INR 6137 - TERRORISM AND POLITICS

Section: D060

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Summer 2026
Class Meeting Days: ASC
Class Meeting Location: Online
Modality: WW
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Thomas Dolan
Office Location: HPH 314

Office Hours:
Tuesdays, 1-3, Wednesdays, 10-11
Email: Thomas.Dolan@ucf.edu

Course Description

INR 6137 COS-POLS 3(3,0)Terrorism and Politics: PR: Graduate standing or C.I. Examines terrorism, including its strategic logics, contemporary methodologies, political roots, and the problems of counter-terrorism. Occasional.

General Course Expectations

Reading

Students should complete all readings by no later than Monday of each week. As this is a graduate course, you are expected to grasp the core elements (question, theory, findings, and weaknesses) of each article through your own reading, and then further develop that knowledge through your participation in the online discussions. You should expect to be challenged by the nature and content of some of the readings, and you should plan enough time to complete them. (As this is a shortened term course, the reading schedule is aggressive.) If you encounter difficulties with the readings, please contact the instructor: there is an art to reading academic articles. If you are unfamiliar with how to interpret regression analysis, you are also encouraged to contact the instructor for advice, since many of the articles will use it. Only readings that are not available through library databases are provided for you in the files section.

Weekly Assignments.

Students will participate each week in the course in several different ways: papers, constructive comments on other students' papers, readings presentations, and questions about the readings. This participation is students' main interaction with each other and foundational to the course. Students should set aside sufficient time, at the right times, to participate effectively in these weekly activities. Students are evaluated on the quality of their participation. They should plan to demonstrate a clear understanding of the readings; ask thoughtful questions; make genuinely useful, constructive comments (i.e., critical but not cruel) on others' papers; and articulate thoughtful, interesting arguments.

Research

Each student will write a research design or "conventional wisdom" paper, due 5 July. A research design is, in essence, the first part of a research paper, and is appropriate for people whose course of study involves training to become political science researchers. It defines your research question, the dependent variable, reviews relevant literature, presents a theory (or at least a well-explained theoretical intuition) and a hypothesis, and then explains how you would test they hypothesis. When you explain how you would text your hypothesis, you need to be specific about the methods you would use, how you would operationalize your variables, and the sources you would use for your

information/data. You should plan to have your question approved by your instructor no later than the end of the third week of class. Your discussion of relevant literature should include relevant readings from the courses but also at least non-required peer-reviewed academic journal articles or books. The conventional wisdom paper is more appropriate for students who will be consumers of political science research. It is focused on using peer-reviewed political science research to better understand and draw conclusions about commonly held beliefs about terrorism, responses to terrorism, and counter-terrorism. It should rely on academic political science publications (peer-reviewed journal articles and books published by university presses), some (but not all) of which may be listed on the syllabus.

Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Discuss, situate, and evaluate research on terrorism
- Theorize about and test hypotheses about terrorism
- *Note that advocacy of personally held political or policy positions is not a course goal, and will not be part of discussion in the course.*

Required Course Materials and Resources

All course materials are available online through the UCF library

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Please Consult the Weekly Schedule to see the weekly flow charts of deadlines!

Serve as an Article Presenter: 10% (2 times = 20%)

- Create and post by 23:59 on the Tuesday before your week begins a narrated slide presentation (e.g. powerpoint) lasting not more than 5 minutes which describes the question, place in the

literature, theory, methods, and findings of an assigned reading and appropriately critiques the article. Please note that it can take a while for powerpoint to save the video file combining voice and slides. For technical assistance (for powerpoint) see https://goo.gl/PC6Sbp

- Respond to all questions posed by fellow students by 23:59 on Saturday.

Group Presentation on a Terror Group: 10%

- The presentation should involve an 8-minute narrated powerpoint, written analytical discussion, and presentation of other relevant media (video clips, images, documents, poetry, etc.). The presentation will be posted during week 6.
- Each group will field questions from other students about the group.
- Each group will submit a description of what each individual did to the instructor. If there are clear discrepancies in effort, those who contributed less will lose points.

Weekly Papers: 3% per paper, 1 paper per week excluding group presentation week (totaling 8 Papers) = 24%

With the exception of the first week (when drafts are due on Saturday), by 23:59 on each Thursday, each student will post one 400 word paper draft on the discussion board in response to one of the posted prompts. The will be turned in for grading by 23:59 on the Tuesday of that week. [The other paper is factored into the participation grade.] Students should use the comments they receive on their papers to identify the stronger paper, and take advantage of those comments improve the paper—the final version, turned in for grading, should be a substantial revision of the draft that they posted on Monday.

• While students will be able to see other students' papers after their initial posts, they should take care to not duplicate others' papers.

