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## American Public University System

*The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind*

School of Security and Global Studies  
NSEC614  
Political Psychology of Terror Groups  
Credit Hours: 3  
Length of Course: 8 Weeks  
Prerequisite: NSEC500

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### Course Description (Catalog)

NSEC614 (3 credit hours)

This course focuses on analyzing terror groups from a political psychological perspective. In particular, the course approaches terror groups from two different political psychological perspectives, individual and group processes. Together these two perspectives provide a solid foundation from which to understand terror groups.

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### Course Scope

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This course focuses on specialized area knowledge and sources in the field. Students will engage in a specialized task based project.

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## **Course Objectives**

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

CO-1: Analyze political psychological concepts and their relationship to individual and groups

CO-2: Appraise political psychological concepts as they relate to individual level case studies

CO-3: Assess political psychological concepts as they relate to group level case studies

CO-4: Create a profile using course concepts

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## **Course Delivery Method**

This course, delivered via distance learning, will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET and include all written assignments, examinations, and research papers submitted for grading. Weekly Forum questions (accomplished in groups in a Forum) require an initial response by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET, with all other required responses due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET. The assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

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## Course Resources

### Required Course Textbooks

The **required** texts for this course is:

There are no required texts for this course. All materials can be found in the online e-Reserves.

The e-Reserves for this course are at:

[http://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=6525](http://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=6525)

### Required Readings

- External websites and other assigned readings are found in the Lessons area of the classroom.
- Weekly Lesson Notes and videos or audio files are found in the Lessons area of the classroom.

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## Evaluation Procedures

The course grade is based on the following assessments:

### Discussion Forums – 30 percent

Discussion questions will be provided and posts should reflect an assimilation of the readings and respond to the assigned topic(s). Students are required to provide a substantive initial post by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET and respond to 2 or more classmates by Sunday 11:55 pm ET. Forum posts are graded on timeliness, relevance, knowledge of the weekly readings, and the quality of original ideas.

### Specialized Project – 35 percent

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This paper will demonstrate your ability to synthesize discipline specific material. 12-15 pages.

Final Assignment – 35 percent

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 4 questions, 2 pages each, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

ASSIGNMENT	Percentage
Specialized Project Assignment	35 percent
Discussion Forums	30 percent
Final Assignment	35 percent
TOTAL	100 percent

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**8 – Week Course Outline**

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Course Objectives</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
Week 1	Why Violence? Introduction and Classic Theory	CO-1	Aboul-Enein & Juhur, <i>Analysis of the Quaranic Verses of War</i>  <i>1 Maccabees</i> , Chapters 1 & 2  Rousseau, <i>Discourse on</i>	Week One Forum Discussion

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			<p><i>Inequality, Preface, Parts 1 and 2</i></p> <p><i>Snyder, How Modern Tyrants Use Terror Management to Consolidate Power</i></p> <p><i>Trotsky, The Art of Insurrection</i></p> <p><i>Mao, Statement of the Problem</i></p> <p><i>Declaration of Independence</i></p>	
Week 2	Why Violence? Contemporary Theories	CO-2	<p><i>Davies, The J-Curve and Power Struggle Theories</i></p> <p><i>Koos, Does Violence Pay?</i></p> <p><i>Newman, Exploring the 'Root Causes' of Terrorism</i></p> <p><i>Noricks, The Root Causes of Terrorism</i></p> <p><i>Tilly, Violence Viewed and Reviewed</i></p> <p><i>Tilly, Regimes</i></p>	Week Two Forum Discussion

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			<i>and Repertoires, Chapter 6.</i>	
Week 3	Why Join? Individual and Situational Theories	CO-2	<p>Cottee &amp; Hayward, <i>Terrorist E(motives)</i></p> <p>Cunningham, <i>Countering Female Terrorism</i></p> <p>Helmus, <i>How and Why Some People Become Terrorists</i></p> <p>Kruglanski &amp; Fishman, <i>The Psychology of Terrorism</i></p> <p>Lynch, <i>British Muslim Youth</i></p> <p>Groskop, <i>Chechnya's deadly 'black widows'</i></p> <p>Lozada, <i>Love in the Time of Terror</i></p>	Week Three Forum Discussion
Week 4	Why Join? Process theories	CO-2	Hafez & Mullins, <i>The Radicalization Puzzle</i>	Week Four Forum Discussion

