



Mahidol University
International College

ICIR 334 Terrorism, Counterterrorism and Political Violence

Course Description & Aims:

This course will consist of a brief historical survey of terrorism. Emphasis will be on theories of terrorism and; a critical examination of political theory regarding the rights and wrongs of revolution and terrorism. There will be an analysis of the relationship of the modern state to terrorism and terrorist groups. Different theories and methods of counter terrorism and conflict resolution will be examined. Students should also be able to evaluate the social phenomena that lead to revolution. Students will be able to understand, analyze and evaluate terrorism in the contemporary world. There will be a detailed analysis of the notion of revolutionary terrorism. Students will be able to evaluate the historical situations that lead to revolution and terrorism in modern society. Students will be able to understand and analyze terrorist movements from a political and geopolitical perspective. Students should be able to understand and propose methods of counter-terrorism and conflict resolution for different societies experiencing terrorism or insurgency.

A brief historical survey of terrorism; theories of terrorism; a critical examination of political theory regarding the rights and wrongs of revolt and terrorism; the relationship of the modern state to terrorism and societies. Students will be able to understand, analyze and evaluate terrorism in the contemporary world.

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Assessment

Quizzes (2 x 5%)	10%
Movie/documentary review	10%
Presentation	15%
Case study	25%
Take home final exam	40%

Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Explain the causes and consequences of modern day terrorist movements.
2. Understand the motivations of terrorists and terrorist movements.
3. Analyze terrorist movements and state responses to terrorism.
4. Evaluate state policy in response to terrorism and effects of terrorism on societies.

Topic No.	Topic
1	Introduction to course
	Theories of political violence
2	Reaction against industrial capitalism; Revolutionary situations
	the French and Russian Revolutions
3	Reaction against American Imperialism
	The Cuban Revolution; The Iranian Revolution
4	Non-violent revolution
	Haiti, the Philippines, Indonesia
5	State sponsored terrorism, domestic terrorism.
6	Terrorism; the problem of definition
	terrorism and liberation
7	The Symbionese Liberation Army and American guerilla warfare. The Baader-Meinhof group. Counter-terrorism measures in Western countries
8	State monopoly on force and the reaction.
	Revolutionary terrorism. Sinderio Luminoso. The failure of counter-terrorism to combat revolutionary and insurrectionary groups. Practices for conflict resolution
9	Punitive terrorism: Al Qaeda, ISIS and Hezbollah
	Attempts at counter-terrorism in the Middle East. Proposals for compromise
10	Terrorism as revolution; terrorism as a tool of liberation
	Syria and the Middle East
11	Military and diplomatic responses to terrorism
	The use of law and enforcement
12	Various state responses to terrorism

Assessment Methods & Criteria

Two (2) Quizzes 10%

These are short-answer (1 paragraph) quizzes and materials.

Movie/documentary review 10%.

The students will see a video in class and write a review applying the content to certain theories. It will contain a synopsis of the plot and critically evaluating plot in terms of theory.

Presentation on a group labeled as “terrorist”. 15 %

Students in groups of three will present the background and activities of a group. The presentation should follow a dialectical approach. Student 1 will present the motivations and grievances of the group; student 2 will present the position of established states in condemning them; student 3 will then present a synthesis of the problem and offer possible resolutions.

Case study paper 25%

Students will individually write up a case study (not the same as their presentation) of an issue in revolution or terrorism. It should be about 1,500 words. The purpose is to determine if they can apply theory to a case then critically analyze and evaluate that case.

Take home final exam 40%

Students will write two essays, each consisting of about 1,200-1,500 words. It will be given to them in week 8 and will be due by email by the last day of class.

Criteria for evaluation of case study.

- 1) A clear understanding of the issues involved in the history of the case.
- 2) Brief discussion of the central concerns of both the group and the established states.
- 3) Application of theories to the issues and activities.
- 4) Classification of type of political violence
- 5) Dialectical approach (looking at both sides and putting them together in a synthesis)

Theories of Political Violence

Topic description: After introducing the course, discuss the general nature of political violence and distinguish it from ordinary violent crime. They will be introduced to the general concepts of political violence and distinctions between various types such as uprising, coup d'état, revolution, terrorist act. Etc.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to understand what political violence is, how it differs from ordinary crime and that classification and definition are subjective and relative.