Weekly Participation: 2% per week, with the lowest week dropped = 16%

With the exception of the first week, and the group presentations week, each student is responsible for asking one question about two different readings by Thursday at 23:59 and posting two constructive comments on other students' papers (both comments cannot be made in response to papers addressing the same prompt) by Saturday at 23:59. During the first week, students will be responsible for making one critical, constructive comment on other students' papers. During Group Presentation week, each student will ask questions on at

least 3 other group's presentations. The lowest weekly participation grade will be dropped.

- Participation is graded in terms of the aggregate quality and timeliness of posted questions, prompts, and papers.
- Note that students are expected to make follow-up comments in response to questions.

Term Paper, 15 Pages: 30%. Submit online. Do one of the following:

A. **Research Design,** Design a research project on terrorism, complete with clear question, 4 page literature review referencing at least 15 peer-reviewed articles, 5 page theoretical discussion, specific and falsifiable hypotheses, and clear statements of operational definitions, evidence sources and method of analysis. *Political science graduate students will find this option better suited to their curricular needs.*
B. **Conventional Wisdom Paper**. Identify a claim often made about terrorism or counter-terrorism about which significant research has been published by social scientists in academic articles and books published by university presses. [Demonstrate that people make this claim using references to it in newspapers of record like the New York Times or Washington Post within the last three years.] Use this research (at least 15 peer-reviewed papers) to draw conclusions about the truth—or falsity—of this claim.

Weekly Schedule

Weekly Deadlines

Week 1

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
			23:59: Post Paper Draft 23:59: Sign up for article presentations,		23:59 Comment on 2 other students' papers	23:59: Submit paper for grading **********

			presentation group			23:59 Wee 2 Article Presenters post presentati

Weeks 2, 3 ,4, 5, 7, 8,9

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
	23:59: Post Paper Draft 23:59 Post questions to presenters		23:59: Post comments on students' papers 23:59: Presenters post answers to questions			23:59 Submit paper for grading 23:59: Next week Article Presenters post presentations

Week 6 (Group Presentation Week)

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
	23:59: Groups Post Presentations		23:59: Post questions to 3 other groups		23:59: Groups respond to questions	23:59: Wee 7 Article Presenters post presentatio

Grading Scale

A 93 or better	High-quality professional work
A- 90-92.99	Professional work
B+ 88-89.99	Good work but not quite professional-level work; contains clear weaknesses
B 83-86.99	Quality is acceptable, but has serious weaknesses
B-	Quality is marginally acceptable

80-82.99	
C 70-79.99	Quality is problematic
D 60-69.99	Quality is not acceptable for graduate work
F 59.99 or below	Fail

Note that in graduate courses, a C is considered to be an unsatisfactory grade.

Late Papers
Papers are to be turned in by the date/time they are due. If you foresee problems in meeting a particular deadline, please inform the instructor as soon as possible to request an extension. Discussion posts can be made in advance, but can only be made after due date/times by permission of the instructor. Posts made after due dates without explicit permission may receive less credit.

Communication Expectations

Student emails will generally be responded to within two business days.

Policies for Course Grade

Late Papers
Papers are to be turned in by the date/time they are due. If you foresee problems in meeting a particular deadline, please inform the instructor as soon as possible to request an extension. Discussion posts can be made in advance, but can only be made after due date/times by permission of the instructor. Posts made after due dates without explicit permission may receive less credit.

Make-up Assignments for Authorized University Event or Co-curricular Activities

Students who represent the university an an authorized event or activity (for example, student athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with

documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied if the student gives advance notice and communicates with the instructor following UCF policy. In the case of an authorized university activity, it is your responsibility to show the instructor a signed copy of the Program Verification Form for which you will be absent, prior to the class in which the absence occurs or due date you need extended. For more information, see UCF Policy 4-401.

Make-up Assignments for Religious Observances

A student who desires to observe a religious holy day of his or her religious faith must notify their instructor as soon as practicable prior to the observance. Students who are absent because of religious observances will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to complete any missed work. For more information, see UCF Regulation 5-020.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is prohibited. Use of GenAI tools via website, app, or any other access, is not permitted in this class except for purposes of editing. But note that edited work should not read as if it was AI generated.

Disability Access & Accommodations

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing equal access to all students with disabilities (ADHD, learning disabilities, Autism, chronic medical conditions, physical disabilities, etc.). To receive consideration for reasonable disability-related course accommodations, disabled students must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and complete the steps required for SAS to review accommodation requests. More information can be found on the UCF Student Accessibility Services website under the Start Here tab or by contacting SAS directly (Ferrell Commons 185; sas@ucf.edu; Phone - 407-823-2371).

