

**POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TERRORISM INSS 5325 (CRN #28314)**  
**ONLINE COURSE**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO**  
**Spring, 2021**

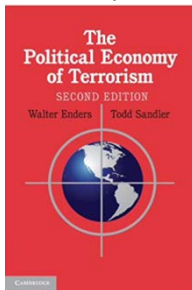
**I. Diana I. Bolsinger**

Office Hours: By request.

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**II. TEXTBOOK**

Walter Enders and Todd Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism*, Second Edition (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 978-0521181006.



Additional reading and video assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

**III. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Understand the value of grounded theory in expanding our understanding of terrorism as a global phenomenon.
- Apply economic concepts such as supply-and-demand, elasticity, and rational actor theory to terrorist behavior.
- Demonstrate understanding of the use and limits of data sciences in predicting terrorist activity.
- Use databases such as the Global Terrorism Database to track the terrorist group life cycle.
- Understand the variety of techniques used to study terrorism, including both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
- Recognize key similarities and differences between terrorist groups across

- national, religious, and ideological boundaries
- Understand how terrorist activity is likely to impact nations' economies and political activity.
  - Describe how terrorist radicalization may follow divergent patterns among male, female, and underage recruits.

## COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this graduate course is to present an up-to-date survey of the study of terrorism. Where possible, the course will apply theoretical and statistical tools so the student can understand why governments and terrorists take certain actions even when, on occasion, these actions may be against their interests. Often, we are able to identify behavior that appears counterintuitive until the underlying strategic interactions among agents (for example, among targeted governments) are understood. Throughout the course, we bring forth insights that are against conventional wisdom, but which are supported by the data. Throughout the course, tools of economic analysis (e.g., indifference curves, constrained optimization, and simple market analysis) are applied to the study of terrorism. In addition, simple game theory is also applied. Prerequisite: Departmental approval.

## IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### A. Exams (25% each for 50% of your grade)

There will be two exams during the semester. Each exam will include multiple choice and short-answer questions. Exam 2 will not be cumulative. You may take each exam at any time during the given windows (**March 8-14 for the midterm and May 10-14 for the final.**)

If you know in advance that you cannot take an exam during its scheduled time period, you must contact me well before the exam. If you miss an exam due to an emergency on the day of the exam, you must contact me as soon as possible. I will require documentation supporting your excuse for missing the exam to determine whether you will be given a makeup exam.

Both the midterm and final will involve open-book essay questions. You will be given several days between the time the questions are assigned and

when your essay responses are due. The final will be cumulative.

***You are not allowed to collaborate with other students on exams.***

**B. Presentation and Target Study (25% of your grade—10% presentation and 15% paper)**

You will be provided with a list of historical and contemporary terrorist groups during the first week of class from which to choose your target group. You will be required to develop a multi-media presentation (for example, in PowerPoint or Prezi) on your chosen group. The goal will be both to teach your classmates about the group you have researched and to gather feedback to improve your final paper. The presentations will be posted to Blackboard by 11:59 pm on **Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**. Points will be deducted for late submissions.

Your presentation must represent your own independent research. Click on “**Presentations**” on the Navigation pane or go to “**Presentations**” under the course “Overview and Welcome” tab to view the grading rubric for this presentation (also click on “**Guidelines for Presentations**” to see some helpful tips in creating effective presentations). Presentations must be submitted via the given link provided under the tab **Week 13: April 19-25**. ***Presentations must include an audio narration.*** All students must provide at least one insightful comment about each of two classmates’ presentations by **Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup>** at midnight.

Your target study should be 12-15 pages long (not including cover page and bibliography). Your study must be proofread and edited, and all ideas and quotations must be properly sourced using an accepted citation style (i.e., APA, Chicago, Turabian). A rubric for these papers is available on your “**Course Overview and Orientation tab.**”

You also will receive a list of specific questions which your study must address. Your study may use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodologies, but you must draw on data available from the Global Terrorism Database at <https://www.start.umd.edu/data-tools/global-terrorism-database-gtd>. You also will need a basic command of Excel, to include creating simple line graphs and bar charts.

