BOR 4321
Trends in Terrorism and Counterterrorism

<mark>**WARNING! * * * * WARNING! * * * * WARNING!**</mark>

This course uses **GRAPHIC** Materials to teach about terrorism and counter terrorism. If videos and photos of the death and destruction terrorists and counter terrorism activities wreck on individuals and communities is offensive to you - please take another class. If the continual parade of Islamic Fundamentalist terrorist attacks (predominant in the world today) is offensive to your religious beliefs - then take another class. We will not "white wash" or "desensitize" the materials in this class to accommodate a single individual. The real world has become a mean and brutish environment along the lines described by Thomas Hobbs. You will be exposed to that world in this course.

Course Overview

Terrorism has reached the global village and it has become necessary to look back as importantly as it is to look forward in order to learn how best to anticipate and prepare for future threats facing the U.S., its citizens, and its allies. More than a decade after the 9/11 attacks on America, numerous governmental agencies throughout the world, alongside security professionals, experts from non-governmental organizations, and research institutions have engaged in collaborative research. Aggregated data and information from historical, international events combined with new intelligence now better informs U.S. counter terrorism decisions and continues the process of delineating enhanced homeland security policies for the future. According to the Heritage Foundation, "the onus is now on the President and Congress to ensure that the U.S. continues to hone and sharpen its counter terrorism capabilities and adapt them to evolving 21st-century threats" (Muhlhausen & McNeill, 2011, Abstract, p. 1).

This course sets its focus on informing the student on the local, national, and global threats and trends in terrorism and counter terrorism.

The information gathered from intelligence and governmental sources indicates that the full-scale campaign against al-Qaeda and its affiliates and support structures after 9/11 is working. The international community and its military and law enforcement efforts have been effective in stopping the extremist attacks, dismantling terrorist groups, and disrupting the financial and funding networks. "A total of 136 countries offered a range of military assistance to the U.S., including overflight and landing rights and accommodations for U.S. forces" in the aftermath of 9/11 (*Terrorism and National Security: Issues and Trends*, 2003, CRS-2). As a result, the U.S. continues its intelligence-sharing and law enforcement cooperation with other nations to destroy terrorist cells. Now, "an encouraging sign in the anti-terrorism struggle has been the evident willingness of certain states to distance themselves from extremist groups that they had supported in the past or from international terrorism generally" (CRS-2).

Unfortunately it seems that as the efforts against Al Qaeda are working, a new set of terrorists, more extreme than Al Qaeda, are in the forefront of worldwide terrorism. This is neither unexpected nor new. As one group is defeated, or their political aims change, or they move from terrorism to participants in the political society, new groups arise to take their place. This continuing change in terrorism across the world is what we will examine in this course. The efforts of counter terrorism to adapt to a changing target and the problems the counter terrorism community faces are also examined.

Course Bibliography and Required Readings:

Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues, **5th Edition**

Author: Gus Martin

Publisher: Sage Publications, Inc.

Year: 2016

ISBN: 978-1-4833-7898-5

Unless otherwise specified in a specific lesson or module, all reading assignments refer to the chapters and pages of this textbook and assigned, published articles. Other readings or media may be assigned by the instructor as part of the course completion. Additional and optional readings will serve to address interests developed by the student for his/her academic advancement.

Time Spent On This Course

Students should expect to dedicate four (4) to six (6) hours each week to readings and videos associated with this course. They should expect to dedicate an additional two (2) to three (3) hours contributing to the discussion board each week.

Course Objectives

Objective One: To develop a familiarization with definitions, terms and concepts related to terrorism and counter terrorism

Objective Two: To reinforce existing understanding about the causes and consequences of terrorism and the various nefarious factions throughout the world that pose threats to the U.S. and civilized societies

Objective Three: To critically appraise emerging terrorist environments, the terrorist landscape, and methods and strategies to mitigate terrorism

Objective Four: To demonstrate in your writing a thorough understanding of the terrorist trade, tools and tactics, the information battleground, and opposing forces

Objective Five: To assess the value and offer critiques of current U.S. counterterrorism strategies

Learning Outcomes

Students have a right to know what their professors expect from them in terms of their course instruction and how their learning will be evaluated. This course establishes several learning outcomes that are measured objectively and subjectively. Upon completion of the course, each student should successfully complete the following:

1. Effectively integrate the terminology used within the study of terrorism and counter terrorism to your writing products
2. Formulate an outline of the complexity, scope, and extent to which terrorism is a problem for democratic counties as well as non-democratic countries across the globe
3. Critically evaluate current counter-terrorism efforts
4. Define the landscape and terrorist environment that can contribute to and attempt to control terrorist attacks and acts of aggression
5. Anticipate the terrorist trends that will shape the future homeland and national security efforts for the U.S., its citizens, and its allies

Method of Assessing the Outcomes

Student learning outcomes will be assessed through their participation in the discussion board.