Approved accommodations are shared with course instructors via the SAS

Course Accessibility Letter. Implementing certain accommodations may require discussion and specific considerations of the course design, course learning objectives, and the individual academic and course challenges experienced by the student. While students with disabilities or chronic health needs are also encouraged to discuss any course concerns with professors in addition to contacting SAS, professors are not required to facilitate disability-related adjustments to the course unless the professor has received a Course Accessibility Letter from SAS that outlines approved accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Code of Conduct at Student Conduct and Integrity Office. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

a. **Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of the course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assignment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.**
b. **Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.**
c. **Commercial Use of Academic Material. Selling of course material to another person and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the University and the instructor of record. Course**

materials include but are not limited to class notes, the instructor of record's slide deck, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, and handouts.

d. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule*. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designation on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Title IX

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on access and community engagement, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- **Title IX – ONAC – Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance & askanadvocate@ucf.edu**
- **Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu**
- **Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)**
- **UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu**
- **The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.**

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced discrimination by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Nondiscrimination & Accommodations Compliance via the ONAC website or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line either anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or by using the online form. UCF cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

Deployed Active-Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Campus Safety

At UCF Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- **In an emergency, always dial 911.**
- **Every UCF classroom has an Emergency Procedure Guide posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.**
- **In the event of an active threat, remember AVOID, DENY, DEFEND. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.**
    - **AVOID. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.**
    - **DENY. When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your cell phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.**
    - **DEFEND. When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.**
- **For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.**

Financial Aid Accountability

All instructors/faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete this activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Class Schedule

Module 1: What is Terrorism? (13-19 May)

1. Charles Tilly, 2004, "Terror, Terrorism, Terrorists," *Sociological Theory*, 22:1.
2. Tuncer Beyribey, Terrorism as a Conceptual Site for Power Struggles. *European Journal of International Relations*, 2023.
3. Bart Schuurman, End of the Lone Wolf. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2018
4. Chia-yi Lee and Yasutaka Tominaga. The Determinants of Terror Listing, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2024.
5. Joshua Tschantret, Social Origins of Modern Terrorism, 1860–1945. *Security Studies*, *32*(1), 2023

-

Module 2: Strategy and Logic of Terrorism (20-26 May)

1. Andrew Kydd and Barbara F. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security*, Summer 2006.
2. Cullen Hendrix and Joseph Young, 2014. "State Capacity and Terrorism," *Security Studies*, 23:2, 329-63.
3. David Carter. Provocation and the Strategy of Terrorist and Guerilla Attacks. *International Organization*, 2016. 70:1.
4. Max Abrahms. 2012. "The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism Revisited," *Comparative Political Studies*, 45:3, 366-393
5. Sara Polo, Blair Welsh, Violent Competition and Terrorist Restraint. *International Organization*. 2024;78(3):397-426
6. Andrew J. Coe, Peter Schram, and Heesun Yoo, "Terrorism Works, for its Supporters," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 69, no. 6 (2025): 955–979

Module 3: Origins of Terrorism and Terrorists (27 May–2 June)

1. J. Kavanagh, "Selection, Availability, and Opportunity: The Conditional Effect of Poverty on Terrorist Group Participation," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2011.
2. Miles Armaly, David Buckley, and Adam Enders, Christian Nationalism and Political Violence, *Political Behavior*, 2022.
3. S. Cottee and Hayward, "Terrorist (E)motives: The Existential Attractions of Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2011
4. Michael Jensen et al. Choosing Where to Fight. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2024.
5. Jakana Thomas and Kanisha Bond. 2015. "Women's' Participation in Violent Political Organizations," *American Political Science Review*, 109:3.
6. Jori Breslaski and Brandon Ives. Killing for God? Factional Violence on the Transnational Stage. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 63:3, 2019,
7. Sarah G. Phillips, Daniel J. Tower; Knowing What Not to Know About Islamic State: Terrorism Studies and Public Secrecy. *International Security* 2025; 50 (1): 9–45

Module 4: Terror Organizations (3-9 June)

1. Martha Crenshaw, "Theories of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 1987.
2. Abrahms, Max, and Philip B. K. Potter, "Explaining Terrorism: Leadership Deficits and Militant Group Tactics," *International Organization*, Vol. 69, No. 2 (Spring 2015), pp. 311–342.
3. Lidsay Heger, Danielle Jung, and Wendy Wong, "Organizing for Resistance: How Group Structure Impacts the Character of Violence," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2012.
4. Christopher Blair et al. Honor Among Theives. *International Organization.* 2021.
5. Kaitlyn Robinson and Iris Malone, Militant Splinter Groups and the Use of Violence, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2024.
6. Sarah Parkinson. Practical Ideology in Militant Organizations. *World Politics*. 2021;73(1):52-81

