**University of Colorado**

FALL 2017

**IAFS 3000: Special Topics**

**Global Politics and Extremism**

**Instructor: Dr. Alison Castel**

TR 3:30pm-4:45pm

Hellems 237

Office: Norlin S423

Office hours Wednesdays 1p-3pm and by appointment: alison.castel@colorado.edu

**DESCRIPTION**

This course offers a theoretical and empirical introduction to the causes and nature of violent political extremism. It examines the main forms of extremism over the past hundred years, from Anarchism, Fascism and Communism through to Genocide and Terrorism. A leading question in the course is whether common causes can be identified for these varied forms. We are particularly interested in the use of violence: what explains why so many groups use violence to reach their political or ideological goals?; do extreme ideologies necessarily lead to violence?; would we all be willing to engage in violent extremist behavior given the right circumstances?

**Course Requirements**

**I. Attendance Policy and Class Participation**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly--no more than 3 excused absences, arrive on time, and be prepared to make substantive contributions to class discussions and actively engage in class activities. For each unexcused absence beyond 3, I will deduct 5 points from your participation grade. Missing more than 6 classes will result in an F in the class. This course is designed for critical thinking that we will do together in the classroom. Absences will seriously affect your grade. A plane ticket home does not qualify as an emergency or excused absence. However, if you are sick, or have an emergency and you know you are going to be absent, please inform me as soon as possible. Some in-class activities simply cannot be made up. If you believe attendance will be a problem, this is not an ideal course for you.

**Technology:** **NO** use of cell phones in class. If your cell phone is out, whether you are actively using it or not, it WILL impact your final participation grade. Laptops and tablets may be used, but if you are on any website (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) that is not appropriate to the course, you will receive a 5 point deduction off your final participation grade.

**II. Reading Assignments**

An study of this nature can be complex, confusing and abstract. We are in many cases, learning a new language. Given this, it is essential that students keep up with the assigned readings as outlined in the schedule of classes below.  **I expect the assigned reading to be completed prior to class the day it is assigned.** This way you will be able to better comprehend the lecture, get more from the in-class activities, and ask questions if doubt or confusion persists.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

This course is highly participatory and students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the readings over the course of the semester in various ways.

**Participation- 20%**

“Participation” in class refers to engagement with others, in discussion, raising questions, making comments, working with the readings directly, and offering opinions. Simply showing up for class does not constitute participation. Spending time on your phone will inevitably count against your participation grade.

**Critical Incidents Paper- 15%**

**\*Due Monday, September 4th by 11:59pm on D2L Dropbox.**

The critical incident paper is a reflective writing piece that serves several purposes. First, reflective writing increases critical thinking skills, motivates action and change, and is a useful practice for professionals in any field. The ability to effectively self-reflect is often cited as one of the most important skills required for leadership and allows individuals to enhance development independently. In this paper, I am asking you to write about two critical incidents you’ve experienced in your own life.

In this assignment, I am asking you to reflect on two different contexts in which you experienced a meaningful transition, change, or solidified already established thoughts, feelings or belief structures. Critical incidents may relate to issues of communication, knowledge, assumptions, culture, relationships, emotions or beliefs. See details on D2L under Content.

**Critical questions and D2L Discussion- 15%**

Each student group will be responsible for starting a discussion on D2L the Sunday before class for the week’s readings. This prompt should include insights from the readings and draw out critical questions for the class to consider. For each post, the group and the rest of the class are required to post two times—SUBSTANTIVELY-- in the conversation before class starts on Tuesday. “I agree” or “I see your point” do NOT constitute substantive engagement with the material. You should reflect on the material and offer opinions, critiques, and observations. Of course, you may agree, but you must elaborate. (This means the discussion leaders will post 3 times total.) The leading group will also bring to class one item from the media that touches on the topic of the week.

**Memoir/Biography Analytic Paper- 20%**

**\*Due October 29 by 11:59pm on D2L Dropbox**

I will present a choice of 5-6 Memoirs/biographies/autobiographies written by “extremists.” You will write a 4-5 page analytic paper based on the book you choose to read. You may choose an alternate book if it is approved by the instructor. See details on D2L under Content.

**Introductory Slides- 5%**

 **\*Due on D2L Discussion Board by September 28.**

You will choose a current extremist group to begin investigating for your final presentation. The slides should include the following information:

Include:

-an outline the group's basic history, membership, current level of activity using the conflict

 - goals of the group,

 - what kinds of actions they have undertaken,

 - what community they claim to represent, and

 -who joins the group.