**Before you begin your research and writing, please review item VIII below on academic dishonesty. If you have any questions regarding the proper use of material or ideas in your work, please ask me rather than risk potential misunderstandings.**

### **C. Exercises (25% of your grade)**

Each week, we will have a discussion or activity relating to our course material. All exercises are due by **Sunday** at midnight. Late submissions will not be graded and a grade of "0" will be assigned. You will be asked at multiple points during the semester to relate class material to the specific terrorist group you have chosen to research. This will both provide you and your classmates with a broader understanding of the terrorist phenomenon and give you a head start on your target study and presentation.

Participation in discussions and other activities will be graded according to the following criteria:

- 1) How well does the answer demonstrate critical thinking?
- 2) Does the student incorporate course material and/or current events into the answer? and
- 3) Does the student provides an accurate and thorough answer?

### **V. OVERALL COURSE GRADING SCALE**

- A = 90 – 100%
- B = 80 – 89%
- C = 70 – 79%
- D = 60 – 69%
- F = below 60%

NOTE: Final grades are a weighted average of assignments and exam grades. Final grades are not curved.

### **VI. COURSE COMMUNICATION**

Please note that I will only use your UTEP email to communicate with you.

## General expectations

Students are encouraged to take an active and engaged orientation to their own learning. Ultimately, the more students put into the process, the more they will learn. The following guidelines will create a comfortable and productive learning environment throughout the semester.<sup>1</sup>

### You can expect me:

- To do my utmost to provide you with an interactive and interesting class
- To reply to e-mails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. When I am traveling, I will respond in 48 hours.
- To assign coursework and reading that adequately covers the material and meets the learning objectives of the course while adhering to the time expectations for the course.
- To give a midterm and final exams that accurately reflect the material covered in class.

### I can expect you:

- To participate fully in online class discussions, team exercises, and other class activities.
- To spend an adequate amount of time on the coursework each week, making an effort to understand the content.
- To share the responsibility of making our class a supportive, respectful, and safe environment for discussion and debate. To remember that our classroom is not a public venue. Postings on this site are private and to be shared only with me and other members of the class. Think of this as preparation for a career where you may be entrusted with classified national security documents.
- To seek help when you need it.

## COVID-19 ADJUSTMENTS

This course has been scheduled as online from the start and thus is less immediately impacted by Covid-19 safety protocols than those classes

originally meant to be delivered in person. That said, it's important that I make sure you are fully aware both of UTEP safety protocols.

- 1) Before coming onto the UTEP campus for any reason, we must all must first enter their information on the UTEP screening tool at [screening.utep.edu](https://screening.utep.edu). Nobody—student, faculty, or administration—is permitted on campus without first doing this screening. Nobody is permitted on campus when they have a positive COVID-19 test, exposure or symptoms. If you have a negative UTEP screening, a positive Covid-19 test, or develop Covid-19 symptoms, please let me know as soon as you can. Even if we don't meet in person, we are a community.
- 2) If you do need to visit the UTEP campus, you must wear a face mask at all times (except if alone in an office), maintain social distance of a minimum of 6 or more feet, and practice proper hygiene practices. Anyone not wearing a mask will be required to leave. I recognize the current pandemic has raised many child-care issues, but children and other guests will not be permitted on campus with you, per UTEP regulation.
- 3) As you enter or exit campus, minimize the number of encounters with others to avoid infection by the SARS-CoV-2. Use preventive safety and health measures at all times until informed otherwise by campus officials.
- 4) You have my pledge to follow precisely the same rules to help keep you and our UTEP community safe.

Please check the UTEP “Responding to COVID-19” web page, <https://www.utep.edu/ehs/COVID-19/> regularly for updates on the situation on campus and information on how you can best protect yourself and your loved ones. Students who are considered high risk according to CDC guidelines and/or those who live with individuals who are considered high risk may contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) <https://bear.accessiblelearning.com/UTEP/ApplicationStudent.aspx> to discuss temporary accommodations for any on-campus courses or activities.

