



# Course program and reading list

Semester 2 Year 2022

**School:** Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy & Strategy M.A

Research Seminar in Contemporary Topics in International Terrorism

**Lecturer:**

Prof. Assaf Moghadam [assafm@runi.ac.il](mailto:assafm@runi.ac.il)

**Teaching Assistant:**

Mr. Abraham Gertz [abraham.gertz@post.runi.ac.il](mailto:abraham.gertz@post.runi.ac.il)

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<b>Course No.:</b>	<b>Course Type :</b>	<b>Weekly Hours :</b>	<b>Credit:</b>
24151	Lecture	4	4

<b>Course Requirements :</b>	<b>Group Code :</b>	<b>Language:</b>
Final Paper	222241510	English

**Prerequisites**

**Students who took one of the courses listed below will not be allowed to register to the course Research Seminar in Contemporary Topics in International Terrorism (24151):**

24086 – Research Seminar: Democracy, failed states and international terrorism

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24146 – Research Seminar: Negotiating Core Issues in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

24150 – Theoretical and Empirical Aspects of Deterring Terrorism

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24225 – Research Seminar: dynamics of power and Technology

24272 – Research Seminar: Governance and Political Violence

## Course Description

The purpose of this research seminar is two-fold. Substantively, the seminar is aimed at exploring some of the main contemporary issues and debates related to terrorism and the study of terrorism. A second purpose is to hone MA students' analytical, research, writing, and presentation skills. Students will delve deeply into a research topic of their choice, engage in readings and in-class discussion with their peers, and interact regularly with their instructor. Students submit a 20–25 page long seminar paper at the end of the course, and prepare several interim assignments towards that paper. In addition, students present their own research individually, and participate in group debates on contemporary topics.

The first part of the seminar offers a historical sketch of international terrorism from the French Revolution onwards, followed by a discussion of some of the main theoretical approaches for analyzing terrorism. In the second part, we focus on contemporary topics in international terrorism, highlighting some of the main debates in the field. In the third part of the seminar, students present their individual research. Throughout the duration of the course, students will discuss and eventually present their research to the class. Active participation in class discussions is a requirement for success in this seminar.

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## Course Goals

This is a highly interactive advanced research seminar whose success depends on the students' timely and attentive reading of the required material, and their active participation in class discussions. Student attendance and participation will be tracked and graded. The table below summarizes the requirements for the seminar.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Percent of final grade</b>
1) Participation	10 %
2) Statement of Research Interest (due by lesson 2)	Ungraded Assignment
3) Research question (due by lesson 3)	5 %

4) Preliminary literature review (due by lesson 6)	10 %
5) Table of Contents (due by lesson 7)	5 %
6) Policy debate (during lessons 8 and 9)	10 %
7) Individual presentations (lessons 10-12)	20 %
8) Seminar Paper (the due date will be announced during the course)	40 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 %</b>



## Grading

**1. Participation (10%):** Active student participation is required for research seminars to succeed. Participation, of course, is dependent on regular attendance of the course. Students who have to miss a class due to emergencies or other unusual circumstances have to notify the instructor ahead of time.

**2. Statement of Research Interest:** The purpose of this assignment is to get students to identify two or three topics related to armed non-state actors that are of interest to them and that they consider as possible topics for the seminar paper. In this assignment, students should write one paragraph on each of these topics. Rather than picking a broad topic (for ex., foreign fighters, lone attackers), students should think how to narrow a topic down. For each of the topics, students should state why they are interested in this topic; which aspect of this topic interests them and why; and what they believe might be the greatest challenges for them in writing a seminar paper on this topic. Students will present their ideas in class during Lesson # 2 and submit their assignments electronically via Moodle, **by the beginning of Lesson #2. This assignment is not graded, but is still a requirement of the course.**

**3. Research question/s (5%):** We will discuss the importance of research questions, and how to pose interesting and feasible research questions in academic research in Lesson # 2 of the course. In order to encourage students to identify a topic for their seminar papers as early as possible, students are required to submit a preliminary research question, or possible research questions, on the day of the third class meeting. **Research questions must be submitted via the Moodle website, by the beginning of Lesson #3.** Students should write down their names on the assignment; the proposed title or topic for the seminar paper; as well as possible research questions. Students can also include in the assignment any concerns they have about their proposed research.

**4. Preliminary Literature review (10%):** This assignment, like the preceding one, is designed as a forcing mechanism to ensure early progress on the seminar paper. The literature review should include at least 6 major books or journal articles of relevance to the student's seminar paper, although the more items will be included in the review, the better (note that the final seminar paper will have to include more than 6 references). The literature review should take the form of an annotated bibliography. These are lists of the references, followed by brief descriptions and evaluations of the source. **The Preliminary Literature Review must be submitted via the Moodle website, by the beginning of Lesson #6.**

**5. Table of Contents (5%):** Students will submit a preliminary table of contents for their seminar paper. The more detailed the table of contents, the better. This assignment is worth 5% of the final seminar grade, **and should be submitted as a single document via Moodle, by the beginning of Lesson #7.**

