POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TERRORISM
David A. Siegel

Course Information:
Course Number: INR 5934/3933
Time: Tuesday 2:30 - 5:00 pm
Place: Bellamy Building 113
Course website: Blackboard

Contact Information:
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OH: Thursday 2:30 - 3:30 pm or by appt.

Course Description

This course is a Masters-level seminar that addresses terrorism from a political economic perspective. At times this will mean explicitly examining the political and the economic determinants and consequences of terrorism. In general, it implies a quantitative approach to the study of terrorism, using the tools of game theory and statistical inference. The former helps structure the strategic interactions in which terrorists and governments engage; the latter helps us draw general conclusions from multiple, disparate cases. Though no prior knowledge of either tool is required, readings will contain both. The first week will be a crash course in everything you need to know to get a handle on the readings; additional detail will be provided in class during discussion.

In the remaining thirteen weeks, we will tackle different aspects of terrorism. Terrorism has become a broad subject, and our focus on a political economic approach means we will not be able to cover all of it in this course. Two notable aspects of terrorism that will not be covered are state terror and psychological approaches to terrorism. This is not in any way a statement of the relative importance of these two; merely an accommodation to time constraints and methodological approach. (And, in the case of state terrorism, the often different dynamics between it and oppositional terrorism, which will study.) What we will explore are issues of mobilization and terror networks, methods of terror and counter-terror and their consequences, and the organization of and competition between terror groups. Discussion of problems and opportunities for research in the literature will arise naturally, often multiple times, in response to analyses of each of these issues. The course will culminate in the production of a 10-15 page policy analysis memo that will take a real-world problem relating to terrorism, set it in the literature we have read, and apply the approach of this class to propose ways to study the problem further and come to a reasoned policy conclusion.

Readings

All readings for the class are listed in the tentative schedule below in the order in which they will be used. Book chapters will be available via Blackboard, and you should check there first for all readings. Articles not there will be available via the internet, either at a site listed with the reading (copy and paste these links, do not click directly on them), or via www.jstor.org or the like. It is your responsibility to obtain these readings (we will discuss how to do this in the first class). Required readings are to be done before class in all cases. Because many of these readings are dense, you should leave yourself time to do them. In some cases, additional recommended readings are listed below each topic on the schedule as well. These are included as a preliminary (and non-exhaustive) guide for further reading on the topic for those who are interested.
Grading

- Participation: 20%. All students are required to have completed the required readings for each week before class begins, and everyone should be prepared to discuss the readings during class. All students should also have read the discussion papers circulated by discussion leaders the day before (see below). This is a seminar class, and will be treated accordingly. That is to say, we will be discussing the readings; I will not be lecturing except to clarify readings and explain their more technical aspects. I expect you to provide evidence that you have done the readings in a thoughtful and careful manner. After each class meeting I will assign a participation grade that takes into account the frequency and quality of your contributions. The following scale will be used for scoring your participation:
  A to A-: The student made a very strong contribution to the class. Comments were thoughtful and constructive.
  B+ to B-: The student contributed meaningfully to the course. Comments went beyond simply repeating the assigned material, but did not demonstrate strong insights.
  C+ or lower: The student did not contribute meaningfully. Comments were limited to repeating the assigned material rather than making connections or extensions, or were inaccurate.
  F: The student did not speak in class.

- Discussion leadership: 40%. Each student will be assigned two papers to lead between weeks 2 and 14. Discussion leaders will be chosen via e-mail after the first class meeting. A seminar leader has two responsibilities for the week that s/he leads. First, each leader is responsible for delivering to the class, via e-mail (one can do this via Blackboard), a 2-3 page paper by 9 am Monday morning the day before class. The paper should open with a brief summary of the major points of the paper s/he was to have read, and then offer additional avenues for discussion that the leader feels would be productive and interesting to address during the seminar. Second, the student in charge of that paper will then lead discussion on the paper during the seminar. The depth of preparation evidenced in these papers, particularly in the discussion questions, along with the leading of the seminar itself, will determine the student’s grade.

- Final paper: 40%. The final paper will be due by 5 pm on Friday the last week of class (April 23rd). Each late day will result in a loss of one letter grade. Papers should be both e-mailed to me and placed in the digital dropbox on Blackboard. Acceptable formats include pdf and doc (i.e. Acrobat and Word 2003); it is your responsibility to ensure that the document can be opened. Papers should be double-spaced, with one inch margins and 11 or 12 point font, and be between 10 and 15 pages. I will provide more instruction as to the content of the papers as the semester goes on, but in general each paper needs to do a few things: 1) identify a real-world problem relating to terrorism that is of substantive interest; 2) set the problem in the literature we have read, explaining who has looked at it or similar problems before and what they have found; 3) propose a theory about the problem (either how to solve it or why it occurs, or both); and 4) apply the approach of this class to propose ways to study (quantitatively and/or formally) the problem further in order to come to a reasoned policy conclusion.
Tentative Schedule of Readings (Subject to Change with Advance Notice):

PRELIMINARIES

**Week 1: January 12** — A Crash Course in Quantitative and Formal Analysis

**Required reading:**

**Week 2: January 19** — Definitions, Progress, and Problems

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**

Some Readings on Historical Terrorism:
International Crisis Group. 2004, Sections II and II of “Dealing with Hamas,” pp. 4-19. [Note: The International Crisis Group (http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm is an excellent source of background information on groups, and further puts out weekly updates on conflict situations.]


