Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction
Proliferation

Class Location: DEA 208
Time: MW 14:00-15:20

Course Description: This course examines the combined threat of terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction. This threat is considered to be perhaps the most serious national security threat today, yet it has proved very difficult to address satisfactorily. This course discusses specifically the “new terrorism” which is religiously motivated terrorism combined with the possibility that these terrorists could use weapons of mass destruction. How big is this threat? Is this threat “overblown”? Is this threat existential, extreme, exaggerated or what?

First, we discuss: what is terrorism? Can a “war on terror” ever be won? Then we discuss and debate the evolving threat from al Qaeda. Is al Qaeda on a “path to defeat” or has it morphed, and is it resurging? How big is the threat from ISIL (also known as IS -- the “Islamic State” or ISIS)? Should we fight ISIL with U.S. “boots on the ground”?

This course also provides a basic understanding of the various threats from weapons of mass destruction: chemical, biological and nuclear weapons. Are WMD spreading? How much should we fear the “democratization of violence”?

We examine theories about proliferation. In particular, how much should the world fear the proliferation of nuclear weapons and how should the U.S. react? What is the actual threat from states like North Korea and Iran--what should be done about their nuclear pursuits? We evaluate different strategies to combat proliferation: preemption, denial, diplomacy, deterrence, and defense. We study the history of arms control efforts. What agreements and treaties have been made and how effective have they been? We consider the fact that the possible threat of “loose nukes” (especially from the former Soviet arsenal or from A.Q. Kahn’s research laboratories) may be changing the nonproliferation problem—what can be done? Trade-offs between strategies for nonproliferation and combating terrorism are analyzed, especially strategies such as drones, or not
overreacting, or promoting development and democracy, or engaging in the “war of ideas,” and/or creating norms to promote nonproliferation are all examined.

Course requirements:
1.) Students must attend class and read assigned materials in advance of class. Readings complement lectures and films, and attending class will be essential for doing well on the two exams and for writing the paper. Reading before class will help you understand the lecture. Attendance will be taken by the use of required I-clickers, and participation will be graded by in-class quiz questions answered with I-clickers. There will be in-class debates, with all in-class activities and participation worth 25% of your final grade. You can miss three classes without penalty, but the more you attend, the better.
2.) Take two exams: midterm worth 20% and the final worth 30% of your final grade.
3.) Complete one 5-7 page ANALYTICAL RESEARCH paper, worth 25% of your grade, also the basis for your debate position. You will be required to turn in an outline for this paper in week 6 (2/11)—failure to do so will result in the subtraction of 5% of your grade on this paper.
4.) Overall—attendance, debating and “over-the-top” research will be fully factored into your grade.

Due dates:
1.) Midterm exam: Wednesday, Feb. 4
2.) Paper outline due: Wednesday, Feb 11
3.) Paper due Wednesday, Feb 25.
4.) In-class debates: Week 8, 9 & 10 (2/25-3/11)
5.) Final exam: Thursday, March 19 at 14:45 (2:45) in the classroom.

Required Reading:
1.) Article links or instructions on Blackboard, especially articles from the journal Arms Control Today, available on-line at: www.armscontrol.org/act/


3.) The New York Times (and/or the BBC.) This course will often address current events. You are required to read The New York Times regularly because this is the paper in the U.S. to read if you are a student of international politics.

4.) Numerous additional (usually short) current readings will be assigned regularly—you will be notified by e-mail and you should check the blackboard site regularly. Collect and read handouts from class.
Course Web Site: There is a Blackboard web site for this course. Be sure you receive my frequent e-mails from Blackboard sent to your uoregon email account. All e-mails will also be posted as announcements.

Learning Outcomes and Critical Skills: This class will provide students with an advanced understanding of numerous aspects of the democratic process of making U.S. foreign policy in the area of national security. Specifically, students will understand the disputed definition of terrorism; delineate the overall history of al Qaeda, and differentiate the competing views on the strength and threat from al Qaeda today, and other terrorist threats. Delineate the history of nuclear weapons and arms control efforts to curb proliferation of nuclear weapons. Apply leading theories of nonproliferation to this history. Differentiate competing strategies to handle the combined threats of terrorism, nuclear weapons and rogue states with nuclear weapons. Therefore it investigates major aspects of the causes of international conflict and cooperation in security, especially the issues of terrorism and nuclear weapons arms racing and cooperation. This course will help students develop the critical skills of identifying, describing and defining basic factual information and analytical concepts of the U.S. political system, especially as it interacts in U.S. foreign policy of national security. Students will also learn to analyze national security issues and phenomena using political science concepts, theories and methods. Students will learn to use arguments and evidence effectively to communicate original analysis of political phenomena, and demonstrate critical thinking, reading, writing and debating skills through collaborative debate projects, essay exams and individual research projects using both primary and secondary sources, and presenting work in an academic format.

Course Policies:
I would like to make this course fully accessible to students of all different abilities. Please discuss with me any accommodations, or any other help you need accessing the course.