-

Module 5: Tactics, Techniques, and Practices (10-16 June)

1. Michael Horowitz, Evan Perkoski, and Philip Potter, Tactical Diversity in Militant Violence. *International Organization*, 2018, 72:1.
2. Michael Horowitz, "Non-State Actors and the Diffusion of Innovations: The Case of Suicide Terrorism" *International Organization*, 64:1 (Winter 2010), pp. 33-64.
3. Brian Philips. Deadlier in the US? On Lone Wolves, Terrorist Groups, and Attack Lethality, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2017.
4. Ido Levy and Abdi Yusuf, How Do Terrorist Organizations Make Money? *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2021
5. Michael J. Reese, Kevin Ruby, and Robert Pape. Days of Action or Restraint? How the Islamic Calendar Impacts Violence. *American Political Science Review*, 2017, 111:3.
6. James Piazza and Michael Soules. Terror after the Caliphate : The Effect of ISIS Loss of Control over Population Centers on Patterns of Global Terrorism. *Security Studies* 2022.
7. Pete Simi and Steven Windisch, Why Radicalization Fails. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 2020.

Module 6: Specific Terror Groups (17-23 June)

Group Presentations on Particular Terror Groups. Presentations must be posted by Saturday, 13 June at 23:59.

Module 7: Target Responses to Terrorism (24-30 June)

1. Mirya Holman, Jennifer Merolla, and Elizabeth Zechmeister, The Curious Case of Teresa May and the Public did not Rally. *American Political Science Review*, 2022.

1. Ryan Shandler et al. Cyber Terrorism and Public Support for Retaliation, *British Journal of Political Science*, 2022

1. Anna Getmansky and Thomas Zeitzoff, 2014. "Terrorism and

Voting: the Effect of Rocket Threat on Voting in Israeli Elections," *American Political Science Review*, 108:3.

2. Kerstin Fisk, Jennifer Merolla, Jennifer Ramos. Emotions, Terrorist Threat, and Drones. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2019, 63:4.
3. Amelie Godefroidt. How Terrorism Does (and Does Not) Affect Citizens' Political Attitudes. *American Journal of Political Science*, 2023.
4. Leonie Huddy, L., Smirnov, O., Snider, K. L. G., & Perliger, A. (2021). Anger, Anxiety, and Selective Exposure to Terrorist Violence. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *65*(10), 1764-1790.

-

Module 8: Counter-terrorism (1 July- 7 July) **Term Paper Due 7 July**

1. Ursala Dazecker and Michael Hess. 2012. "Repression Hurts: Coercive Government Responses and the Demise of Terrorist Campaigns," *British Journal of Political Science*, 43: 559-77.
2. Erik Dahl, "The Plots that Failed: Intelligence Lessons Learned from Unsuccessful Terrorist Attacks Against the US," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2011.
3. Patrick B. Johnston and Anoop K. Sarbahi. "The Impact of US Drone Strikes on Terrorism in Pakistan" *International Studies Quarterly*, 60:2, 203-219
4. Jenna Jordan, "Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark: Why Terrorist Groups Survive Decapitation Strikes," *International Security* 38:4, 7-38.
5. Sheena Chestnut Greitens, Myunghee Lee, and Emir Yazici, Counterterrorism and Preventive Repression: China's Changing Strategy in Xinjiang, *International Security* 2020 44:3, 9-47.
6. Sarah Phillips & Nadwa al-Dawsari. (2024). Trivializing Terrorists: How Counterterrorism Knowledge Undermines Local Resistance to Terrorism. *Security Studies*, *33*(1), 30–54.
7. Lee Jarvis L & Michael Lister. Critical security research and the war on terror: From the margins to the mainstream? *European Journal of International Security*. 2025;10(1):150-169.

Module 9: Ending Terrorism (8 -14 July)

1. Neumann, Peter R.(2005) 'The bullet and the ballot box: The case of the IRA ', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 28: 6
2. R. Alonso, “Why Do Terrorists Stop?” Analyzing Why ETA Members Abandon or Continue with Terrorism,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2011.
3. Mary Beth Altier, Emma Boyle, Neil Shortland and John Horgan. Why They Leave: An Analysis of Terrorist Disengagement Events from 87 Autobiographical Accounts. *Security Studies*, 2017, 26:2.
4. Rachel Schmidt. Contesting the Fighter Identity: Framing, Desertion, and Gender in Columbia. *International Studies Quarterly.* 2020.
5. Tamar Mitts. Countering Violent Extremism and Radical Rhetoric. *International Organization.* 2021.