**6. Policy Debate (10%):** Another assignment in this course is a policy debate. During Lessons #8-#9, students will engage in a policy debate in which they will argue in favour of a position in a key policy debate, while another student will argue a different position. Additional instructions about the debates will be discussed in the class meetings. Students will be responsible for identifying relevant readings on these debates. **For this assignment, students do not need to make a submission via Moodle.**

The following list includes examples for possible topics for debates. The instructor and the students may suggest additional topics that might be of interest. The final list of debates and the schedule of the debates—including whether debates will be conducted individually or in groups—depends in part on the number of students enrolled in the class. The debate schedule will be finalized by Lesson # 4:

- Greed vs. Grievance: Are conflicts involving armed non-state actors more likely to be caused by grievances or economic opportunities?
- How useful are non-violent strategies for armed non-state actors?
- Terrorism or Guerrilla: Which one serves as a better tactic for non-state actors?
- How important is the threat posed by left-wing groups? (In comparison to Jihadist or right-wing armed non-state actors).
- Jihadism or right-wing extremism: Which poses the greater threat to the West?
- Is Antifa a Terrorist Group?
- Was the January 6, 2021 attack on Capitol Hill an act of terrorism?

**Individual Presentation (20 %):** Every student will present his research project in an individual presentation, via Zoom. Student presentations are opportunities for students to

progress with their research; practice their presentation skills; engage other students in discussion; and receive helpful feedback from students and the instructor about their research project.

The presentation schedule will be distributed in class. Students are encouraged to submit their presentations electronically to the instructor before class in order for the presentation to be uploaded to the course website. Students must use visual aids, such as MS PowerPoint or Prezi for their presentations. Every student is allocated 45 minutes for his/her presentation--15 minutes for presentation, and 30 minutes for questions and answers and general discussion.

The formal presentation of the student's research should include the following items:

- Background to the issue addressed in the paper
- Puzzle and research question
- Main argument
- Importance/contribution
- Literature review
- Theory
- Methodology
- Expected findings

**Seminar Papers (40%):** The seminar papers are the main graded requirement in this course. The main purpose of the seminar paper is for students to hone their academic, research, analytical, and writing skills, and to delve deeply into a topic of interest to them. The seminar builds on the previous assignments of the course, especially # 2 (Research Question) and # 3 (Literature Review and Table of Contents. No seminar paper will be accepted without these preliminary assignments having been completed and approved by the instructor. Research topics must relate to a contemporary topic of interest related to terrorism (topics not discussed in class but related to terrorism are permitted), and ask an interesting and answerable research question. In answering the research questions, students are expected to rely on the analytical tools and theoretical approaches acquired in the course of their graduate degree, including this seminar.

Research papers should be approximately 20-25 pages in length (not including cover page, bibliography, and appendices). Papers must be double-spaced, Calibri font, 12 size font, with normal margin width. Papers must include the following:

1. A cover page with the title of the course, semester, paper title, student name, student ID #
2. Table of contents
3. Page numbers
4. Section headings that divide the paper, at a minimum, into the following sections:
  1. Introduction
  2. Analysis
  3. Conclusion
5. Bibliography
6. Full reference information for all sources cited. Students are free to pick any

reference style of their choosing (f.ex., Chicago, Harvard, APA), but they must use this style consistently throughout the paper. The paper should be generously footnoted/referenced throughout, and students should make sure that all references used are from respectable sources. In case of doubt, the students should contact the instructor or the TA.

Research paper topics must be approved by the instructor via email. Each student must submit an electronic copy of his/her paper via the Moodle course at a date to be determined.



## Learning Outcomes

The seminar schedule for this research seminar is necessarily flexible and dynamic. Topics presented might change based on current events, students' interests, and other factors. The number of weeks devoted to individual presentations may change based on the number of participants in the seminar.

<b>Lesson</b>	<b>Substantive discussion</b>	<b>Skill-building</b>
Lesson 1 (2/3)	Introduction	How to read / how to find a research topic?
Lesson 2 (9/3)	Terrorism: A Historical Sketch	How to formulate a research question?
Lesson 3 (16/3)	Psychological Approaches to Terrorism	How to do a literature review?
Lesson 4 (23/3)	Radicalization	How to write a seminar paper?
Lesson 5 (30/3)	Domestic Terrorism in the United States	How to prepare your seminar presentation?
Lesson 6 (6/4)	Accelerationism	The Publication and Review Process
Lesson 7 (27/4)	Critical Studies on Terrorism	The Job Market

Lesson 8 (11/5)	The Global Jihad Movement	Policy Debates
Lesson 9 (18/5)	Conspiracy Theories, The Manosphere, and Incel Ideology	Policy Debates
Lesson 10 (25/5)	Student Presentations	
Lesson 11 (1/6)	Student Presentations	
Lesson 12 (8/6)	Student Presentations	



### Lecturer Office Hours

**Seminar Instructor:** Prof. Assaf Moghadam, [assafm@idc.ac.il](mailto:assafm@idc.ac.il)

**Office hours:** By appointment through email.

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### Teaching Assistant

**Seminar TA:** Abraham Gertz, [abraham.gertz@gmail.com](mailto:abraham.gertz@gmail.com)

**Office hours (Zoom):** By appointment through email.

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### Reading List

**Readings:**

Readings will be posted on the website six days in advance of each class.