Readings and activities: Abrahms, Max (2008). "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counter Terrorist Strategies." *International Security*, 32(4): 78-105. Pape, Robert (2003). "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 97(3): 343-361.

Activity: Class discussion on what "terrorism" means.

Reaction Against Industrial Capitalism

Topic description: What industrial capitalism is. How it affected ordinary people. The French and Russian revolutions as reactions to industrial capitalism. The Marxist idea of revolution.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should have a greater understanding of industrial capitalism and how it can lead to those who are desperate rising up to overthrow the state. They should be able to distinguish between popular uprising, individual terrorism and revolution.

Readings and activities: Crane Brinton, "Anatomy of a Revolution" Prentice-Hall (1965), Pp. 3-20.

Activity: Students will be asked to explain what "revolutionary terrorism" means and to discuss it in groups.

Reaction Against American Imperialism

Topic description: American imperialism and the imposition of capitalism. How the Cuban and Iranian revolutions were similar as reactions to American imperialism and how they differed in their goals and in the states that resulted.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should understand the role of capitalism in imperialism, Students should be able to define "capitalism" and imperialism. They should also gain understanding of the differences between a socialist and a nationalist revolution.

Readings and activities: Huntington; Pp. 19-35; Introduction to Brinton; Anatomy of a Revolution.

Activity: Watch parts of the movie "Che" and identify American imperialism and reaction to it. This will be done orally with students called on at random.

Non-violent Revolution

Topic description: Can a revolution be non-violent? What is the non-violent party? What is the meaning of non-violence? How the practices of Gandhi and ML King were used in Haiti, the Philippines and Indonesia to overthrow dictatorships.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should have an understanding of the method of non-violent civil disobedience. They should gain an idea of revolutionary terrorism as opposed to general terrorism and how it is the anti-thesis of non-violent revolution. They should be able to compare and contrast the violent methods of previous revolutions like Cuba and Iran to the non-violent ones.

Readings and activities: Re-read Pape: Pp. 346-361: Martin Luther King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (on-line).

Activity. Look at popular uprisings in history and ask students to identify violent and non-violent elements. Use, especially the 1976 uprising in Thailand. General class discussion getting conflicting opinions on non-violent revolution.

State Sponsored Terrorism and Domestic Terrorism

Topic description: How is revolutionary or nationalist liberation terrorism different from State-sponsored terrorism? What states sponsor terrorism, how do they do it and why do they do it?

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to compare terrorism by groups who want to liberate themselves or others from state control to those that are unofficial arms of states. They should be able to identify the reasons that states use vigilantes and international terrorists for their own purposes.

Readings and activities: Piazza, James (2008). "Incubators of Terror: Do Failed and Failing States Promote Transnational Terrorism?" *International Studies Quarterly* 52(3): 469-488.

Activity: Show parts of the movie "Munich" and have students discuss then write a short paragraph on it as an example of Israeli sponsored terror.

Problems of Defining Terrorism

Topic description: Why "terrorism" is so hard to define. What would be necessary for a good definition of "terrorism". Why different states define it differently. Is terror the ultimate liberty? How does terrorism relate to liberation?

Expected learning outcomes:: Students should see the connection and be able to contrast official ideas of terrorism to those of oppressed peoples. They should be able to contrast the ideas of liberation of "terrorists" to those of state officials.

Readings and activities: Laqueur, Walter, "Terrorism Reader", Temple University Press (1978), Pp. 17-30.

Activity: Have students examine several different working definitions of "terrorism" from the US, UK, Israel, Germany, etc. Have them compare, contrast and criticize those definitions in class. Write a definition of "terrorism" (ungraded)

Some Liberation Groups

Topic description: Distinguish between "terrorism" and "guerilla warfare". Discuss the nature and purpose of the Symbionese Liberation Army. Relate case study of the Kidnapping of Patty Hearst.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to apply the idea of guerilla war to different conflicts and to distinguish it from terrorism. They should be able to apply the idea of urban guerilla warfare to uprisings in developed countries.

Readings and activities: Read Che Guevara's "Guerilla Warfare" (furnished by instructor). Watch the movie "The Company You Keep".

Activity: Students will identify, from the article and movie, the reasons that desperate people fight to overthrow advanced capitalist states.

