

## **POLS 625: Extremist Groups and Government Response**

Spring 2023

Section 48779

Department of Political Science

University of Kansas

Professor Haider-Markel

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Office Hours: MW 1:00-4 pm  
and by appointment

TR 1:00-2:15

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### **Purpose and Goals of the Course**

This course examines the rise and fall of political extremist and terrorist groups from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century and how government has responded to these groups. The course stakes out a position that political extremism develops from within broader political social movements and that government actions and policies foster or inhibit extremism. Special attention will be given to the public policy process regarding extremists and terrorists, including many elements of counter-extremism and counterterrorism, and whether government overreacts to extremist groups. Issues and themes will include groups such as left-wing terrorism in the 1960s and 1970s, right-wing and anticommunist groups, hate crime, environmental extremists, citizen militia groups, Jihadist groups, and anti-abortion groups, among others. Students will be assessed on their ability to understand the policy process, the elements of counterterrorism and their impact, and the causes of political extremism and terrorism.

### **Grading and Responsibilities**

Class Participation and Reading Assignments: Class weeks will be a mix of lecture and seminar. *A student's grade will reflect his or her participation in class.* Participation not only includes showing up for class but also having completed the reading assignments and actively using this material to engage your fellow students (and myself) in discussion. If you miss class on a regular basis or for an extended period for *any* reason, you should contact me as soon as possible. Waiting to explain absences at the end of the semester will not suffice.

The reading assignments are listed below in the course outline. All students are expected to *complete the required readings for each class Week*. Usually the week's readings can be divided between session 1 and 2 for the week. Note that I will occasionally supplement our discussion with newspaper articles that will be sent to you via email; students are encouraged, but not required, to tie these articles into our discussion. I also strongly recommend that students regularly read and view national news.

For an idea of how many hours you will have to work to complete the elements of this course outside of class meeting times please use the Course Workload Estimator and the information from the syllabus.

<http://cte.rice.edu/workload/>

### **Required Reading**

The following books are **required reading** and are available for purchase in the bookstore:

George, John, and Laird Wilcox. 1996. *American Extremists*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus. 1-57392-058-4

Risen, James and Judy L. Thomas. 1998. *Wrath of Angels: The American Abortion War*. New York: Basic Books. 0-465-09273-X

Hoffman, Bruce. 2017. 3rd ed. *Inside Terrorism*. New York: Columbia University Press. ISBN 9780231174770.

Martin, Gus. 2020. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. *Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 9781544375885

In **addition** I have put together a **required reading packet** for the course. The packet is available for reading/photocopying in the Department of Political Science, 504 Blake Hall. If your financial situation makes it difficult for you to buy the books or photocopy the reading packet, please let me know as soon as possible.

### **Recommended Reading (not required and not in bookstore)**

Berger, John M. 2018. *Extremism*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

**Films:** I will assign a number of films for viewing throughout the semester. I will announce the films and supply links through Canvas. These films are required for the course. Please inform me ASAP if you cannot view a film for whatever reason.

**(Short) Assignments:** These are 2 short quizzes. ***If you miss even one of these assignments it could cost you a whole grade.***

**Capstone Research Paper:** You will have one 6-10 page paper during the semester. You will be provided with detailed instructions on the paper the first week of class. In short, in this paper you will incorporate theoretical perspectives from other social science courses with those introduced in this course to write a research paper as follows:

Based on your interests, **select one historically relevant or modern political**

**extremist group** or movement operating anywhere in the world and compose a ***typed, double-spaced essay to me*** that specifies:

- 1) the group you choose and **why it is (or is not) politically extremist and why it is or is not a terrorist group** (there is no right answer),
- 2) what **government actions/policies** led to the rise of this group or movement?
- 3) how federal, state, and or local governments ***responded to this group*** (i.e. passed new policies, used existing criminal statutes, FBI infiltration, local police applying existing laws, etc.)--***be specific***,
- 4) **an argument as to why government response to this group was an overreaction or not** (i.e. government violated civil liberties), and
- 5) an argument as to why excessive government response to extremist groups generally is **problematic and potentially counterproductive** (i.e. it may exacerbate extremism and terrorism)

**Exams:** There are 2 main exams—a midterm and a final exam. The final exam will cover the material introduced following the Midterm exam. The dates are in the syllabus and the exams will be administered through the course ***Canvas*** site.

