

IDS 2935: Political Violence and Power

Quest 2

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- Spring 2025
- Required 100% In-Person, no GTAs, 35 residential students
- M, W, F 11:45 AM - 12:35 PM (Period 5)
- MAT 0011
- 3 Credits

Instructor

- Prof. William Whitham
- CSE E552
- Office Hours: F 2:30-4:30 PM
- Email: wwhitham@ufl.edu
- Office Phone: 352-294-3416

If you need to schedule an appointment outside of office hours, please email the course instructor.

Course Description

Though terrorism feels like an urgent threat to western societies today (just look at your news feed), the use of violence to achieve political goals is old and universal in world history. But what is political violence? Why can defining “terrorism” be so difficult and morally charged? What sort of person becomes a terrorist and why? How do terrorists maintain organizations, exploit media attention, and (in some cases) come to power? How can societies and states prevent political violence? In this course, we’ll survey the history of political violence to better understand our present. We’ll explore fin-de-siècle anarchism, Soviet communism, German Nazism, anti-colonial struggles, jihadism, violent extremist groups on the far left and on the far right, and more. Students will read original historical documents, familiarize themselves with social-scientific analysis, and study people they may find strange, dangerous, or evil. Above all, students will learn about the nature of power in modern times.

Quest and General Education Credit

- Quest 2
- Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Writing Requirement (WR) 2000 words

This course accomplishes the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S–U.

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Required Readings and Works

Please obtain copies of these books:

- Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 3rd edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017)
- Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004)

All additional readings will be made available in electronic format and/or as physical library reserves.

For writing guides, students are encouraged to consult:

- George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language,” *Horizon*, April 1946, [link](#)
- Orwell, “Why I Write,” *Gangrel*, summer 1946, [link](#)

For best practices regarding grammar, punctuation, proper citation of sources, formatting, how to write (and not to write) in the social sciences, and much more, see:

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 18th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2024)
- William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 4th edition (Upper Saddle River: Pearson, 2000)
- Purdue Online Writing Lab ([OWL](#))
- Michael Billig, *Learn to Write Badly: How to Succeed in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013)

Students are welcome to discuss and workshop their written assignments at the [Writing Studio](#).

Materials and Supplies Fees: N/A

Course Objectives

- Define and apply key terms and concepts of sociological research, analyze historical case studies, weigh the relative value of different social–scientific methodologies and theories, and reflect on the ethical conundrums posed in political life.
- Form a nuanced, defensible understanding of the terrorism category and of the broader phenomenon of political violence.
- Identify, describe, explain, and offer thoughtful proposed solutions at the level of policy, political action, or human praxis to problems of political violence. Do so by drawing on and assimilating a range of genres (testimonies, journalism, scholarship), social–scientific frameworks, and normative perspectives.
- Communicate concisely, clearly, and cogently in writing and in discussion when dealing with fundamentally contested and controversial topics related to political violence. Advance non-obvious, specific, arguable, and original claims supported by social–scientific analysis, qualitative and quantitative evidence, and sound logic in terms accessible to an educated public.
- Thoughtfully reflect on how students, as community and family members, citizens, and future leaders, can best understand and most effectively confront problems of political violence faced in contemporary societies. Understand key rights, responsibilities, and ethical dilemmas of modern political life, above all in free societies.

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

1. Active Participation and Attendance: 20%

a. Active Participation: 15%

- i. To receive full credit, you must be ready to discuss all of week's assigned texts by the start of the first class of the week, listen actively and respectfully to your classmates, and offer thoughtful points and questions for discussion. You will never be penalized for asking "dumb" questions, venturing unpopular points of view, or disagreeing civilly. See participation rubric below. (R)

b. Attendance: 5%

- i. On-time class attendance is required for this component of the course grade. Class attendance will be recorded daily. You may have two unexcused absences without any penalty, but starting with the third class missed your grade will be affected. Starting with the third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence reduces your attendance grade by 2/3: an A- becomes a B, and so on.
- ii. Except for absence because of religious holiday observance, documentation is required for excused absences, per university policy. Excessive unexcused absences (10 or more) will result in failure of the course. If you miss 10 or more classes (excused or not), you will miss material essential for successful completion of the course.

2. Experiential Learning Component: 20%

Choose ONE of the following (a or b):

a. Interview Report

- i. You will conduct 3 one-on-one interviews with people who during their lifetimes witnessed or heard/read about the same act of terrorism or, more broadly, of political violence. (Common examples include assassinations and bombings, but any major violent activity with political aims will fit the assignment.) Each interview should be at least 15 minutes long.
- ii. Using quotations and paraphrases from your interviews, prepare an 800-word essay that answers these questions:
 1. What do your interviewees remember about the specific event? How did they (directly or indirectly) witness it or learn about it (radio, TV, newspaper, word of mouth, social media, etc.)? How did it make them and others feel? How did they understand why the event had happened? What were its consequences (if any), in their lives or in the lives of people they knew? Looking back, what do they think or know now that they did not think or know then? How, if at all, do they view the event differently in retrospect? Do your interviewees' testimonies agree with one another – why or why not?