## VII. TECHNOLOGICAL PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS

For all technological, hardware, software problems, lost files, and/or questions with Blackboard, as well as difficulties you are having during an exam, contact Technology Support Help Desk 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Tech support is set up to specifically address technical questions and problems about Blackboard. **If you have question on how to operate in the Blackboard Learning System, please check out the resources available at the [Blackboard Student Orientation](#) site.**

**Professors are not technical support staff.**

Phone: 915.747.4357 or toll free: 1-877-382-0491

Website: <https://www.utep.edu/technologysupport/>

In-Person (Currently closed due to pandemic): UTEP Library, Room 300

Please regularly refer to Blackboard for links, documents, announcements, and calendar changes. You are responsible for staying up-to-date on all class information that is posted on Blackboard.

### **CHECK YOUR TECHNOLOGY**

- To complete this course, you must have a computer with a reliable internet connection. Mobile devices are not reliable to access exams and use the discussion board.
- Blackboard (BB) Learning Management System. This entire course is run through UTEP's BB system, so students must activate and use their BB accounts regularly. Always log in using your UTEP name and password, and never as a "guest" (the guest option will kick you out after 15-20 minutes, which is problematic when taking a test because you will not be able to finish your test). All students are responsible for regularly logging in and checking for posted announcements, submitting assignments, participating in discussion boards, and taking tests through BB. Contact UTEP tech support for any questions or concerns regarding navigating in BB or learning how to do something in BB.
- Browser Information (See the left side of the menu on the main BB page for hardware, software, and browser checks) Firefox seems to consistently work the best, but other supported Browsers include Chrome, Safari, and Internet Explorer. Be sure to "Allow pop-ups" for Blackboard Clear your

browser cache

- Verify that you have the most updated version of “Java”  
<http://java.com>.
- All word documents should be saved with a “docx” extension identifying it as a Microsoft Word file or compatible with MS Word, Windows Media Player, Quick Time, Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash Player.
- We will be using Microsoft Excel for several exercises.

## VIII. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

If a student is suspected of cheating on the exams through collaboration with other students, the instructor will follow the University’s policy regarding student dishonesty, which may result in a grade of zero and referral of the student to the Office of Student Conduct. If a student is suspected of plagiarism, the instructor will follow the University’s policy regarding student dishonesty, which may result in a grade of zero and referral of the student to the Office of Student Conduct.

Academic dishonesty or cheating is simply unethical and not acceptable under any circumstances. Plagiarism is a form of cheating that involves “stealing” the words and thoughts of others. It is a very serious academic violation and cannot be tolerated. The most common form of plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper or other assignment without giving credit to the source of that information or wording. **Plagiarism also includes the direct copying of a source verbatim (word for word) and incorporating that copied material into the student’s paper or assignment without first paraphrasing with proper referencing or placing the copied text into a direct quotation, again with appropriate footnotes or citations.** Students must use their own words when not using direct quotes.

Direct quotes should be used sparingly and only when appropriate to provide examples, evidence, or illustrate specific points. **Students cannot simply “cut and paste” wording or text from source material to artificially “construct” their papers, essays, and other assignments. This practice is also considered plagiarism, even if references are done properly.**



Likewise, students must not submit work under their name that they did not do themselves. Students also may not submit work for this course that they produced for another course. If students are found to be cheating in any capacity including plagiarism and collusion, they will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Cases of academic dishonesty will be sent to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for adjudication and possible sanctions. Possible penalties for academic dishonesty include a zero for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, suspension, and even expulsion from the university. Students are responsible for understanding their specific obligations to maintain academic integrity at all times. Please refer to the following link for further information on UTEP's policies on plagiarism and academic dishonesty: <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>.