**Final Grades will be determined on the following basis (From A to F with pluses and minuses):**

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 2 Short Assignments | 10% (5% each) |
| Midterm Exam        | 30%           |
| Final Exam          | 30%           |
| Capstone Project    | 30%           |

***Missing assignments, exams, etc. will normally be counted as zero.*** However, based on the situation, I may allow late assignments/papers to receive some credit. In such a case points will be deducted on an hourly basis. Only serious emergencies, such as a student or family long-term illness, constitute grounds for an incomplete. If you face a significant emergency during the semester you should contact me as soon as possible. You should also contact me as soon as possible if you think you will be late on an assignment for any reason.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Any student who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating her/his abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate the educational opportunity. Informing me of a disability two months into the semester will make it difficult for me to accommodate your needs.

### **Instructor Availability**

Students wishing to meet with me can do so during office hours (listed at top of first page), or by appointment. Please schedule an appointment even if it during my office hours. I can arrange to meet with you on your schedule. Remember I am available to you as a resource--*take advantage of it*. Please be aware that the easiest way to reach me is via e-mail (top of page 1)--I check my e-mail several times a day.

### **Non Academic Misconduct**

The scope and content of the material included in this course are defined by the professor in consultation with the political science department. Although the orderly exchange of ideas, including questions and discussions prompted by lectures, discussion sessions and laboratories, is viewed as a key part of the educational environment, the professor has the right to limit the scope and duration of these interactions. Students who engage in disruptive behavior, including persistent refusal to observe boundaries defined by the professor regarding inappropriate talking, discussions, and questions in the classroom may be subject to discipline for non-academic misconduct for disruption of teaching or academic misconduct, as defined in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (CSRR), Article 22, Section C, and the University Senate Rules and Regulations, Section 2.4.6. Article 22 of CSRR also defines potential sanctions for these types of infractions.

Related Copyright Issues and Plagiarism: The issue of digital plagiarism has raised concerns about ethics, student writing experiences, and academic integrity. Please be aware that by enrolling in this class you are agreeing to submit any written assignments for this course to the professor through a specified electronic format. The professor has permission to include your paper in databases such as Turnitin™ so that your paper can be checked against web pages and databases of existing papers. Although you may never have engaged in intentional plagiarism, many students do incorporate sources without citations; this program can alert me to your academic needs.

### **Intellectual Property Issues**

Course materials prepared by the professor of this course, including the course syllabus, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the professor are the property of the professor. Lecture notes and PowerPoint slides will not be distributed. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the professor is prohibited. On request, the professor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the professor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course. Any individual or organization

violating the professor's copyright on course materials and lectures could be subject to charges of academic misconduct and/or to civil action for copyright violations.

Pursuant to the University of Kansas' [Policy on Commercial Note-Taking Ventures](#), commercial note-taking is not permitted in POLS 625. Lecture notes and course materials may be taken for personal use, for the purpose of mastering the course material, and may not be sold to any person or entity in any form. Any student engaged in or contributing to the commercial exchange of notes or course materials will be subject to discipline, including academic misconduct charges, in accordance with University policy. **Please note:** note-taking provided by a student volunteer for a student with a disability, as a reasonable accommodation under the ADA, is **not the same** as commercial note-taking and is **not** covered under this policy.

### **Concealed Carry**

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns **are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with [state and federal laws](#) and [KU weapons policy](#)**. Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier.
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control.
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

Students who choose to carry a concealed handgun in a purse, backpack, or bag must review and plan each day accordingly, and are responsible for making alternate arrangements as necessary. The university does not provide appropriate secured storage for concealed handguns.

### **Classroom safety**

To protect all of us, **everyone must wear a mask in the classroom if required** by the [Protect KU Pledge](#) and by University policy. If you face challenges to fully participating at any time during the semester, please let me know, and please contact me if you expect to miss class. I am available and ready to support your success. Additionally, if you need to report an extended illness or serious accident, please contact Student Support and Case Management at [course-adapt@ku.edu](mailto:course-adapt@ku.edu) or 785-864-4060. A case manager will send email notifications to your instructor(s) on your behalf. When you are able, you will need to follow up with your professors to coordinate a temporary arrangement regarding missed instruction and coursework.

## **Course Outline and Weekly Schedule**

### **Week 1: Introduction to the Course**

Jan 17 and 19

no readings

### **Week 2: Issues and Definitions; Public Policy and the Policy Process**

Jan 24 and 26

#### Reading Packet

--Kraft and Furlong, 2007; pp. 2-23 and 62-91

--Birkland, Thomas A. 2004. "'The World Changed Today': Agenda-Setting and Policy Change in the Wake of the September 11 Terrorist Attacks." *Review of Policy Research* 21(2):179-200.