2. How do your interviewees define political violence or terrorism? To what extent do their definitions agree?
 3. In your view, how do your interviewees' responses illuminate something interesting, counterintuitive, or important about political violence? Make a non-obvious, arguable, and specific claim. (An arguable claim is something that can be argued or persuasively shown, while remaining up for debate and subject to revision. It is something a reasonable person could support or oppose.) You should demonstrate knowledge of course discussions and readings.
 4. This is not a research paper, but if you are unfamiliar with the event in question, conduct some background reading about it by referring to and citing (see the *Chicago Manual of Style*) 1–3 news articles from reputable journalistic sources and/or works of peer-reviewed scholarship (articles, book chapters, books).
- iii. I will provide comments on a first, ungraded draft, which you will then revise and submit for a grade. See writing rubric below. (R)
 - iv. First draft due to Canvas at 11:59 P.M. on the first class day of Week 11. Final draft due to Canvas at 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of Week 12.

b. Film Review

- i. You will watch *The Battle of Algiers* (1966), directed by Gillo Pontecorvo. I will organize a class screening of the film or you may stream it yourself using Kanopy.
- ii. In an 800-word film review, discuss how the film illuminates something interesting, counterintuitive, or important about political violence. Please do not summarize the film. Instead, analyze a few aspects in order to substantiate your claim, which should be non-obvious, arguable, and specific. You may want to talk about one or more of the following: music and sound effects, plot, dialogue, character arcs, direction, set design, costumes, makeup, acting, cinematography, or editing. You should demonstrate knowledge of course discussions and readings.
- iii. I will provide comments on a first, ungraded draft, which you will then revise and submit for a grade. See writing rubric below. (R)
- iv. First draft due to Canvas at 11:59 P.M. on the first class day of Week 11. Final draft due to Canvas at 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of Week 12.

3. Reflection Papers: 10%

- a. Three times during the semester, you will write a brief reflection essay of approx. 200 words that discusses how our course discussions and readings have changed, refined, or challenged how you think about politics, violence, power, ethics, the social sciences, the contemporary world, and/or your own place in it.
- b. These assignments will be assessed as full credit, half-credit, or no credit. To earn full credit, they must meet the word count, state a specific, interesting, and original (your own) claim about how the course has affected you, and refer to specific discussions and readings (evidence). See writing rubric below. (R)

- c. Reflection Papers are due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the first class day of Weeks 4, 8, and 13.
4. **Midterm Examination: 20%**
- a. There will be an In-Class Midterm Examination during the first class of Week 9 consisting mostly of identification, true/false, and multiple choice questions, with some short answer responses. See examination rubric below. (R)
5. **Policy Memo: 30%**
- a. You will prepare a policy memorandum of 1,200 words that analyzes a problem of political violence in the contemporary world and proposes one or more possible solutions to it. You should advance non-obvious, arguable, specific, and sophisticated claims about the problem and what to do about it. Be sure to consider likely counterarguments or clarifying questions. Your report should indicate familiarity with the frameworks we have discussed in class thus far. You will choose your own topic in consultation with the instructor.
 - b. Besides demonstrating mastery of course discussions and assigned readings, the memo should be informed by and provide proper scholarly citations (see the *Chicago Manual of Style*) for at least:
 - i. 5–10 news articles from at least 3 different reputable newspapers, magazines, or websites, and
 - ii. 5 peer-reviewed sources (such as scholarly articles, book chapters, or books) from at least 2 different disciplines in the social sciences (political science, history, economics, sociology, anthropology, regional/area studies) and/or in fields that are broadly concerned with the empirical and normative dimensions of political action (for instance, political and social philosophy, critical theory, ethics).
 - c. I will evaluate and provide written feedback on the you written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization. After I provide comments on a first, ungraded draft, you will then revise and submit for a grade. See writing rubric below. (R)
 - d. First draft due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of Week 14. Final draft due to Canvas during Examination Period (deadline to be scheduled).

III. Annotated Weekly Schedule

The course has two parts. In PART I: AN ANALYTICAL TOOLBOX, we'll familiarize ourselves with key concepts, frameworks, and modes of analysis in the social sciences and in the history of social and political thought that will be useful for understanding politics, violence, power, and more. In PART II: CASE STUDIES, we'll use our tools to investigate specific movements, groups, and regimes that relied in salient ways on political violence.

Roughly 60–65 pages of reading are assigned per week, on average. Please be aware that some texts require more time and concentration than others. Be sure to budget your time to ensure that you can complete all readings for the weeks when assignments are also due or when midterm exam is scheduled.