Discussion board posts are considered to be writing assignments and are expected to demonstrate effective communications skills through the use of proper grammar, syntax, format, and sentence structure. Discussion posts that employ "text messaging" as a writing type will see a significant deduction in their associated grade. Students are

expected to employ proper use of the English language in all posts to the discussion board. Failure to effectively communicate ideas and critical thinking, failure to demonstrate completion of reading assignments through proper employment of citations and associated references, failure to meet the minimum standards for developing and sustaining "discussions" with other students will all result in a reduced grade for the discussion assignment.

A major competency identified by Homeland Security professionals is the ability to produce technical reports and briefings, to communicate coherently a wide variety of thoughts to a diverse audience that may not be as knowledgeable of a subject as the person conducting the briefing or writing the report. To address this concern, throughout the Border Security and Criminal Justice programs students are assigned writing projects of various lengths and complexities. Effective writing and critical thinking skills are necessary for a graduating student to succeed in the workplace and future employment.

Grades

Your grade for this course will be based on the following:

Each weekly discussion thread will be graded on a 25 point scale.

Please note that this course is writing intensive. Unlike other courses the discussions in this course are expected to be significant and thorough - to the point that the initial posts will be considerably longer and more involved than students are used to. As this is an eight-week course, there is no time available to "re-do" work. If you get a poor grade on a discussion, take heed of the comments posted in the grade center and improve on the next discussion.

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.

Assignment Rubrics

Normally we would use standardized grading rubrics to measure the quality of your work. Your work in this course will be graded based on the fundamental components specified in the Discussion Rubric. However, the rubric itself is insufficient as a stand alone measure for the intensity of this course. Therefore, additional measures are going to be employed to determine the "quality" of your participation.

[Discussion Rubric](#)

Additional measures of adequate performance:

- Your initial post to a discussion thread must meet or exceed the specific requirements of that particular lesson assignment. If it says a minimum of 750 words, that means what it says - the CONTENT of your post, exclusive of references or citations, must meet or exceed that amount of work.
- The minimum standard for interaction with others is to respond critically to at least two (2) other student posts. You can't do this if you don't actually read and critically evaluate the other student discussion posts. Additionally, this is a MINIMUM standard and will only garner you a minimum grade (60-65) on the assignment.
- The term "discussion" implies that a conversation is taking place between two or more people. If another student posts to your initial thread, the least you can do out of courtesy is to reply to that student's comments. If you post to another student's thread, you should follow up later in the week to see if you have been replied to - in which case you should respond where appropriate. This develops a discussion in depth that indicates a conversation is ongoing over the topics presented for that week.
- If you develop a discussion with others then you should have no less than five (5) discussion posts each week.

More if the conversation is interesting and interactive.

- When responding to somebody else's post you should always address them directly by name. This is a matter of courtesy in an online format.
- When responding to somebody that has commented on your initial thread you should say something along the lines of, "Thank you John for reading my post." This allows me to readily recognize your response as being to someone that posted on your thread when it comes to grading.
- If I post to your thread - and I will almost every week - then it is simply courtesy to reply to me, even if I didn't ask you to clarify or expound on a point in your post.

Communication

Participation

In this class *everyone*, brings something to the table. Your ideas and thoughts do count, not only to me, but the entire class. Feel free to ask questions either via e-mail or the discussion board. **Check the discussion board regularly.** Many student questions are applicable to the class as a whole, as are the responses. You may be surprised how many of your classmates have the same questions and concerns as you. I may simply post your particular question on the discussion board and allow your classmates to provide the answer through their own posts.

Also, by posting a response early in the week, there is ample opportunity for fellow students to post a reply. Otherwise, late posts do not contribute much to student dialog and there is little time for robust discussion. Late posts usually do not receive much student reply.

To some students, this course may be a first online class, and naturally, it could seem somewhat intimidating. As a class, we are together to help each other with this learning process and share our collective knowledge on how best to communicate; how to resolve technical issues that may arise (if we have the expertise), and to assist each other to find answers to our questions.

We will learn and work as a team.

Courtesy and Respect

Courtesy and Respect are essential ingredients to this course. We respect each other's opinions and respect their point of view at all times while in our class sessions. The use of profanity & harassment of any form is strictly prohibited (zero tolerance), as are those remarks concerning one's ethnicity, life style, race (ethnicity), religion, etc., violations of these rules will result in immediate dismissal from the course.

Office Hours/Contacting the Instructor

See the Instructor Information section for contact information.

Course Organization:

Lesson 1:   Introduction to the current state of terrorism in the world; an evaluation of what brought the world to this point.

Lessons 2-7: This course addresses current trends in a highly volatile subject. As such, changing conditions in the world will necessarily drive the course content and discussions. Pre-scripting such an effort is impossible as neither terrorists nor governments are willing to stick to a professors pre-planned concepts of what is to be discussed each week.

Lesson 8:   Conclusion: The Most Current Future Trends in terrorism and counter terrorism.

University Policies

Course Drop Day

Schedule Changes

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

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

Student Affairs 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 emailing studentservices@angelo.edu, or by contacting:

Office of Student Affairs
University Center, Suite 112
325-942-2047 Office
325-942-2211 FAX

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.