--Crenshaw, Martha. 2001. "Counterterrorism Policy and the Political Process." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 24:329-337.

-- Sinclair, Barbara. 2005, "Patriotism, Partisanship, and Institutional Protection: The Congressional Response to 9/11." In *Transforming the American Polity*

-- Clarke and Saltskog (2021) "Assessing the National Strategy For Countering Domestic Terrorism"

WaPo, 2022, "Justice Dept. forms new domestic terrorism unit to address growing threat"

### **Week 3: Issues and Definitions II; Extremism and Terrorism**

Jan 31 and Feb 2

--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 7-94, 421-423.

-- Hoffman, Bruce. 2017., Chapter 1

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 1 and Chapter 2

#### Reading Packet

Smith (1994), *Pipe bombs and Pipe Dreams*, pp. 1-52

Silva et al. (2020). "Addressing the Myths of Terrorism in America"

Clarke and Al Aqeedi (2021) "What Terrorism Will Look Like in the Near Future"

#### **Week 4: Causes of Extremism and Terrorism**

February 7 and 9

Examples include:

**John Brown and the Abolitionists**

**Anti-Masons**

**Molly Maguire's**

**Revolutionary Action Movement**

**International Workers of the World (IWW)**

**Communist Party**

**Socialist Workers Party**

**Progressive Labor Party**

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapters 3 and 8

-- Hoffman, Bruce. 2017., Chapters 2 and 3

--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 7-94, 421-423 (review)

#### Reading Packet

--Crenshaw, Martha. 2002. "The Logic of Terrorism," pp. 54-66.

-- LaFree, Gary, and Gary Ackerman. 2009. "The Empirical Study of Terrorism: Social and Legal Research." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 5:347-74. (read pp. 347 to 363).

Nemeth and Hansen. 2021.- "Three key factors that drive far-right political violence — and two that don't" \_ - The Washington Post

#### **Week 5: Who Becomes an Extremist/Terrorist? Examples of Left Wing Extremists I:**

Feb 14 and 16

Some Examples include:

**Weather Underground**

**SDS: Students for a Democratic Society**

-- Hoffman, Bruce. 2017., Chapter 4,

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapters 5 and 6

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 7

--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 97-113, 147-152

#### Reading Packet

-- review, LaFree, Gary, and Gary Ackerman. 2009. "The Empirical Study of Terrorism: Social and Legal Research." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 5:347-74. (read pp. 347 to 363).

Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan. 2005. "The Quality of Terror." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3):515-530.

Khalil, James. 2014. "Radical Beliefs and Violent Actions Are Not Synonymous: How to Place the Key Disjuncture Between Attitudes and Behaviors at the Heart of Our Research into Political Violence." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37(2):198-211.

**Week 6: The Logistics of Terrorism and Terrorism and the Media, Examples of Left Wing Extremists II:**  
Feb 21 and 23

Some Examples include:

**Black Panther Party**  
**African People's Party**  
**Nation of Islam**  
**Anarchists**  
**Radical Environmentalists and Animal Rights (ELF &ALF)**

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 12, Left-Wing, 313-330  
-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapters 10 and 11  
-- Hoffman, Bruce. 2017., Chapter 6  
--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 114-124, 156-158

Reading Packet

--Smith (1994), pp. 93-129

**Week 7: Countering Extremists: Law Enforcement and Homeland Security; and Examples of Right-Wing (The Anti-Communists)**  
Feb 28 and Mar 2

Some Examples include:

**The Minutemen**  
**Arizona Patriots**  
**Secret Army Organization**  
**Sheriff's Posse Comitatus**

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 1 (review)  
-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 13  
--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 221-245



Reading Packet

-- LaFree, Gary, and Gary Ackerman. 2009. "The Empirical Study of Terrorism: Social and Legal Research." *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 5:347-74. (read pp. 363 to 374).

**Week 8: Racists:**

March 7 and 9

**The four waves of the Ku Klux Klan**

--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 362-382.

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 12, Right-Wing, 330-354 & review Chapter 13

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 14

**Week 9: No Class; Spring Break week**

**March 14 and 16**

**Week 10: Neo-Nazi's, Skinheads, and Hate Crime**

March 21 and 23

**Midterm begins around March 21 (open period on Canvas of a week or so)**

Examples include:

**The German-American Bund (federation)**

**American Nazi Party**

**The Black Legion**

**The Silver Shirts**

**Aryan Nations**

**Skinheads**

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 12, Right-Wing, 330-354 (review)

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 14 (review)

--George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 323-353

--Hoffman, 2017 pp. 101-118

Reading Packet

Haider-Markel, Donald P. 1998. "The Politics of Social Regulatory Policy: State and Federal Hate Crime Policy and Implementation Effort." *Political Research Quarterly* 51(1):69-88.