**Final Presentation 25%**

**\*Presentation Dates:. December 3, 5, 12, 14**

For this presentation, you will present a detailed and analytical analysis about your chosen extremist group or movement. You will draw on theories and approaches used during the semester to illuminate new insights that might not be obvious from what the is superficially accessible to the public. Your analysis should draw on multiple sources, academic, journalistic, personal accounts, etc. in order to provide a comprehensive and holistic analysis. Each group will present for 15 minutes and be responsible for taking questions from the class. Details will follow.

Grading

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 97-100 | A+ | 77-79 | C+ |
| 93-96 | A | 73-76 | C |
| 90-92 | A- | 70-72 | C- |
| 87-89 | B+ | 67-69 | D+ |
| 83-86 | B | 63-67 | D |
| 80-82 | B- | 60-62 | D- |

**University Policies**

**Cheating, Plagiarism and Fabrication:** Cheating (using unauthorized materials or giving unauthorized assistance during an examination or other academic exercise), Plagiarism (the use of someone else’s ideas without clear acknowledgement), and Fabrication (the intentional falsification or invention of information) are serious academic offences that may result in a failing grade for the particular assignment, for the course, or in suspension or expulsion from the university. Just don’t do it.

**The Honor Code:** All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at

<http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>.

**Disabilities:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492- 8671, Willard 322, [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)).

**Religious Observances:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, I ask that you contact me at least one week ahead of the date(s) that you will be absent so that we can discuss any assignments/class material that you will miss.

**Classroom Behavior:** Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

**Discrimination and Harassment:** The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 2: September 5, 7**

**Definitions of Extremism**

This week provides an overview of extremism. It examines the ideologies, goals and violence of a broad range of groups which can be considered extremist. I will introduce several concepts which will be important throughout the course, including: terrorism; propaganda by deed; radicalization; genocide; fundamentalism; and hate crimes.

I will pose several questions which will re-emerge over the course. What are the similarities between mass state-based extremist movements such as Nazism and smaller groups such as contemporary terrorists? What explains the decision to move from extreme ideas to violent action? Might we all hold the potential to become extremists given the right circumstances?

We will also discuss the structure and goals of the course. I will provide advice on what is expected of you in your assignments and how to do well.

*Readings*: Minus Midlarsky, *Origins of Political Extremism: mass violence in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, Introduction.

John Horgan, “Psychology of Terrorism: Introduction to the Special Issue”, *American*

*Psychologist*, vol 72, no 3, 2017, pp199 – 202.

Online Readings:

Toward a Common Lexicon of Violent Extremism:

<https://www.lawfareblog.com/toward-common-lexicon-violent-extremism>

Pathways to extremism: what neo-Nazis and jihadis have in common:

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/may/27/extremism-terrorism-far-right-neo-nazi-devon-arthurs>

**Week 3: September 12, 14**

**Anarchism, Communism and Leftist Extremism**

This week examines extremism of varying degrees from 'the Left,' anarchist violence in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. Some commentators (see below) claim that Anarchist terrorists share a number of similarities with contemporary Islamist ‘lone wolves’.

*Readings*:

Richard Bach Jensen, “Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite: Anarchist Terrorism in Nineteenth Century Europe”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol 36, no 3 (Spring 2004), pp116-153.

Elizabeth J. Perry, “Studying Chinese Politics: Farewell to Revolution?” in *China Journal*, Vol. 57, (January 2007), pp. 1-22.

Online Readings:

Blood, rage and history: the world’s first terrorists:

[http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/blood-rage-history-the-worlds-first- terrorists-1801195.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/blood-rage-history-the-worlds-first-%20terrorists-1801195.html)

**Week 4: September 19, 21**

**Fascism and the Holocaust**

The week examines Fascism, one of the most destructive forms of political extremism. We discuss definitions of Fascism, the ideological and social origins of Fascist movements, their goals and how and why Fascist regimes took power in many countries in the early to mid-20th Century. We will look at the most extreme manifestation of Fascism, the Holocaust. A key question to ponder in this lecture is: are there key characteristics of Fascism which still resonate in global politics in 2016?

*Readings*:

Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism*, 1914-1945, Introduction.

Michael Mann, *Fascists*, Chapter 1: A Sociology of Fascist Movements.

Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, New York: Knopf, 1996, Chapter 15.

Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, New York: Harper Collins, 1992, Chapter 18.

Online Readings:

Umberto Eco’s 14 features of fascism:

<http://www.openculture.com/2016/11/umberto-eco-makes-a-list-of-the-14-common-features-of-fascism.html>

**Week 5: September 26, 28**

**Genocide and Mass Killing**

This week we look at the attempted extermination of a racial, national or religious group. We consider what is and is not Genocide, with reference to the current United Nations Definition. We then turn to two of the worst post-WWII genocides, Rwanda and Indonesia (1965/66).

*Readings*:

Robert Gellately & Ben Kiernan (eds), *The Specter of Genocide: mass murder in historical perspective*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003, Chapter 1: The study of Mass Murder and Genocide.

Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, Chapter 8: Rwanda’s Leviathan.

Robert Cribb, “Genocide in Indonesia, 1965-1966”, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3, 2, 2002: pp 219-239.

Online Readings:

How do you define genocide?:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-11108059>

**Week 6: October 3, 5**

**Religion and Extremism**

Religion sometimes seems central to extremism and terrorism. How and why is religion linked to extremism and violence? Can we consider religion a cause of violence or is it simply a façade for more ‘worldly’ motives? What is ‘religious fundamentalism’ and which phenomena explain it? The concepts and socio-political dynamics discussed here are relevant to subsequent readings on terrorism.

*Readings*:

Jeffrey Seul, “Ours is the Way of God: Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict.” *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 5 (1999): 553-569.

Jonathan Fox, “Do Religious Institutions Support Violence or the Status Quo?” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 22, no. 2 (1999): 119-139.

Marc Sageman, “The Origins of the Jihad”, in Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

Online Readings:

What ISIS Really Wants:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>

**Week 7: October 10, 12**

**Terrorism**

This week focuses on the definition and causes of terrorism. While a consensus is developing on what constitutes terrorism, this perspective is far from uncontroversial. First we examine this definition and several critiques of it, then look at some proposed causes of terrorism: what motivates individual perpetrators and what structural conditions make a country ‘terrorism-prone’?

*Readings*:

Lisa Stampnitzky, *Disciplining Terror: How Experts Invented “Terrorism”*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, Introduction (Most chapters in this book are very useful on the definition / politicisation of terrorism).

Charles Tilly, “Terror as Strategy and Relational Process”, in *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, vol 46, 1-2, 2005, pp 11-32.

Max Abrahms, “What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy”, *International Security*, vol 32, no 4 (Spring 2008), pp 78-105.

Max Taylor and John Horgan, “A Conceptual Framework for Addressing Psychological Process in the Development of the Terrorist”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 18, 2006, pp585-601.

**Week 8: October 17, 19**

**Terrorism in Middle East**

This week examines some causes and background to the rise of terrorism in the Middle East. The discussion considers the role of Islam, conflict, political repression and other phenomena in these movements.

*Readings*:

Daniel Byman, “Understanding the Islamic State – A Review Essay”, *International Security*, vol 40, no 4 (Spring 2016), pp 127-165.

Peter Neumann, *Radicalized*, chapter 2 The Religious Wave.

Marc Sageman, *Understanding Terrorist Networks*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004, “Chapter One: The Origins of the Jihad”.

Online Reading:

International Crisis Group, “Exploiting Disorder: al-Qaeda and the Islamic State”, 14 March 2016.

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/exploiting-disorder-al-qaeda-and-islamic-state>

**Week 9: October 24, 26**

**Islamist Radicalization in the West**

This week examines the increasing incidence of Muslim radicalisation and terrorism in the West. It discusses the attacks in Paris, Sydney and Florida among other cases.

*Readings:*

Mohammed Hafez, and Creighton Mullins, “The Radicalization Puzzle: A Theoretical Synthesis of Empirical Approaches to Homegrown Extremism”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 38, 2015: 958-975.

Peter R Neumann, ‘The Trouble with Radicalization’, *International Affairs*, 89, 4, 2013: 873- 893.

