.

The Office for Military and Veterans Services assists with all military and veterans' services. Please contact the office at milvets@osu.edu or at 614-247-8387. Thanks for your service!

The Collegiate Recover Community (CRC) assists students who are in or are seeking recovery from alcohol or drug addiction. The CRC can be reached at recover@osu.edu or at 614-292-4527.

Late Assignments and Incompletes

Every assignment is due at the **beginning** of class unless otherwise noted. Late assignments will not be given full credit (without prior discussion with me) unless you have a documented illness or emergency. Please do not be afraid to talk with me if you cannot make a deadline. If you turn in an assignment one day late and have not spoken with me about it, you can only receive 75% of the original points. If it is two days late, you can receive 50%, and if it is three days late, you can receive 25% (but again, come talk with me about this prior to missing a deadline!). Assignments that are more than three days late without explanation will not be graded. Incompletes will only be given in extreme circumstances. Please do not hesitate to talk with me about any issue that may influence your ability to finish this course.

Plagiarism and Citation Style

Noun: “The unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work” (dictionary.com). Plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in an automatic F on an assignment. It can easily be avoided by citing others’ words and ideas. Note that you may use any citations style as long as you use it consistently. Note also that the Committee on Academic Misconduct investigates cases of academic misconduct on campus and that faculty members are required to report such cases.

Grading

The total number of points possible is 200.

A	93-100 %	B+	87-89 %	C+	77-79 %	D+	67-69 %
A-	90-92 %	B	83-86 %	C	73-76 %	D	60-66 %
		B-	80-82 %	C-	70-72 %		

Disclaimer and Expectations of Me

While it is important to treat the syllabus as a contract between us, I also may make minor changes as necessary or based on your suggestions, though we will discuss any potential changes. I also hope that you take the time to read this syllabus. If you have done so, please send me an email by the start of class on January 13th, and I will give you two points of extra credit!

As a student in this class, you can always expect that I will treat you with respect. I will do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours and to promptly return graded work. I am also always happy to discuss the class as well as your future plans. I hope to see you during my office hours, though I would also be happy to have coffee anytime. If you would like to do so, just email me.

Finally, please note that guest speaker dates listed below are tentative and subject to change given guests’ demanding schedules. We will thus be flexible to ensure that they are able to visit our class!

Course Schedule

Part 1: Defining Terrorism and Situating it in History

Week 1: Introductions and Defining Terrorism

Wednesday, January 11th: Introductions and Why We Study Terrorism

Introductions
Review Syllabus and Course Overview
Pretest and the Importance of Studying Terrorism

Friday, January 13th: Defining and Thinking Sociologically about Terrorism

Conley, Dalton. 2013. "The Sociological Imagination: An Introduction." *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*. W. W. Norton & Co. p. 3-8.

"What is Terrorism?" *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 1-5, 17-24.

Week 2: Terrorism Throughout History

Wednesday, January 18th: The History of Terrorism

Please upload a one-paragraph biographical statement (name, major, career aspirations, etc.) on Carmen by class today. I will not be grading or proofreading this, but I will be sharing it with guests coming to our class, and it will count toward participation points for today.

"History of Terrorism." *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 41-51.

Tilly, Charles. 2004. "Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists." *Sociological Theory* 22(1): 5-13.

Friday, January 20th: Four Waves of Terrorism

Rapoport, David. "The Four Waves of Modern Terrorism." Reprinted in *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 111-124.

"International Terrorism." *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 91-96, skim 97-109.

Week 3: Terrorism Today

Wednesday, January 25th: The Religious Wave and 9/11

Martin, Gus. "Violence in the Name of Faith: Religious Terrorism." *Understanding Terrorism*. p. 134-146 and p. 155-156.

Executive Summary. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*. p. 1-16, skim 16-26.

Friday, January 27th: Tactics of Terrorism—from Suicide Terrorism to Technology and Terror

Hoffman, Bruce. 2006. *Inside Terrorism*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 137-171.

"Terrorist Tactics Across the Globe." *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 137-153.

Guest speaker: Understanding Islam

Part 2: Causes and Theories of Terrorism

Week 4: Psychological Profiles and Criminological Perspectives

Wednesday, February 1st: Psychological Theories and Profiles of Terrorism

Victoroff, Jeff. 2005. "Inside the Mind of a Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(1) 3-42. Read 7-17.

"Women Terrorists" in *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 239-247.

Friday, February 3rd: Criminological Perspectives

LaFree, Gary and Laura Dugan. 2004. "How Does Studying Terrorism Compare to Studying Crime?" in *Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism: Criminological Perspectives*. New York: Elsevier. p. 53-74.

Agnew, Robert. 2010. "A General Strain Theory of Terrorism." Reprinted in *Terrorism in Perspective*, p. 26-38. Focus on 28-34.

Week 5: Economic Perspectives and Social Movement Theories

Wednesday, February 8th: Economic and Social Movement Perspectives

****Terrorism Case Study Due on Carmen****

Gurr, Ted Robert. 2011. "Why Men Rebel Redux: How Valid are Its Arguments 40 Years On?" Available at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2011/11/17/why-men-rebel-redux-how-valid-are-its-arguments-40-years-on/>

Piazza, James A. 2006. "Rooted in Poverty? Terrorism, Poor Economic Development, and Social Cleavages." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 18:159-177.