State Monopoly on Force and the Reaction

Topic description: Review of the concept of revolutionary terrorism and discuss how it applies very well the Baader-Meinhof group. Have a discussion of West German of the 1970s under American occupation. Discuss how it is similar to American imperialism in Iran and Cuba and why the Baader-Meinhof group decided to take up the fight.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to apply the idea of revolutionary-terrorism (using terrorism to begin a guerilla war) to various places under capitalist or American domination. They should be able to discuss how the concept applies equally to Baader-Meinhof, the Symbionese Liberation Army and other Marxist groups.

Readings and activities: Read Carlos Marighella, "Minimanual of the Urban Guerilla" Show news reels of activities of Baader-Meinhof's operation.

Activity: Have discuss those operations and compare them to more recent events and then have them debate whether terrorism can lead to revolution using Marighella and Guevara.

Punitive Terrorism

Topic description: Punitive Terrorism is the use of terrorism to punish an imperialistic or oppressive state. Explanation of that concept. How al Qaeda, Hezbollah and ISIS use punitive terrorism differently because they have different goals and methods. There will also be a discussion of state responses from power sharing as in Nigeria to militarized police forces.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to apply the various kinds of terrorism: revolutionary; liberation and punitive to the various terrorist groups and activities in the contemporary political world order.

Readings and activities: Read Ahmad Eqbal, "Terrorism: Theirs and Ours" (supplied by instructor).

Activity: Divide students into four groups. Two groups will debate the issue between Israel and the Palestinians (one group for each side). Two groups will debate the issue between Nigeria and Boko Haram.

Terrorism as a Tool of Revolution

Topic description: The situation in Syria. Various states are sponsoring different groups that are fighting against the government of Syria. Outline the goals and activities of the major players.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to use the Wars in Syria to apply their understanding of the various kinds of terrorism and guerilla warfare. They should be able to identify the goals and methods of the different groups, states and governments involved in the conflict. They should then be able to apply it to various other political conflicts in the middle East.

Readings and activities: Huntington, Samuel (1993). "The Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*, Vol 72, No. 3, pp 22-49.; Pp. 174-183; Hexamer, Thomas & Aaron Y. Zelin. "How Syria's Civil War Became a Holy Crusade." *Foreign Affairs*. 7 July 2013.

Activity: Appoint students in pairs to represent each of the parties involved in the Syrian civil war (Syrian government, ISIS, Russia, etc.) Give them a two week lead and have them present the view of the state or group they represent.

Military and Diplomatic Responses to Terrorism

Topic description: Presentation of various military and diplomatic responses to terrorism that have been tried from the US invasion of Afghanistan to the brokered deal between Israel and the PLO. Discuss the effectiveness and morality of drone attacks into guerilla held territory and the use of assassination of "terrorist" leaders. Discuss how similar responses have been tried in the Philippines and Thailand with their insurgencies. Present the idea that in some cases the major players may benefit from the conflict and the people become comfortable with it so that there is not incentive to solve it.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to analyze the goals and methods of both governments and "terrorist" organizations and apply that analyses to gain a better insight into the motivations of both sides in these conflicts.

Readings and activities: Kydd, Andrew and Barbara Walter (2006). "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security* 31(1): 49-80.

Activity: Show the cartoon, "What Happens when the Coyote Catches the Road Runner?" Have students present their ideas on what might happen if long standing conflicts are resolved and people no longer benefit by them.

State Responses to Terrorism

Topic description: Since military and diplomatic responses comes from the state, the state response will be similar to the those of the military and diplomatic corps such as drone attacks, militarized police and power sharing. A key difference is that states might respond by attempts of state-building, that is creating a new state in the image of the one reacting to terrorism. Discuss how this worked in turning the Haganah terrorists into the leaders of the state of Israel but failed in turning the PLO fighters into a leader of a Palestinian state or Moro fighters into leaders of a semi autonomous state of Moro in Southeast Asia. Students will also be asked to evaluate multi-state alliances against terrorism and if that gives to much hegemony to states with powerful military organizations.

Expected learning outcomes: Students should be able to distinguish between military, diplomatic and state building attempts to control terrorism. They should be able to use this understanding to analyze various conflicts and recommend different approaches to solving them.

Readings and activities: Callimachi, Rukmini. "How ISIS Built the Machinery of Terror Under Europe's Gaze." *New York Times*. 29 March 2016; Smith, Megan and James Igoe Walsh (2013). "Do Drone Strikes Degrade Al Qaeda? Evidence from Propaganda Output." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25(2): 311-327.

Activity: Watch the Video "Syria's War: Who is Fighting and Why?"