Course Syllabus and Policy Requirement Statement

In order to access your course materials, you must agree to the following, by clicking the "Mark Reviewed" button below.

By checking the "Mark Reviewed" link below, you are indicating the following:

- You have read, understood, and will comply with the policies and procedures listed in the class syllabus, and that you have acquired the required textbook(s).
- You have read, understood, and will comply with class policies and procedures as specified in the online Student Handbook.
- You have read, understood, and will comply with computer and software requirements as specified with Browser Test.
- You have familiarize yourself with how to access course content in Blackboard using the Student Quick Reference Guide or CSS Student Orientation Course.

ISSA 6313 – Intelligence and Counterterrorism

Course Description/Overview

ISSA 6313 will review terrorism from both historic and modern perspectives as well as the successes, failure, and challenges posed by terrorist organizations, homegrown violent extremists, and lone wolves. While terrorism may seem like a modern invention and more lethal than ever, history and facts prove otherwise. This course will look at the root causes of terrorism, the disparate motivations of terrorists, and the reasons why some groups persist while others wither away. The course will also review the US government's approach to countering terrorism following the attacks of 9/11/01. Included in this analysis will be the government's counterterrorism and intelligence organizations, policies, successes, and challenges.

History of terrorism: The definition of terrorism is often in the eye of the beholder. The often quoted maxim of "one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist" still holds true today. Hizballah and Hamas are just two of the most prominent US-designated foreign terrorist organizations who have substantial population support as well as governing and socio-economic responsibilities. The transformation of these quasi-government organizations leads to the concept of the evolution or life cycle of terrorist organizations. Some, like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, have existed for decades and have little interest or ability to govern, while others, like al-Qaeda and its affiliates, seem to morph and merge with other groups as situations evolve.

Although terrorist organizations targeted US interests and personnel overseas for decades, terrorist activity was a foreign concept to many Americans. Even though domestic terrorists struck targets within the US, the illusion of protection and insulation was shaken by the attacks on 9/11. In the midst of two prominent wars and several ancillary military actions worldwide, the fear of attacks among the US populace became more prominent. With the 9/11 attacks, the US had another significant intelligence failure on its hands, which led to a massive reorganization of the homeland security efforts and, in some cases, additional redundancies and duplications of effort. The US also sought to strengthen its alliances with intelligence agencies throughout the world and the sharing of information became more widespread.

The US and allied responses did not go unchallenged by terrorist organizations as they continued to change and swiftly adjust to US actions. Al-Qaeda became more decentralized and more of an inspiration to groups and, most problematically, individuals worldwide. With the growth of the Internet, Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs) and disgruntled or marginalized individuals
could now become self-radicalized with little to no contact with others and, most dangerously, outside the observation of intelligence or law enforcement officials.

ISSA 6313 will consist of two major blocks of instruction. The first will review and analyze the history and evolution of terrorism and will look at some of the prominent terrorist organizations of the past ten years. The history, ideologies, and fundamentals of terrorism will provide students with a solid foundation to conduct comparative analyses with other organizations. This will culminate in students completing an analytical study of an existing US-recognized terrorist organization and determining the history, goals, tactics, and viability of that group. The second half of the course will review the US’ efforts to organize against and target terrorist organizations. Students will learn about the structure of the counterterrorism community, its strengths, weaknesses, effectiveness, and limitations, and the US’ continued efforts to prosecute actions against terrorist organizations through diplomatic, intelligence, military, and economic (DIME) means. The students’ final evaluation will consist of an analytical paper where they assume the role of the President’s National Security Advisor and write about the history, goals, successes, and failures of a US-recognized terrorist organization. They will also analyze the US response from a DIME perspective and provide recommendations of a balanced multi-agency approach to counter and defeat the organization, recognizing the limitations of the domestic and international geo-political and fiscal constraints and realities.

The reading material will consist of a series of published journal articles and government documents interspersed with lectures and interviews found on-line or provided with the instruction. The prosecution of the war on terrorists/terrorism has been controversial and this course, by its nature, is meant to be highly interactive and open to divergent reasoning and analysis, taking into account the course material and the backgrounds and experiences of the instructor and students. Current events could, and will, shape the weekly discussions.

