



**Texas A&M**  
UNIVERSITY  
Central Texas

HLS 5320  
*Religious Terrorism*  
Spring 2021

Class Location: Online  
Class Hours: Tuesdays, 6:00-8:45 pm  
Instructor: Floyd Berry, PhD  
Office: HH 204 S (not used during pandemic)  
Office Hours: MTR 2:00-6:00 (please make an appointment)  
Email: (prefer Canvas message) [fberry@tamuct.edu](mailto:fberry@tamuct.edu)  
NOTE: If contacting instructor *outside* of Canvas, students must use their official TAMUCT emails.

### 1.0 Course Description

Examines the religious motivations, support, and tactics behind the phenomena of domestic and foreign terrorism. Analyzes case studies of specific terrorist organizations, justifications for violence, and terrorist targets.

### 2.0 Accessing Canvas

This is an online course that meets for roughly three hours, one day per week. The student accesses Canvas at <https://tamuct.onecampus.com/> or on the TAMUCT website ("MY CT") at <https://www.tamuct.edu>.

### 3.0 Course Objectives

1. Students will be able to discuss the characteristics of religious terrorism.
2. Students will be able to critique the religious motivations for terrorism.
3. Students will be able to define terrorism as a distinct form of violence.
4. Students will be able to describe the organizational and resource prerequisites for terroristic campaigns.
5. Students will meaningfully participate in class discussions over required reading material.
6. Students will gain an appreciation for the study of terrorism, based on readings, commentaries, and class discussions.
7. Students will submit acceptable essays for mid-term and final exams. To be accepted, the student shall discuss all aspects of an essay question, using standard English prose and grammatical construction.
8. Students will provide summaries for a number of peer-reviewed articles.

### 4.0 Textbook

#### 4.1 Required for Course

Juergensmeyer, M. (2017). *Terror in the mind of God: The global rise of religious violence* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Oakland, CA: California.

#### 4.2 List of Unrequired Reading

- Bunton, M. (2013). *The Palestinian-Israeli conflict: A very short introduction*. Oxford.
- Esposito, J. (2002). *Unholy war: Terror in the name of Islam*. Oxford.
- Hashmi, S. H. (Ed.). (2012). *Just wars, holy wars, & jihads: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim encounters and exchanges*. Oxford.
- Hesterman, J. L. (2013). *The terrorist-criminal nexus: An alliance of international drug cartels, organized crime, and terror groups*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- Kumar, U., & Mandal, M. K. (Eds.). (2014). *Understanding suicide terrorism: Psychosocial dynamics*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Lewis, B. (2003). *The crisis of Islam: Holy war and unholy terror*. New York: Random House.
- Martin, G. (2018). *Understanding terrorism: Challenges, perspectives, and issues*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Medina, R. M., & Hepner, G. F. (2013). *The geography of international terrorism: An introduction to spaces and places of violent non-state groups*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- Ross, S. (2010). *The Israeli-Palestinian conflict* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Teach Yourself.

### 5.0 **Course Requirements**

#### 5.1 Exams (400 pts)

The student will take two exams, a mid-term and a final. The exams are “take-home” exams in that the student has a week to answer the questions that are presented. Students type on a Microsoft Word document and submits the exam by attaching it to an email (message in Canvas), sent to the instructor. Each exam is valued at 200 points. Students are encouraged to review their work before submission. The mid-term exam will receive comments from the instructor and will be returned to the student. The following rubric will guide the instructor:

Qualities & Criteria	Poor	Good	Excellent
<b>Content</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elements of topics to be addressed</li> <li>• Information is correct</li> <li>• Coherency</li> </ul> <p>(Weight: 70%) Continued</p>	<p>Not objective and poorly addresses the issues. Information is unnecessary or insufficient to discuss the issues.</p> <p>(0-109 pts)</p>	<p>Mostly objective and addresses most of the issues. Information is mostly necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues.</p> <p>(110-131 pts)</p>	<p>Objective and addresses all the issues. Information is necessary and sufficient to discuss the issues.</p> <p>(132-140 pts)</p>

<b>Quality of Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity</li> <li>• Grammar and English usage</li> <li>• Organization and coherence</li> </ul>	Poorly written and contains flagrant spelling and grammatical errors. Poorly organized, lacks clarity, and is incoherent.	Mostly well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways.	Well-written, without egregious spelling or grammatical errors. Well organized, clear, and ideas are presented in coherent ways.
	(0-40 pts)	(41-55 pts)	(56-60 pts)
(Weight: 30%)			

A week before each exam, the instructor will provide students with two exam questions. This practice provides the student with a week's worth of preparation.

**NOTE:** Graduate students are expected to have adequate knowledge of the essentials of grammar, writing style, and essay organization in accordance with writing manuals. If the student does *not* have adequate knowledge in these areas, then the purchase and use of additional books are highly recommended. The University Writing Center is also available to students. Failure to provide written work in accordance with the essentials of acceptable, English writing style will result in poor grades. Examples of non-standard English usage include, among other things, sentence fragments, run-ons, dangling modifiers, lack of agreement between pronouns and their antecedents or subjects and verbs, bulleted items, slashes, flagrant misuse of punctuation, slang or abbreviated expressions, "etc." or "*et cetera*," and excessive use of metaphorical language. In Modules, there is a Power Point on "Typical Problems with Essay Exams." Students should review this Power Point.