Late or missed assignments will be penalized. In many cases, arrangements can be made for conflicts with the paper deadlines or with other deadlines—but PLAN IN ADVANCE. Advance planning is essential to being a responsible person.

DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. We will discuss this—but it is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and to make sure you do not do it.

I. Terrorism and WMD:
Week 1: Definitions, history and trends of Terrorism. What is the Concept of the “New Terrorism” & Countdown to Zero

Introduction to Terrorism, defining terrorism, examining motives for terror, and .... FILM: “Countdown to Zero”—this film makes clear the PROBLEM this course addresses .... Terrorism + WMD—what should be done?
1.) Defining Terrorism handout—see Blackboard for several more brief readings.

2.) J.M. Berger: “War on Error” Feb 5, 2014
   http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/02/04/war_on_error_al_qaeda_terrorism


7.) “Countdown to Zero” – required film—study it.

**Week 2: Is al Qaeda defeated? Discuss and debate**

**What is the history of al Qaeda? Debate on Thursday.**

1.) Al Qaeda core: A short history:
   http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/03/17/al_qaeda_core_a_short_history


3.) How strong is al Qaeda today, really? From The Atlantic, 2012:
   http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/05/how-strong-is-al-qaeda-today-really/256609/

4.) How BIG is ISIS threat? See Robert N. Hein of Brookings, Nov. 7 2014:

5.) For a different view of ISIS—we will watch part of this video with John Mearsheimer analyzing the threat from ISIS:

6.) For reference: Gunaratna, “Al Qaeda’s Organizational Structure and Its Evolution” 2010

Week 3: History of WMD, and especially the Nuclear Bomb--Arms Control and Nonproliferation efforts introduced; Nuclear Modernization TODAY!

5.) Also: Arms Control Today’s brief historical overview of Strategic Nuclear Arms Control: [http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/#Strategic%20Arms](http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/#Strategic%20Arms)

Week 4: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons

Theoretical Debate; How much should we fear proliferation? Why? What should we do? Pre-emption or diplomacy or relax? Realism vs. Organization theory—who’s right? Both? Iran?

Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*

1.) Read chapters 1-4, pp. 3-134.
2.) Kenneth Waltz, “Why Iran Should Get the Bomb”, July/Aug 2012, *Foreign Affairs*
3.) Stephen Walt on Iran & the Bomb: [http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/category/topic/iran](http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/category/topic/iran)

Week 5: Midterm; and Good News on Nonproliferation

MIDTERM Exam on Wednesday Feb 4.


**Week 6: More debate on Proliferation; A. Q. Kahn considered; Deep nuclear reductions possible to stop proliferation, or nuclear modernization?**

1.) Film on A.Q. Kahn in class and required—see Blackboard.
2.) Lawrence Freedman, “Disarmament and Other Nuclear Norms” The Washington Quarterly, 2013,

**Paper outline due Wed. Feb. 11, at the beginning of class.**

**Week 7: Strategies to Handle Proliferation; Rogue Regime: North Korea in Focus; Missile Defenses to handle threat from North Korea?**

1.) BBC: North Korea Profile at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-15256929
4.) Current readings TBA—and watch the New York Times, Carnegie and Arms Control Today on North Korea
5.) **Film and discussion of Missile Defense:** Possibly clips from Frontline: Russian Roulette and Missile Wars (or possibly clips from Visions of Star Wars—excellent older film with great historical footage.) We will watch some parts of these films, and debate. It is recommended you watch all of these films on your own.
6.) IN FOCUS: What was the “ABM Treaty”? Was it a “relic of the Cold War”? Look at Arms Control Today’s fact sheet on missile defense and the ABM Treaty:  http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/#missiledefense


Week 8: Loose Nukes: Richard Lugar and 20 Years of Cooperative Threat Reduction (Tough Question: Should Ukraine have given up its nukes?)


2.) 20 Years of Nunn-Lugar:  http://www.nti.org/newsroom/news/celebrating-20-years-nunn-lugar-program/

DEBATES BEGIN Wed 2/25

Paper Due: Wednesday 2/25, at the beginning of class.

Weeks 8, 9 & 10: Three Debates: All must Participate

1.) Terrorism: Should the U.S. combat ISIL with boots on the ground? Yes, fight/defeat ISIL vs. NO, largely ignore ISIL, or minimally support others, and they will collapse.

2.) Nuclear strategy: Should the world go to Zero nuclear weapons, or near Zero? What Treaties and Norms? Or should the U.S. pursue national missile defense? Will robust weapons and NMD keep the U.S. safe from North Korea and Iran (others)?

3.) Organization Theory and Budgets: Should the US modernize its nuclear forces? What systems and weapons does the U.S. need? How much does the U.S. need to spend? How much could the U.S. save? (See Lieber and Press; Obama’s Nuclear Upgrade, 2011, Foreign Affairs)

Review for Final, Wed. 3/11.

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, March 19, at 2:45 (14:45-16:45) in the classroom.