### Films

**Frontline: Documenting hate, Charlottesville**

<https://www.pbs.org/video/documenting-hate-charlottesville-1120-ie0mod/>

## **Week 11: The Politics of Abortion: from the Right and Left**

March 28 and 30

- review Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 12, Right-Wing, 330-354 (review)
- review Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 6
- review Hoffman, 2017 Chapter 4
- Book, *Wrath of Angels*, Risen and Thomas (1998), pp. 3-216, 217-378

### Reading Packet

Seegmiller, Beau. 2007. "Radicalized Margins: Eric Rudolph and Religious Violence." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19:511-28.

## **Week 12: Patriot Movement, Militia Groups, Anti-System Politics, and Accelerationism**

April 4 and 6

### Examples include:

**Michigan Militia**  
**III Percent Movement**  
**Oath Keepers**  
**Proud Boys**  
**Patriot Prayer**  
**Incel**  
**Accelerationists (Boogaloo Boys, etc.)**

- George and Wilcox (1996), pp. 246-274
- review Hoffman (2017), pp. 101-118

### Reading Packet

--Haider-Markel, Donald P. 2004. "Militia Movement." In *The Encyclopedia of American Social Movements*, Ed. Immanuel Ness. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp, Inc.

--Haider-Markel, Donald P., and Sean P. O'Brien. 1997. "Creating a "Well Regulated Militia": Policy Responses to Paramilitary Groups in the American States." *Political Research Quarterly* 50(3):551-565.

--Chamberlain, Robert, and Donald P. Haider-Markel. 2005. "Lien On Me": State Policy Innovation in Response to Paper Terrorism." *Political Research Quarterly* 58(3):449-460.

--USDHS: Assessment: "Rightwing Extremism...." all

--"Citizen Militias in the U.S. Are Moving toward More Violent Extremism - Scientific American", 2021

### **Week 13: Counterterrorism: Military Force and Intelligence Resources, Part 1; Examples of International Extremists**

April 11 and 13

- Hoffman, Bruce. 2017., Chapters 7 and 8
- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 8 (review)
- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 13 and 14, review

#### Reading Packet

--Humud, Carla E. 2016. *Al Qaeda and U.S. Policy: Middle East and Africa*. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service. R43756.

--9/11 Commission, pp.47-70. (chapter 2) "The Foundation..."

### **Week 14: Counterterrorism: Military Force and Intelligence Resources, Part 2; Examples of International Extremists**

### **Monday, April 17 is Patriot's Day in 2023**

April 18 and 20

- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 13 and 14 (review)
- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 15

#### Reading Packet

--9/11 Commission, pp.108-143. (chapter 4) "Responses to Al Qaeda's Initial Assaults."

--9/11 Commission, pp.325-338. (chapter 10) "Wartime"

-- Pfiffner, James P. 2005, "National Security Policymaking and the Bush War Cabinet." In *Transforming the American Polity*

--Miller, Gregory D. 2007. "Confronting Terrorisms: Group Motivation and Successful State Policies." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 19:331- 350.

**Week 15: Counterterrorism: Military Force and Intelligence Resources, Part 3; Examples of International Extremists and Final Thoughts**

April 25 and 27

-- Martin, Gus. 2020., Chapter 13, 14, and 15 (review)

-- Hoffman, Bruce. 2017., Chapters 9 and 10

Reading Packet

Groves, Bryan. 2013. "America's Trajectory in the Long War: Redirecting Our Efforts Toward Strategic Effects Versus Simply Tactical Gains." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 36(1):26-48.

--Vidino, Lorenzo. 2009. "Homegrown Jihadist Terrorism in the United States: A New and Occasional Phenomenon?" *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 32(1):1-17.

--Wilner, Alex S. 2010. "Targeted Killings in Afghanistan: Measuring Coercion and Deterrence in Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 33(4):307-329.

--Loidolt, 2021. "How Far Will Targeted Killing Get the United States in Afghanistan" \_ - War on the Rocks

**Week 16: Final Thoughts and Catch Up**

May 3 and 4 (stop day is May 5)

**Research Paper is due by May 9 @ 5pm**

**Final Exam will be available on Canvas May 6 to 13**