In this class, we will explore different facets of transnational terrorism. We begin by asking ourselves: “What is terrorism?” and “Who is a terrorist?” The answers to these questions underline the rest of the class, as we try to understand some of the motivations, sources and responses to terrorism. While the course will focus on Islamist militancy, we also situate this form of violence historically and globally. Case studies are used throughout the course to illuminate our understanding of the subject. We will also watch some films, which highlight some of the moral and strategic dilemmas of dealing with terrorism. A critical approach and active discussion is encouraged throughout the class. The course has significant reading and writing components. **Students are expected to be familiar with international relations theories and the study of comparative politics.**

**Course Materials**
The following books are required for the course:


The following books are *recommended*.

All films mentioned in the syllabus are required viewing. Unless otherwise noted, they are available on reserve at the library.

Basic course requirements
Since this is the senior seminar for political science majors, students are required to show a sophisticated engagement with the readings. The course will include some formal lectures. For the most part, however, students will lead and structure the discussions. You are expected to do a considerable amount of reading and writing. Active and engaged participation is a requirement of the course.

Note that failure to keep with current events will make it significantly more difficult for you to meet the requirements of the course.

Additional reading assignments are either available online or at library reserve. Please note that you are expected to be familiar with the use of online library resources available at Wilson Library. If you are unfamiliar with the use of these resources, please see a librarian immediately.

Your final grade in this course will be based on:

- 30% Reaction papers
- 30% Final Paper
- 20% Class presentation
- 20% Class participation

Course Requirements

Reaction papers
You will be asked to submit written reaction papers for two of the class sessions. The paper should provide a brief summary of readings. The bulk of the paper should provide analyses and criticisms of the readings and include references to class discussions. You should conclude with your own reaction and opinion. Your position must be argued with reference to the readings and class discussion. You are required to refer to a minimum of two of the assigned readings. Approaches include: identify and respond to a central theme in the reading; review a controversy that emerges among the authors of the week or consider how the arguments of a given author or authors differ with or support conclusions drawn by previous readings; consider the implications of the week’s readings for various historical (or current) cases, etc. Bonus points will be awarded if you draw from external readings that are not on the assigned list. These papers should be 4-6 pages long (Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced). Due dates for each reaction paper are marked in the syllabus. All papers must be submitted in hard copy by the due date, in class. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances. A guide to writing paper is posted on Blackboard.
Final Paper
As your final project, you will write a comprehensive overview of a specific terrorist or insurgent organization. Your paper should discuss the group’s ideology, goals, tactics, membership and the state’s response to it. Where relevant, you should also discuss the international community’s treatment of the organization. Relevant theories (for example, realism versus liberalism) must be applied to your discussion. A comprehensive bibliography should accompany the paper. The length of the paper should be 7-9 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman (12 point font). In addition to the written paper, you must give a presentation (5-10 minutes) on your findings.

You should choose your group from the list posted on Blackboard. No duplicates are permitted. Assignments will be made on a first come, first serve basis.

The time line for the paper is as follows:

April 22: Topic choice due by noon (email)
May 6-June 3: In-class presentations
June 5: Final paper due.

If you fail to choose your topic by 4/22, I will assign you a group of my choice and deduct points from your final grade. The final paper must be submitted in hard copy and email format by the due date and time. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

Class participation
Your class participation will be based on active engagement with the discussions. For the topics under discussion, you are required to have a set of two to four analytical questions about the arguments, concepts, themes and issues raised by the readings. These questions should be critical and thought-provoking. In other words, ask how and why questions. Raise questions about the arguments, the nature of the evidence, possible bias and implications for public policy. Compare the conclusions, evidence or concepts of one author with that of another. You must post these questions on Blackboard by 2PM on the day of class. Be prepared to ask and discuss your questions in class. The questions posed by the students will be the basis of class discussion. You must submit responses to at least three of the total topics (note that some topics are discussed over two sessions). You will lose participation points for additional misses.

I will call upon students to discuss their questions in class. You should be prepared to address your points in class. Lack of preparation will affect your discussion grade.

Class Presentation
Each class will be led by a team of two students. For your chosen session, you will be responsible for making a presentation that summarizes the main points of the assigned readings. Use the guide given at the end of the syllabus to structure your presentation. You
do not have to address each point given in the guide; but try to touch upon as many as possible. You should also submit to the class a set of two-three issues to start the class discussion. The issues can be critiques (highlight points in the article you disagree with) or commentaries (for e.g., do these authors make points that are applicable to the current situation in Iraq?). Try to be creative. For example, you could link the readings to an assigned film or to something you read recently on the news. If you like, you can also assign an in-class assignment (for example, small group discussions).
Submit a hard copy your presentation to me at the end of the class, including your main discussion points and questions. This should not be longer than 2 pages and can be in bullet-point format.
After your presentation, you should submit a peer grade for your partner by e-mail. This grade will be kept confidential.
Once you sign up for a class presentation, you cannot change the date. You must present on your chosen day. Failure to do so will result in a ‘0’ for this component of the class.

