

**Insurgency, Rebellion, and Terrorism**  
**University of Nebraska-Lincoln**  
**POLS 479: Spring 2014**

**Instructor Information:**

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**Course Description:** This course is designed to give students an introduction to the causes, methods, and justifications for the use of terrorism. This is not a simple task; politicians, pundits, and media reports routinely treat terrorism as if every listener has a clear understanding of the behaviors and activities that are encapsulated within. However, there are a host of varying, and oftentimes competing, definitions that mitigates the efficacy of counterterrorism policies. For this reason, this class will include a review of the definitions of terrorism, as well as the tactics these groups employ and their motivations for doing so. The goals of this course are to provide a greater understanding of terrorism as a political phenomenon with the ultimate goal of creating a solution to this behavior.

**Required Texts:**

- Crenshaw, Martha. *Explaining Terrorism: Causes, Processes, and Consequences*. Routledge Publishing. 2011.
- Juergensmeyer, Mark. *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. University of California Press; Third Edition. 2003.
- Combs, Cynthia. *Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*. Pearson Education; Seventh Edition. 2013.

These are the *required* texts for the class; additional readings and videos may be assigned to supplement the core texts.

**Grades:** The grades for this class will follow the standard university grading rubric.

These grades will come from three primary areas:

1. **Weekly Reading and Lecture Quizzes.** (45% of total grade) Each week a quiz will be posted that covers content from both the weekly reading and the online lecture. The quizzes will open at 12:00 A.M. on Sunday morning and will close at 11:59 P.M. the following Saturday. Students will have 20 minutes to complete the 5-10 question multiple choice quiz. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed quizzes.

2. **Reaction Papers:** (20% of total grade) There will be a total of 3 short reaction papers. The papers will be 2-3 page book critiques that will be due on Saturday at 11:59 p.m. of the week we are finished reading that particular book. These papers should be written double spaced with 12-font and 1-inch margins all around. I do not require a specific citation style as long as you are consistent (although I do prefer APA) I do not expect you to write a summary of the book; rather I want you to critically examine the argument of the author and provide me with a well thought out critique of what you liked, disliked, what you thought the author missed, what you thought he/she did well, etc. The due dates will be posted in this syllabus. The papers need to be submitted to the appropriate folder in the Assignments tab in Blackboard.
  
3. **Final Paper:** (35% of total grade) The final paper will be 12-15 pages long on a topic that you clear with me by Week 10. The topic will be largely your choice and can range from a discussion of the academic understandings of terrorism to a detailed examination of a particular group or action. There are a plethora of good topics and I will be more than happy to work with each of you in developing yours; having said that please refer to the syllabus often for specific due dates including the date that you must propose your final paper topic for approval. An outline of the final paper is due on Saturday night of week 13. The final paper will be due on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 p.m.

**Learning Environment:** Topics such as terrorism, insurgency, and rebellion are inherently contentious and tend to provoke some strong opinions and emotions. This class is structured to provide opposing viewpoints and perspectives in order to offer a broad range of viewpoints; as such it is likely that some of us in the class will have very different opinions on these topics. This is a learning environment where these opinions are welcome but I expect courtesy and professional reactions to those opinions. Be respectful in your reaction papers to the sensitive nature of this topic and certainly avoid derogatory or hateful statements concerning certain groups, ethnic backgrounds, gender, or people or religious affiliation. I want to foster an atmosphere where all viewpoints can be discussed without malicious response; while I do not expect this sort of behavior to occur I will take appropriate corrective measures if necessary.

**Communication:** Communication is critical in any class but especially so in an online format. The best way to reach me is through my university email ([ahansen@huskers.unl.edu](mailto:ahansen@huskers.unl.edu)). I will try to respond to all emails within 24 hours; however, please understand that there will be times that I am unable to reply that quickly. If you have ANY problems or are confused about the class or assignments please email me as soon as possible. If you are emailing me right before an assignment is due I may not have the time to reply prior to the deadline so *please* do not procrastinate on your work. I am much more likely to grant extensions or work with you to avoid late penalties if you contact me in a timely fashion. If you are on campus or in the Lincoln area, I will be happy to meet by appointment.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty in all forms is unacceptable and has serious repercussions. If you are unclear on what exactly constitutes academic dishonesty I encourage you to view the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Student Affairs website at <http://stuafs.unl.edu/ja/code/three.shtml>. It is expected that you know what academic dishonesty is and how to avoid it. If I suspect plagiarism or any form of cheating I will first contact the

student for an explanation and try to resolve the issue. At this point the consequences for academic dishonesty range from the student working with me to fix the problem (if it was accidental), to a failing grade in the course, and/or the situation will be taken to the Dean of Students to determine an appropriate response. Of course, there are safeguards in place for students to challenge the claim (once again please read the Code of Conduct on the Student Affairs website so you are familiar with this process). If you ever have any questions please email or come see me.

## **Weekly Schedule**

Week One: January 13-18

Watch Lecture #1: Introduction to POLS 479

Quiz #1: Syllabus Quiz

Week Two: January 19-25

Reading: Crenshaw Introduction and Part I (Pgs. 1-66)

Watch Lecture #2

Content Quiz #2

Week Three: January 26-February 1

Reading: Crenshaw Part II (Pgs. 69-134)

Watch Lecture #3

Content Quiz #3

Week Four: February 2-8

Reading: Crenshaw Part III (Pgs. 137-190)

Watch Lecture #4

Content Quiz #4

Week Five: February 9-15

Reading: Crenshaw Part IV (Pgs. 193-222)

Watch Lecture #5

Content Quiz #5

\*Crenshaw Reaction Paper due on Saturday at 11:59 p.m.\*

Week Six: February 16-22

Reading: Combs Preface-Chapter 3 (Pgs. xiii-53)

Watch: Lecture #6

Content Quiz #6

Week Seven: February 23-March 1

Reading: Combs Chapters 4-6 (Pgs. 54-130)

Watch Lecture #7

Content Quiz #7

Week Eight: March 2-8

Reading: Combs Chapters 7-9 (Pgs. 131-217)

Watch Lecture #8

Content Quiz #8

Week Nine: March 9-15

Reading: Combs Chapters 10-13 (218-326)

Watch Lecture #9

Content Quiz #9

Week Ten: March 16-22

Reading: Combs Chapters 14-15 (327-380)

Watch Lecture #10

Content Quiz #10

\*Combs Reaction Paper due on Saturday at 11:59 p.m.\*

Final Paper Topic Due (5% of Final Paper Grade)

Week Eleven: March 23-29

**Spring Break!!**

Week Twelve: March 30-April 5

Reading: Juergensmeyer Chapters 1-3 (Pgs. 3-60)

Watch Lecture #12

Content Quiz #12

Week Thirteen: April 6-12

Reading: Juergensmeyer Chapters 4-6 (Pgs. 61-118)

Watch Lecture #13

Content Quiz #13

Final Paper Outline Due (10% of Final Paper Grade)

Week Fourteen: April 13-19

Reading: Juergensmeyer Chapters 7-9 (Pgs. 121-189)

Watch Lecture #14

Content Quiz #14

Week Fifteen: April 20-26

Reading: Juergensmeyer Chapters 10-11 (Pgs. 190-249)

Watch Lecture #15

Content Quiz #15

\*Juergensmeyer Reaction Paper due on Saturday at 11:59 p.m.\*

Week Sixteen: April 27-May 3

No Reading/Lecture/Quiz

Work Week

**Final Paper Due on Saturday May 3<sup>rd</sup> at Midnight**