## 5.2 Class Participation (300 pts)

Students are expected to participate in class discussions, indicating an understanding of the reading material and how to apply it. Students are to read assigned material before class. Students earn a point for each of two questions that are posted by the instructor. Thus, the student earns 0-2 points on each class day (total of 14 days), which correspond to the following grade:

Points	Grade	Points	Grade	Points	Grade
28	300	19	201	10	102
27	289	18	190	9	91
26	278	17	179	8	80
25	267	16	168	7	69
24	256	15	157	6	58
23	245	14	146	5	47
22	234	13	135	4	36
21	223	12	124	3	25
20	212	11	113	1-2	13

**NOTE: The graduate student is allowed one absence without major deduction of points (based on Class Participation rubric). A second absence, however, results in a lowering of final course grade (e.g., A becomes B, B becomes C).**

### 5.3 Academic Integrity Document

During the first week of class, the student is to read the section in the syllabus on Academic Integrity (§ 8.0) and the link provided in that section regarding plagiarism. The student must sign the document (also in Canvas, under Modules) pertaining to Academic Integrity and send emails to the instructor that they understand Academic Integrity. **NOTE: Students will not be allowed to continue in the course without notifying the instructor of their comprehension of this material.** Examples of academic dishonesty in this course might be having someone do the student's work or plagiarizing from internet sites.

### 5.4 Article Summaries (300 pts)

Students will read eight assigned articles in the Course Calendar and provide a one-page summary of their content (no cover sheet). Each summary will have a header with the student's name. The summary will be double-spaced, with some paragraphs. Each summary is submitted by attaching it to an email on Canvas, due by 6:00 p.m. (The due date for each summary is indicated in the Course Calendar.) Points are awarded for the number of article summaries submitted, as follows:

# of Articles	Grade
8	300
7	258
6	215
5	225
4	173
3	130
2	88
1	45
0	0

**Students must submit summaries that are well-written, in accordance with graduate-level standing. Poorly written summaries will receive no credit.**

## 6.0 Grading Matrix and Conversion

### 6.1 Matrix

	Points
Exams (2 @ 200)	400
Class Participation	300
Article Summaries	300
Academic Integrity Acknowledgement	-----
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1000</b>

### 6.2 Conversion to Course Letter Grade

Points	%	Grade
900 – 1000	90 – 100	A
800 – 899	80 – 89	B
700 – 799	70 – 79	C
600 – 699	60 – 69	D
0 – 599	0 – 59	F

## 7.0 Course Calendar<sup>1</sup>

Date	Topic	Readings <sup>2</sup>	Assignments Due
1/19/21	Syllabus Academic Integrity	Syllabus Academic Integrity/ plagiarism readings (§ 8.0 of syllabus)	
1/26/21	Introduction to Religious Terrorism	Ch 1  <b>Article 1:</b> Geertz, C. “Religion as a cultural system.” In Modules, Geertz 1993. Or <a href="http://nideffer.net/classes/GCT_RPI_S14/readings/Geertz_Religion_as_a_Cultural_System.pdf">http://nideffer.net/classes/GCT_RPI_S14/readings/Geertz_Religion as a Cultural System .pdf</a>	Academic Integrity document due at 6 pm (hard copy)  <b>Article 1 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
2/2/21	Christian Terrorism	Ch 2  <b>Article 2:</b> Ariarajah, S. W. “Religion and violence: A Protestant Christian perspective.” In Modules, Ariarajah 2002. Or <a href="https://sedosmission.org/old/eng/wesley.htm">https://sedosmission.org/old/eng/wesley.htm</a>	<b>Article 2 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
2/9/21	Jewish Terrorism	Ch 3  <b>Article 3:</b> Friedman, R. I. “The right’s greater Israel: No land, no peace for Palestinians.” (On Canvas, under Modules, read Friedman 1988.)	<b>Article 3 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
2/16/21	Islamic Terrorism	Ch 4, pp 68-87	
Cont.			