**Required Texts/Library Resources/On-Line Resources:**

**Required Texts:**

3. Additional readings, which will be electronically retrievable, will be assigned for specific classes.

**Excellent Library Additions**

If you are looking to build an extensive library on counterterrorism and intelligence community, the following are recommended:


**On-line Counterterrorism and Intelligence Resources**

2. Combating Terrorism Center at West Point [http://ctc.usma.edu/](http://ctc.usma.edu/)
7. RAND Corporation Terrorism Reports, Research, and Database [http://www.rand.org/topics/terrorism- and-homeland-security.html](http://www.rand.org/topics/terrorism- and-homeland-security.html)
8. Director of National Intelligence [www.dni.gov](http://www.dni.gov)

**Grading Policies**

A Note on Grades: On-line learning has many benefits but also unique challenges. The interaction with other students often found in a classroom setting is difficult to replicate. It is incumbent upon you to reach out to your fellow students, participate in professional dialogues, and contribute in meaningful ways. The success of ISSA 6313, and your ability to comprehend the material, is dependent on your discussions. Not coincidentally, the intelligence and counterterrorism communities are also reliant on coordination and cooperation. As such, your weekly participation in the discussion threads is a significant part of your grade. Final grades are composed as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Thread participation</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Weekly when no essay or presentation is assigned. Due date for initial posts is Friday 11:59 pm Central Time with follow up posts due by Sunday 11:59 pm Central Time. If issues arise, contact the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5-7 page essay. Due Sunday at 9 pm Central Time at the end of Lesson 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12-14 page essay. Due Wednesday of Lesson 8 before 9 pm Central Time.</td>
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Students' grades will be based on the successful practices of counterterrorism and intelligence professionals—writings should be based on comprehensive research with appropriate citations, organized in a logical manner, well thought out with arguments incorporating relevant concepts and theories, and sound judgments or conclusions.

Angelo State University employs a letter grade system. Grades in this course are determined on a percentage scale:

A = 90 – 100 %
B = 80 – 89 %
C = 70 – 79 %
D = 60 - 69 %  
F = 59 % and below.

**Student Essay Papers:** Each student will write two essays.

The first essay will be 5-7 pages and will be due at the conclusion of **Lesson 4**. The paper serves as the evaluation of the first three weeks of instruction. Students are to select two or more terrorist organizations from the Department of State's Foreign Terrorist Organization list and conduct a comparative analysis of their history, organization, ideology, recruiting, tactics, and methods and evaluate their effectiveness at achieving their goals. Page count submitted does not include the cover page or reference page.

The second essay will be your final exam for **Lesson 8** and will be due Wednesday of week 8. While the first essay displays students' ability to research and form cogent analysis and conclusions, this 12-14 page essay requires applying course instruction and independent learning to formulate policy prescriptions to address specific concerns and mitigate terrorist organizations and activity. Page count submitted does not include the cover page or reference page.

**Guidance Concerning Paper Structure:**

Essays will cover areas of topical interest to the counterterrorism and intelligence communities and must be organized and written in a professional manner. While the first essay reviews and compares terrorist organizations and is meant to measure and evaluate your research and cognitive abilities, the final exam will reveal your deeper understanding of US policy and organizations and your ability to provide reason and analysis as a top US national security official. Each essay should contain backgrounds, current perspectives, analysis, and conclusions and/or key judgments. Due to the nature of the assignments, individual sections and subheadings may differ. Creativity is encouraged; however, since these are graduate-level papers, professionalism, attention to detail, and cogent organization are mandatory.

**Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

**Course Objectives:**

ISSA 6313 is designed to encourage critical thinking and promote analytical discussions among the students using different sources of material provided in various formats. The study of terrorism, counterterrorism, and US policy is timely, relevant, and integral to students interested in national security and the US Intelligence Community. At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the definition of terrorism and the differences between terrorism and legitimate state-sponsored use of force.
- Describe the nature, objectives, strategies, and structures of terrorism and terrorist organizations.
- Analyze the political, psychological, socioeconomic, and religious motivations behind terrorism.
- Apply course instruction, research, and personal backgrounds and experiences to critically review existing terrorist organizations and conduct comparative analysis against other organizations.
- Understand and critique how the US Government organized and enacted policies to counter terrorist organizations both domestically and with partner nations.
- Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of how the Intelligence Community is organized to support policy makers.
- Review the challenges faced by the US and the inherent tradeoffs between security and freedom.
- Complete a final 12-14 page course paper analyzing the US response to a specific terrorist group from a diplomatic, information, military, and economic (DIME) perspective. Acting as the US President's National Security Advisor, the student will explain a balanced multi-
agency approach to counter and defeat the organization, recognizing the limitations of the domestic and international geo-political and fiscal constraints and realities.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Intelligently describe the root causes of terrorism and recognize the indications which could lead to the development of terrorist organizations.
- Conduct comparative analyses of terrorist organizations to find the strengths, weaknesses, and long-term viability of different groups.
- Understand how the US Government and, specifically, the US Intelligence Community is organized to counter terrorist activity.
- Critically analyze US responses to terrorist organizations and terrorist activity.
- Identify improvements and modifications to US Intelligence Community organizations, policies, and processes.
- Develop research skills to quickly find information on existing and emergent terrorist organizations and US policies and guidelines designed to mitigate domestic and international terrorism.