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			<p>Illardi, <i>Interviews with Canadian Radicals</i></p> <p>King &amp; Taylor, <i>The Radicalization of Homegrown Jihadists</i></p> <p>McCauley &amp; Moskalenko, <i>Mechanisms of Political Radicalization</i></p> <p>Moghaddam, <i>The Staircase to Terrorism</i></p> <p>Sageman, A <i>Strategy for Fighting International Terrorists</i></p> <p>Taylor &amp; Horgan, <i>A Conceptual Framework</i></p>	
Week 5	Why Stay? Theories of Cohesion and Control	CO-3	<p>Cottam, et al., <i>Introduction to Political Psychology, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.</i> Chapter 10</p> <p>Jackson, <i>Organizational Decisionmaking by Terrorist</i></p>	Week Five Forum Discussion

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			<p><i>Groups</i></p> <p><i>Perliger &amp; Pedahzur, Counter Cultures, Group Dynamics and Religious Terrorism</i></p> <p><i>Piazza, Is Islamic Terrorism More Dangerous?</i></p> <p><i>Collier &amp; Hoeffler, Greed and Grievance in Civil War</i></p>	
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Week 6	<p>Case Studies I</p> <p>Galleanists</p> <p>IRA</p> <p>Tupamaros</p>	CO-3	<p><i>Brum, Revisiting Urban Guerillas</i></p> <p><i>Gibbs, Looking at Terrorism through left realist lenses</i></p> <p><i>Horgan &amp; Taylor, The provisional Irish Republican Army</i></p> <p><i>Lopez-Alves, Political Crises, Strategic choices, and Terrorism</i></p> <p><i>Mastors, Can the Ulster Defense Association Transition into Mainstream Politics?</i></p> <p><i>Simon, The Forgotten Terrorists</i></p> <p><i>Irish Republican Army, Green Book</i></p>	Week Six Forum Discussion
7	<p>Case Studies 2</p> <p>Lone Wolves</p> <p>Suicide Terrorists</p>	<p>CO-3</p> <p>CO-4</p>	<p><i>Beam, Leaderless Resistance</i></p> <p><i>Ingram, Three Traits of the Islamic State's</i></p>	<p>Week Seven Forum Discussion</p> <p>Specialized Project Paper Due</p>

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	Islamic State		<p><i>Information Warfare</i></p> <p>Meloy &amp; Yakeley, <i>The Violent True Believer as a 'Lone Wolf'</i></p> <p>Merari, <i>Psychological Aspects of Suicide Terrorism</i></p> <p>Michael, <i>Leaderless Resistance: The New Face of Terrorism</i></p> <p>Paper, <i>The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism</i></p> <p>Revkin, <i>The legal foundations of the Islamic State</i></p>	
8	External Outreach and Future Directions	CO-1 CO-2 CO-3	<p>Breckinridge &amp; Zimbardo, <i>The Strategy of Terrorism and the Psychology of Mass-Mediated Fear</i></p> <p>Fernandez, <i>Here to Stay and</i></p>	<p>Week Eight Forum Discussion</p> <p>Final Assignment Due</p>

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			<p><i>Growing</i></p> <p>Klausen, <i>Tweeting the Jihad</i></p> <p>Ligon, et al., <i>Lethal Brands</i></p> <p>Nalbandov, <i>Irrational Rationality of Terrorism</i></p> <p>Trujillo, et al., <i>Radicalization in Prisons?</i></p> <p>Williams, <i>Islamic State Propaganda and the Mainstream Media</i></p> <p>Simpson, <i>War and Peace in the Age of the Smartphone</i></p>	
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## **Policies**

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

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[Plagiarism Policy](#)  
[Extension Process and Policy](#)  
[Disability Accommodations](#)

### Citation and Reference Style

Attention Please: Students will follow the Turabian/Chicago Style as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University. For this course, use the "Author-Date" style. See <http://www.apus.edu/Online-Library/tutorials/chicago.htm>.

### Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

### Netiquette

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add "emoticons" to help alert your readers: ;-), : ), ☺

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## Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to [librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

- *Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:* The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- *Electronic Books:* You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- *Electronic Journals:* The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.

Request a Library Guide for your course  
(<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111), or class name.

The NSEC Program Guide can be found at:

<http://apus.libguides.com/friendly.php?s=NationalSecurityStudies>

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If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library:  
[librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

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## Turnitin.com

Faculty require assignments be submitted to Turnitin.com. Turnitin.com will analyze a paper and report instances of potential plagiarism for the student to edit before submitting it for a grade. The instructor will post information in the classroom on student procedures.

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## Selected Bibliography

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Dan Kahneman & Amos Tversky, 1979. "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk," *Econometrica*, Vol. 47(2) (March 1979): 263-289.

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