Friday, February 10th: Social Movement Perspectives and Lone Wolf Terrorism

Beck, Colin. 2008. "The Contribution of Social Movement Theory to Understanding Terrorism." *Sociology Compass* 2(5): 1565-1581. Read p.1565-1575.

Sageman, Marc. 2004. *Understanding Terror Networks*. University of Pennsylvania Press. p. 99-115.

Hamm, Marc and Ramon Spaaij. "Lone Wolf Terrorism in America." Read p. 3-6. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/248691.pdf>

Week 6: Organization, Networks, and Funding

Wednesday, February 15th: Organization and Networks; Beginning Discussion of Financing Terrorism

White, Jonathan. 2014. "Models of Terrorism" and "Changing Dynamics and Structures." *Terrorism and Homeland Security*. p. 54-66.

Freeman, Michael. 2002. "Sources of Terrorist Financing: Theory and Typology." *Financing Terrorism: Case Studies*. p. 7-25. Available as an E-Book from OSU's library.

*Note that we will begin this discussion today and finish it on Friday.

Friday, February 17th: Financing Terrorism and ISIL

Omar, Manal. 2015. "The United States Will Never Win the Propaganda War Against the Islamic State."

Guest speaker: Manal Omar, U.S. Institute of Peace

Week 7: Review and Quiz

Wednesday, February 22th: Quiz Review

Friday, February 24th: Quiz #1

Part 3: Terrorism Case Studies

Week 8: International Terrorism

Wednesday, March 1st: (Counter)Revolutionary Terrorism

Spend 15 minutes researching one of these groups: Italian Red Brigades, ETA, the Peruvian Shining Path, or the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Bring your notes to class.

Friday, March 3rd: Ethnic Terrorism

Byman, Daniel. 1998. "The Logic of Ethnic Terrorism." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 21: 149-166.

Cornell, Stephen and Doug Hartmann. 2004. "Conceptual Confusions and Divides: Race, Ethnicity..." In Foner and Fredrickson's *Not Just Black and White*. p. 26-32.

Week 9: State Terror and State-Sponsored Terrorism

Wednesday, March 8th: An Overview of State/State-Sponsored Terror

Conley, Dalton. 2013. "Authority and the State." *You May Ask Yourself: An Introduction to Thinking Like a Sociologist*. W.W. Norton & Co. Chapter 15, p. 581-588.

Davenport, Christian. 2007. "State Repression and Political Order." *Annual Review of Political Science* 10: 1-23.

Friday, March 10th: State Terror in Rwanda and Bosnia

Hatzfield, Jean. 2006. *Machete Season: The Killers of Rwanda Speak*. p. 21-27; 36-40.

Jones, Adam. 2006. "Bosnia and Kosovo." *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*. p. 212-220.

Guest Speaker: Edouard Kayihura on his experience in "Hotel Rwanda"

Week 10: March 13-17 th : Spring Break!
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Week 11: Domestic Terrorism and the Construction of Terror

Wednesday, March 22nd: Domestic Trends

“Homegrown Terrorism in the United States.” *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 183-195.

“Klu Klux Klan: A History of Racism and Violence.” *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 196-203.

Friday: March 24th: The Social Construction of Terror

****Terrorism Scenario Due on Carmen****

“Media Coverage of Terrorism.” *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 209-221.

“The Portrayal of Female Terrorists in the Media.” *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 249-259.

Part 4: Consequences of and Responses to Terrorism

Week 12: International and Domestic Responses to Terrorism

Wednesday, March 29th: U.S. Counterterrorism

“Counterterrorism.” *Terrorism in Perspective*. p. 307-320.

Extra reading: Byers, Michael. 2002. “Terrorism, The Use of Force, and International Law after September 11.” *International and Comparative Law Quarterly*. p. 401-414. Read and summarize in two paragraphs for extra credit. Send to me by the start of class by email in order to claim the extra credit.

Guest Speaker: Threat assessment briefings

Friday, March 31st: Counterterrorism: Domestic and International

Galicki, Zdzislaw. 2005. “International Law and Terrorism.” *American Behavioral Scientist* 48(6): 743-757.

Week 13: Homeland Security and Quiz

Wednesday, April 5th: Quiz Review

Guest Speaker: Kirsten Minnie, Homeland Security

Friday, April 7th: Quiz #2

Week 14: Career Panel and Briefings Part 1

Wednesday, April 12th: Career Panel

Friday, April 14th: Briefings Part 1

****Presentation due on Carmen for those presenting today; upload by 8:35 a.m.****

A panel of guests will be joining us to hear your briefing and ask questions.

Week 15: Briefings Part 2

Wednesday, April 19th: Briefings Part 2

****Presentation due on Carmen for those presenting today; upload by 8:35 a.m.****

A panel of guests will be joining us to hear your briefing and ask questions.

Friday, April 21st: Wrapping Up