Course Organization

Lesson 1: Nature of Terrorism

This lesson delves into terrorism and terrorist organizations and reviews the different objectives and methods of terrorist groups. It also incorporates how the United States defines terrorism and categorizes terrorist organizations.

Lesson 2: Political, psychological, socioeconomic, and religious causes of terrorist organizations

Lesson two begins by exploring why terrorist groups form and why they use terrorist attacks to achieve their objectives. The lesson will review if terrorist groups have a broader purpose than to just destroy, intimidate, and create fear. The causes of terrorism can be broken down into precipitant and permissive factors with global, state, and local issues. Students will need to understand there is no one overriding cause of terrorism—even within al-Qaeda there are multiple reasons terrorists participate—but there are several categories most groups fall in to. Finally, lesson two will conclude with a review of what governments can do to prevent terrorist organizations from forming.

Lesson 3: Terrorist organizations: What do they want and what will they do once they get it?

Lesson three examines the specifics of why individual terrorist organizations exist. Although no two terrorist groups will have identical goals and objectives, they often use similar tactics to achieve those goals. Likewise, the way groups are organized, governed, and run are similarly distinct. These factors vary depending on the size, scope, and location of the groups. Like all organizations, terrorist groups frequently reorganize and reprioritize to fit the changing requirements and address external factors. As Jones (2008) stated, all terrorist organizations end, either through attainment of their goals or through government action or other means. This lesson examines those areas and compares those factors against current terrorist organizations.
Lesson 4: The Role of the U.S. Government

Lesson four examines the history of the U.S. government's efforts to counter terrorist activity and terrorist organizations. Following the attacks, the U.S. government's role and efforts expanded exponentially. As the 9/11 attacks recede in the public's memory, the U.S. government may find it increasingly difficult to expend vast resources to counter the threat.

Lesson 5: Countering the terrorist organization: The United States Responds

Lesson five examines the history of the U.S. government's efforts to counter terrorist activity and focuses on the reorganization and reengineering of processes and communication gaps following the 9/11 attacks. Students will obtain a greater appreciation of the challenges involved in predicting and preventing terrorist attacks and the constant tug of war between civil liberties and security that law enforcement and intelligence personnel face every day. The truism of "we have to be right 100% of the time; terrorists only have to be right (or lucky) just once" is still as applicable today as it was on 9/11.

Lesson 6: Forming a Strategy: The United States Evolves

Lesson six expands upon the previous lessons covering terrorism and how the U.S. is postured to counter terrorist activity. This lesson delves into the specific strategies employed and reviews the interaction between and among government and other public and private sector entities. Just as terrorist organizations evolve, the U.S. government's strategy has to remain just as flexible. National security and intelligence experts need to have a full understanding of their roles in this process and be able to provide recommendations to policy makers when appropriate.

Lesson 7: Assessing the US response: The Right Stuff?

Lesson seven allows the student to analyze and assess U.S. government efforts to address and mitigate the terrorism threat. Policies and strategies are not created or implemented in a vacuum. Domestic politics, fiscal realities, judicial decisions, and, perhaps most importantly, terrorist groups' counterstrategies, all impact the likelihood of success or failure. Domestically, pressure from civil liberties groups and the occasional overreach from law enforcement and intelligence agencies constantly shape policy and operations. Internationally, the shifting political alliances and priorities along with budgetary challenges keep cooperation in a constant state of flux.

Lesson 8: Critical Analysis: Counterterrorism strategy proposal

Lesson eight is the culmination of ISSA 6313 and provides the student the opportunity to propose recommendations to current U.S. strategies and policies. Students must understand the motivations and actions of terrorist groups as well as U.S. intelligence and national security architectures. Any recommendations must include the best, worst, and most likely implications of a new strategy.
Communication

Office Hours/Contacting the Instructor

See the Instructor Information section for contact information.

University Policies

Academic Integrity
Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the university Academic Honor Code and the ASU Student Handbook.

Accommodations for Disability
The Student Life Office is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting the Student Life Office at (325) 942-2191 or (325) 942-2126 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at Student.Life@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Student Life Office will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities.

Student absence for religious holidays
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.