2/23/21	Islamic, cont.	Ch 4, pp 88-102 <b>Article 4:</b> Ioana, I., & Cracsner, E. "The terror of suicide." (On Canvas, under Modules, read Ioana 2017.)	<b>Article 4 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
3/2/21	Sikh Terrorism	Ch 5 <b>Article 5:</b> Singh, P. "Deconstructing the Punjab crisis of 1984: Deer, hawks, and siqdārs ('officials') as agents of state-sponsored violence." (On Canvas, under Modules, read Singh 2016.)	<b>Article 5 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
3/9/21	Buddhist Terrorism	Ch 6 Recommended, not required: Coclans 2013	
3/16/21	Spring Break		
<b>3/23/21</b>	<b>Mid-term Exam</b>		
3/30/21	Performance Violence	Ch 7 <b>Article 6:</b> "Endgame? Sports events as symbolic targets in lone wolf terrorism." (On Canvas, under Modules, read Spaaij 2015.)	<b>Article 6 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
4/6/21	Cosmic War	Ch 8 <b>Article 7:</b> "Martyrdom and sacrifice in a time of terror." (On Canvas, under Modules, read Juergensmeyer 2008.)	<b>Article 7 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
4/13/21	Demonizing others	Ch 9 <b>Article 8:</b> "'Us and 'them': The politics of American self-assertion after 9/11." (On Canvas, under Modules, read Norris 2004.)	<b>Article 8 Summary</b> due at 6 pm
4/20/21	Terrorism and Power	Ch 10	
4/27/21	Responses to Terrorism	Ch 11	
5/4/21	Good v bad Muslims	Reading: Mamdani, M. (2002). Good Muslim, bad Muslim: A political perspective on culture and terrorism. <i>American Anthropologist</i> , 104(3), 766-775. (On Canvas, under Modules, read Mamdani 2002.)	
<b>5/11/21</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>		

<sup>1</sup> Events are subject to minor revision (see § 15.0)

<sup>2</sup> **Ch** = chapter from textbook, **pp** = pages

## 8.0 Academic Integrity

TAMUCT expects all students to maintain high standards of personal and scholarly conduct. Students guilty of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, self-plagiarism ("recycling"), or collusion. The instructor shall initiate action for each case of academic dishonesty and report it to the Associate Director of Student Conduct. Zero points will be assigned for any course product that violates academic honesty. The student should access this link for more information:

<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html>.

### **9.0 Disability Support**

If students believe that this course may present barriers to learning due to a disability, they must contact Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831 in Warrior Hall, Ste. 212. For more information, students may visit their website at <https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>. Any information that the student provides is private and confidential and will be treated as such. The instructor cannot accommodate students' disabilities unless they first communicate with Access and Inclusion. The director of Access and Inclusion is Donald Norman.

### **10.0 Diversity in the Classroom**

Respect for cultural and human biological diversity are core concepts within the social sciences. In this course, each voice in the classroom has value in contributing to class discussion. The student should respect the different experiences, beliefs, and values expressed by one's fellow students and instructor, and refrain from derogatory comments about other individuals, cultures, groups, or viewpoints. In this course we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, disabilities, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, geographical locations, languages, military experiences, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences.

### **11.0 Classroom Etiquette**

Students shall show respect to other students and to the instructor in all communications, whether verbal or in writing (e.g., online). For example, making rude or threatening remarks or gestures, arguing, complaining, and challenging that is not based on readings, rationality, and the course objectives are all violations of classroom etiquette. Regarding odors, please refrain from bringing smelly foods into the classroom, and please engage in personal hygiene practices. Certain strong odors may be perceived as offensive and may distract other students from their learning experiences.

### **12.0 Writing Center**

The University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students. The UWC is located in Warrior Hall, Rm 416. One may contact Dr. Bruce Bowles at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu) for more information.

### **13.0 Late Work**

As a rule, make-up work for exams is not offered. *The mid-term exam may be made up with instructor approval; however, in no instance will that make-up be given later than two weeks from the original exam date. To be considered as a prospect for making up the mid-term exam, the student must contact the instructor within 24 hours of having missed the exam for purposes of making it up.* The final course grade will be posted within a few days of the final exam; therefore, *no incompletes will be awarded for this*

*course*. If students foresee that they will be unable to complete the course, then they should either drop the course or accept the posted grade.

#### **14.0 Student's Expectation of Grades**

If students foresee that their scores in class participation, article summaries, or exams are unacceptable, they may wish to drop the course. Absences for any reasons, including medical, cannot be used to exempt one from the requirements of the course. For example, students may inform the instructor that they will not or did not attend class(es) for some reason. While the instructor appreciates the information about absences, students should not expect that they will be afforded leniency or a recalculation of grades based on this information. All students in a class must be treated fairly and equally. If students foresee that they will be unable to earn the grade they desire, then they should either drop the course or accept the posted grade.

#### **15.0 Modification of the Syllabus**

This syllabus may be revised in minor ways at the discretion of the instructor. The student is responsible for noting any changes in the syllabus. More than likely, a change in the syllabus will pertain to typos or events in the course calendar (§ 7.0). If modified, a revised course calendar will be posted on Canvas and will replace § 7.0 of the syllabus.

#### **16.0 Contact with the Instructor**

The student should contact the instructor via the message feature of Canvas about any topic or issue that pertains to the course. If students contact the instructor through the instructor's official TAMUCT email, they must use their own official TAMUCT email. Many personal emails find their way to the junk folder by default.

#### **17.0 Announcements**

The student is responsible for checking Canvas for ongoing announcements or messages pertaining to the course. For example, if a class is cancelled due to inclement weather, students would benefit from checking messages about the class cancellation and thus be able to alter their travel schedules.