Discussion
In-class discussion will be encouraged throughout the class. You are required to do your reading assignments before each class session. You are also expected to be aware of current world events. Possible news sources include (but are not limited to) www.washingtonpost.com, www.nytimes.com, www.bbc.com. Good journals to consult on an ongoing basis are Foreign Policy and Foreign Affairs.
Students are expected to respect the opinions of other students and to engage in discussion and debates in a sensitive and respectful manner
The MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base and the Global Terrorism Database are good sources of information.

Netiquette
E-mail correspondence with the instructor should follow basic etiquette, as you would use in business communication, such as applying for a job. Make sure you include a subject in the subject line. Please write your emails using appropriate grammar, spelling and tone. I will not reply to correspondence that neglects to follow these guidelines.

Additional points:
Students are responsible for following the academic honesty guidelines provided in the WWU Academic Dishonesty Policy and Procedure. The penalty for academic dishonesty can and will include a failure in the course.
Students with disabilities should inform the instructor of their needs at the beginning of the semester.
Course schedule

Session 1: April 1, 2008
Introduction

- General introduction.
- Discuss syllabus
- What is terrorism? How is it different from other forms of political violence?
- In-class viewing: Paradise Now

Session 2*: April 8, 2008
The Data: What are we Worried About?

- Peace and Conflict 2008, chapters 3, 6, 7
- Global Terrorism Database: A Demonstration and Assignment
- Reaction paper due date: April 15

Session 3*: April 15, 2008
History of Terrorism: What is Terrorism? What are its Origins? What’s New?

- BH, Chapters 1-3, 6-7
- Viewing assignment: The Battle of Algiers
- Reaction paper due date: April 22

Sessions 4 & 5*: April 22 & 29, 2008
The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism

April 22
- BH, Chapter 4-5, 8
- MB, Chapters 1, 3, 4

April 29
• Viewing Assignment: The War Within
• Reaction paper due date: May 6
• Final paper choices due by email on April 22

Session 6*: May 6, 2008
The Palestine Predicament
• “The Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas),” http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/mideast/hamas.htm
• Reaction paper due date: May 13
• In-class presentations

Session 7*: May 13, 2008
(Why) do They Hate Us? Part I
• Mamdani, Mahmood. 2002. “Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism”. American Anthrolopologist 104(3): 766-786.
• GK, Introduction, Chapters 1-3
• Assigned viewing : Control Room
• In-class presentations
• Reaction paper due date: May 20

Session 8*: May 20, 2008 [Two part session]
(Why) do They Hate Us? II
• Wedeen, Lisa. 2003. “Beyond the Crusades: Why Huntington, and Bin Ladin, are Wrong”. Middle East Policy 10 (Summer).
• GK, Chapters 4-5
• Reaction paper due date: May 27 [email]

The Global Jihad: The Near Enemy vs. The Far Enemy
• FG, Chapters 1-3
• Reaction paper due date: June 3
• In class presentations

May 27, 2008
No class
Final paper preparation

Session 9: June 3, 2008
The Global Jihad: The Near Enemy vs. The Far Enemy
• FG, Chapters 4-6
• GK, Chapter 7
• In class presentations
• No reaction paper for this session

All final papers are due, in hard copy and e-mail, by 4PM on Thursday, June 5. Late papers will not be accepted under any circumstances whatsoever.

How to Read a Book or Article (Adapted from http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/howtoread.html).

This website also has other useful tips:

http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/handoutlinks.html

The following are questions to ask of each work you read. They can be summarized as follows:

A. What is the core argument? What is happening? Why?
B. How persuasive is the argument(s)? Is it presented with convincing evidence?
C. Who cares?

1. What is/are the argument(s)?
   a. What is the puzzle? What is the argument?
   b. Is there a causal argument? Is something (independent variable) causing something else (dependent variable)?

2. How logically valid are the arguments?
   a. Are the hypotheses/arguments clear?
   b. Do the hypotheses/arguments build on one another? Or does the author make illogical leaps, based on biases or shoddy methodology?
3. **Are the arguments empirically well supported?**
   a. Does the author provide clear evidence? What kinds of evidence are used?
   b. Are there any alternative explanations for the phenomena being explained?
   c. Does the author argue against her/himself? Does s/he contend with the alternative explanations?
   d. What would it take to falsify or weaken the argument?
      i. New or missing evidence?
      ii. New or missing variables or arguments?
      iii. What research should be done that might strengthen (or weaken) the findings?

4. **Style**
   a. Is the writing clear?
      i. Should this article or book serve as a role model for others?

5. **What are the author’s possible biases?**
   a. Are the biases evident in the argument or in the use of evidence?

6. **What is the author’s purpose?**
   a. Again, what is the puzzle or question?
   b. Who are the targets? Who or what is the author arguing for or against?

7. **How useful are the argument(s) and overall project?**
   a. Are they new? Creative?
   b. Are they important or trivial?
   c. Will anyone care about this work in 5, 10, or 50 years? Why?
   d. Would you assign this article or book when teaching? Why or why not?