Who joins?: Mobilization, Recruitment, and Networks

**Week 3: January 26** — Economics, Democracy, and Repression I

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


Week 4: February 2 — Economics, Democracy, and Repression II

Required reading:

Recommended reading:

Week 5: February 9 — Mass Impact of Terrorism

Required reading:

Recommended reading:


Week 6: February 16 — Terror Networks

Required reading:


Recommended reading:


Week 7: February 23 — Religion

Required reading:


RECOMMENDED READING:

ATTACK AND DEFENSE: METHODS OF TERROR AND COUNTER-TERROR

Week 8: March 2 — Terror Strategies

REQUIRED READING:

RECOMMENDED READING:

Week 9: March 16 — Suicide Terror

REQUIRED READING:

RESPONSES TO PAPE:


RECOMMENDED READING:
Gambetta, Diego (Editor). 2006. Making Sense of Suicide Missions. Oxford University Press, USA.

Week 10: March 23 — Counter-terror: Target Defense and Information
REQUIRED READING:

RECOMMENDED READING:

Week 11: March 30 — Negotiations, Credible Commitment and Costly Signaling
REQUIRED READING:


**Recommended reading:**

**Organization, Finance, and Competition**

**Week 12: April 6 — Finance and Counter-finance**

**Required reading:**

**Recommended reading:**
Week 13: April 13 — Organizational Structure

**Required reading:**


**Primary Sources:**


Harmony Documents: “Al-Qa’ida Goals and Structure” and “Employment Contract.” Available at [http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/aq_pdf.asp](http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/aq_pdf.asp). [There are many other such documents as well for your perusal.]

Twomey, “Staff Report” (course website).

**Recommended reading:**


Week 14: April 20 — Competition and Factionalization

**Required reading:**


**Recommended reading:**


Additional Information

Students with Disabilities
Instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students with physical, mental or learning disabilities. Students with disabilities which may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements are to inform the instructor (after class or during the instructor’s office hours) so that appropriate arrangements may be made. Students should register with the Student Disability Resource Center and bring a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating the required accommodations in the first week of class.

Department/Collegiate Complaint Procedures
A student who has a complaint against any member of the college’s teaching staff is responsible for following the procedures described in the Student Handbook at the following website: www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/. The student should attempt to resolve the issue with the faculty member or teaching assistant involved. Lacking a satisfactory outcome, the student can turn to the department chair. If a satisfactory outcome still is not obtained, the student can turn to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Complaints may concern inappropriate faculty conduct (including inappropriate course materials), incompetence in oral communications, inequities in assignments, scheduling of examinations at other than authorized and published times, failure to provide disability accommodations, or grading grievances. FSU has a specific policy regarding sexual harassment - this can be found at http://www.auditservices.fsu.edu/.

Plagiarism and Cheating
All students are bound by the Academic Honor Policy (http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/academics.htm). You are expected to be honest and honorable in your fulfillment of assignments and in test-taking situations. Plagiarism and cheating are serious forms of academic misconduct. Examples of them are given in the Student Handbook: http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/2003codes/honor.html. The department of Political Science works with individual instructors to detect plagiarism and cheating and to ensure that appropriately serious punishments are applied. Instructors who detect cheating or plagiarism may decide to reduce the student’s grade on the assignment or course, even to assign an F. The instructor will discuss the matter with the student, put any agreement regarding academic penalty in writing signed by both the instructor and the student, and report the infraction to the Chair and the University judicial office. If no agreement can be reached, the instructor refers the matter to the Academic Honor system Hearing Panel.

Your Responsibilities
Your responsibilities to this class - and to your education as a whole - include attendance and participation. This syllabus details specific expectations the instructor may have about attendance and participation. You have a responsibility to help create a classroom environment where all may learn. At the most basic level, this means you will respect the other members of the class and the instructor and treat them with the courtesy you hope to receive in turn.

Plus-Minus Grading
All the department’s instructors can append plus or minus grades to the letter grades they assign for the course. If the instructor does not specifically indicate in the syllabus that he or she will not assign plusses or minuses, students should assume that this form of grading will be used.

Please visit the Political Science Department’s website: http://polisci.fsu.edu/. It is frequently updated with new events and procedures in our department.