Online Readings:

How do you stop a terrorist when the only evidence is a thought?:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/22/world/europe/france-orlando-isis-terrorism-investigation.html?_r=0>

Ramon Spaaij and Mark Hamm, Parramatta Shooting: how much do we really know about ‘lone-wolf’ terrorists?’, The Conversation,

<http://theconversation.com/parramatta-shooting-how-much-do-we-really-know-about-lone-wolf-terrorists-46746>

**Week 10: October 31, November 2**

**Islamist Terrorism Outside the Middle East**

This week considers the occurrence of Islamist terrorism outside the Middle East. It examines terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram in Nigeria, Jemaah Islamiyah in Indonesia (responsible for the Bali bombing) and Abu Sayyaf and pro-ISIS groups in the Philippines.

*Readings*:

Andrew Walker, What is Boko Haram?, United States Institute of Peace, June 2012. <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/SR308.pdf>

International Crisis Group, Indonesia Backgrounder: How the Jemaah Islamiyah Network Operates, Asia Report no 43. (A lot of pages but not too much text). <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/indonesia/indonesia-backgrounder-how-jemaah-islamiyah-terrorist-network-operates>

Online readings: Pro-ISIS Groups in Mindanao (Philippines): <http://file.understandingconflict.org/file/2016/10/IPAC_Report_33.pdf>

The Rise of Extremism in Bangladesh:

 <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/bangladesh/2016-06-09/rise-extremism-bangladesh>

**Week 11: November 7, 9**

**Contemporary Far Right**

This week examines contemporary right wing movements in the West. Are they rising and if so why? What explains current right wing populism? What similarities and differences does it hold with the fascism of the 1930s? How much impact can contemporary far right groups have; is it possible that a quasi-fascist regime could assume power? Can democratic institutions curtail the drive to violence if they do?

*Readings:*

Paul Hainsworth (ed), *The Politics of the Extreme Right: From the Margins to the Mainstream*, Introduction.

Cas Mudde, “Introduction to the populist radical right, in Cas Mudde (ed), “*The Populist Radical Right: A Reader*”, New York: Routledge, 2017. (And more of this book if you are interested in or will write an essay on this topic)

Manuela Caiani, Donatella della Porta & Claudius Wagemann, “The Extreme Right and Social Movement Studies: An Introduction”, in Manuela Caiani, Donatella della Porta & Claudius Wagemann (eds), *Mobilizing on the Extreme Right: Germany, Italy and the United States*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Online Readings:

His Kampf (on Richard Spencer):

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/06/his-kampf/524505/>

Your handy field guide to the many factions of the far right, from the Proud Boys to Identity Europa:

<https://www.wired.com/2017/05/field-guide-far-right/?mbid=social_twitter_onsiteshare>

**Week 12: November 14, 16**

**Ethnonationalist Extremism**

This week examines terrorism carried out in the name of ethnic nationalism. Cases considered include the Irish Republican Army, the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Tamil Tigers. While these groups sometimes used the same tactics and means as Islamist terrorist organisations we often view them differently. We sometimes portray them as ‘freedom fighters’ against foreign occupation or dominance and repression by another ethnic community. What motivates groups to use terrorism in these contexts and should we view them differently to other terrorist organisations?

*Readings*:

Walker Connor, “The Politics of Ethnonationalism”, *The Journal of International Affairs*, vol 27, no1, pp1-21. (As an introduction to ethnonationalism. See also Anthony Smith)

Bernadette Hayes & Ian McAllister, “Sowing Dragon’s Teeth: Public Support for Political Violence and Paramilitarism in Northern Ireland”, in *Political Studies*, vol 49, 2001, pp901- 922.

Stephen Hopgood, “Tamil Tigers, 1987 – 2002”, in Diego Gambetta, *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

**Week 13: November 28, 30**

**Unite States Hate Groups and Extremism**

Matt E. Ryana, Peter T. Leesonb, “Hate groups and hate crime.” International Review of Law and Economics 31 (2011) 256–262.

Chermak, et al. “The Organizational Dynamics of Far-Right Hate Groups in the United States: Comparing Violent to Nonviolent Organizations.” Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 36:193–218, 2013.

The Second Wave: Return of the Militias, A Special Report from the Southern Poverty Law Center Montgomery, Alabama. August 2009.

**Week 14: December 5, 7**

**Final Considerations**

Some final questions for the end of the course. In particular, what are the common features of the different forms of extremism? Do similar processes of radicalisation occur in different terrorist organisations? When and why do violent extremist movements emerge? Are ‘lone wolf’ terrorists really today’s ‘anarchists’?

*Readings*:

Clark McCauley & Sophia Moskalenko, “Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 20, 2008, pp415-433.

**Week 15: December 7, 12, 14**

**Group Presentations**