#### **IX. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please contact me personally in the first week of class, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The CASS Office can also be reached in the following ways:

Website: <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>

Phone: (915) 747-5148 voice or TTY Fax: (915) E-Mail: [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu)

#### **X. UTEP COURSE DROP POLICY**

If unforeseen circumstances happen where a drop is necessary, students are responsible for initiating any course drop. It is the student's responsibility to determine how dropping courses may affect financial aid. **Students are limited to dropping no more than 6 courses over their entire academic career, including all courses taken at any public college or university in Texas.**

- A. Students who drop a course before the "official census date," the course will not appear on the transcript, and doesn't count toward the 6-course drop limit.

- B. Dropping a course after the official census date, but before the “course drop date” will generate a “W” in the course—although the drop shows on your transcript, a “W” does not lower your GPA. However, a “W” counts against your 6-drop limit.
- C. If the course is dropped after the “course drop date” or if the student just stops participating, taking tests, etc., UTEP requires the instructor to issue an “F” in the course that permanently remains on the transcript.
- D. UTEP also allows instructors to administratively drop any student because of too many times the student fails to submit assignments, discussion questions, or because of disciplinary reasons. In this case, the student will be notified of the course drop through their UTEP student email account. A “W” or an “F” will be issued. A “W” for these reasons counts against the 6-drop limit.

## XI. CLASS CALENDAR\*

Most of the reading assignments are from our class textbook, but we also will draw from additional sources. In addition to the text and journal readings listed below, most weeks will also include short media articles or videos linking our topics to current events. All required readings except the textbook will be available through our Blackboard page under the appropriate week.

\*This calendar is subject to change.

| Week                   | Topic                              | Primary Reading  |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Week 1: January 19-24  | Introduction                       | Syllabus   |
| Week 2: January 25-31  | What is a Terrorist?               | Enders & Sandler, ch. 1; Post, "Terrorism and Right-Wing Extremism." |
| Week 3: February 1-7   | Who Becomes a Terrorist?           | Horgan, "Involvement," pp. 77-103.                                   |
| Week 4: February 8-14  | What Conditions Support Terrorism? | Enders & Sandler, ch. 2.   |
| Week 5: February 15-21 | A Case Study in Radicalization     | Bolsinger, "Al-Qa'ida Exploits the New Openings," pp. 115-149.       |

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|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Week 6:<br>February 22-28       | Statistical Studies and the<br>Dynamics of Terrorist Behavior | Enders & Sandler, ch. 3.  |
| Week 7: March<br>1-7            | Women and Children First?                                     | Bloom, "The Four Rs Plus One;"<br>Cunningham, "Cross-Regional Trends in<br>Female Terrorism;" Bloom & Horgan, "The<br>Rise of the Child Terrorist." |
| Week 8: March<br>8-14           | Terrorist Groups and Their<br>Organizations                   | Enders & Sandler, ch. 8; Shapiro, The<br>Terrorist's Dilemma."  |
| March 15-19                     | SPRING BREAK  | None  |
| Week 9: March<br>22-28          | MIDTERM   | None  |
| Week 10:<br>March 29-April<br>4 | Counterterrorism  | Enders & Sandler, ch. 4   |
| Week 11: April<br>5-11          | International Cooperation:<br>Dilemmas and Inhibitors         | Enders & Sandler, ch. 6   |
| Week 12: April<br>12-18         | The Economic and Political<br>Impact of Terrorism             | Enders & Sandler, ch. 10  |
| Week 13: April<br>19-25         | Homeland Security   | Enders & Sandler, ch. 11  |
| Week 14: April<br>26-May 2      | The Future of Terrorism                                       | Enders & Sandler, ch. 12  |
| Week 15: May<br>3-6             | Prepare for Final   | Study Guide on Blackboard   |
| Finals: May 10-<br>14           | FINAL EXAM  | None  |

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<sup>i</sup> This section is a reproduced and modified version provided by the Elderly Center for Teaching Excellence and Educational Innovation at Carnegie Mellon University:  
<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/design/syllabus/samples-policiesexpectations/>