PART I – AN ANALYTICAL TOOLBOX

WEEK 1: THE PROMISE AND LIMITS OF SOCIAL INQUIRY

What is scholarly knowledge or (social) science (*Wissenschaft*), according to Max Weber? How does it function and what is it able to do for us? What is it *not* able to do for us? Considering this, how ought we to live in a world of conflicting values and contradictory interpretations?

Readings (approx. 35 pages)

1. Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation,” 1917, in *The Vocation Lectures* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), 7–36.

WEEK 2: POLITICS, VIOLENCE, AND STRUCTURES OF POWER

What is the nature of politics, according to Weber? What are the major social processes and institutions that structure the landscape of human activity? How might we understand and navigate a political realm characterized by violence, unpredictability, and human frailty? How can we manage the tension between ethical conviction and attention to real-world consequences?

Readings (approx. 55 pages)

1. Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," 1919, in *The Vocation Lectures*, 76–94.
2. Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 180–95, 245–66.

WEEK 3: CONCEPTS AND FRAMEWORKS

What is political violence and what are some of the different forms it has taken across modern history? What, in particular, is “terrorism” and what differentiates it from other forms of political violence? Can we arrive at a defensible definition of it? Why or why not?

Readings (approx. 65 pages)

1. Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 1-44
2. John Mueller, “Six Rather Unusual Propositions About Terrorism,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 17/4 (October 2005), 487-505.

WEEK 4: STRATEGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Under what circumstances is political violence strategic? What are rationality and irrationality in human action? Is terrorism the product of a specific psychological pathology?

Readings (approx. 60 pages)

1. Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 242–68.
2. Martha Crenshaw, “The Logic of Terrorism: Terrorist behavior as a product of strategic choice,” in Walter Reich (ed.), *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theories, States of Mind* (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998), 7–24.
3. Jerrold M. Post, “Terrorist Psycho-Logic: Terrorist behavior as a product of psychological choices,” in Reich (ed.), *Origins*, 25–40.

Assignments:

- Reflection Paper #1 – due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of the week

WEEK 5: ORGANIZATIONS

According to Shapiro, in what ways are terrorist groups “ordinary” organizations with dynamics similar to those of everyday businesses and NGOs? What are the specific security tradeoffs that terrorists face? In light of the particular version of the principal-agent problem that operates in terrorist groups, how can governments fight terrorism more effectively?

Readings (approx. 60 pages):

1. Jacob N. Shapiro, *The Terrorist's Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 1-62.

PART II: CASE STUDIES

In Part II, you will encounter a variety of political movements that, despite their dizzying variety of principles and organizational types, aimed at overthrowing or disrupting existing systems of rule and, in some cases, succeeded in establishing a new form of government. As you read, recall the concepts and frameworks we've learned in Part I and ask yourself these three questions:

1. *Historical origins and motivation*: Under what historical circumstances did the movement (or group or regime) arise? What were its ostensible grievances and motivations?
2. *Aims and structure*. What was the movement's ideology, intentions (aims), strategy, tactics, organizational structure, and following? In the case of multiple groups, what united them and what divided them?
3. *Wider significance*. How and why was the group successful/unsuccessful? How does the case study add to the analysis and the narrative that we have developed together so far?

WEEK 6: ANARCHISM

Across Europe, Russia, and America, anarchists were the premier terrorists of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, assassinating seven heads of state or government in 1894–1912 and terrifying publics despite their small number. How can we explain the apparent mismatch—if there is one—between Nechaev’s amoral, calculating “Catechism” and Kropotkin’s idealistic “Appeal”? Was Nechaev’s strategy rational? How did anarchism’s particular modes of militancy adapt to—or fail to adapt to—political opportunities c. 1900? What counterterrorism and political alternatives helped to blunt the movement?

Readings (about 65 pp.):

1. Sergei Nechaev (with Mikhail Bakunin?), “Catechism of a Revolutionary,” 1869, in Philip Pomper, “Bakunin, Nechaev, and the ‘Catechism of a Revolutionary’: The Case for Joint Authorship,” *Canadian–American Slavic Studies* 10/4 (Winter 1976), 546–50.
2. Pëtr Kropotkin, “An Appeal to the Young,” 1880, in *Kropotkin’s Revolutionary Pamphlets*, ed. Roger N. Baldwin (New York: Dover Publications, 1970), 260–82.
3. Richard Bach Jensen, “Daggers, Rifles, and Dynamite: Anarchist Terrorism in Nineteenth–Century Europe,” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 16/1 (2004), 116–53.

WEEK 7: SOVIET COMMUNISM

The Soviet Union, improbably established by the Bolsheviks in Russia during chaotic years of imperial war, civil conflict, and revolution in 1917–1923, was committed, like anarchism, to a future without private property, inequality, unhappiness, or social disharmony, to be achieved through a protracted historical process of terror and expropriation of private property (collectivization). Yet Bolshevik rule was, unlike anarchism, an enduring institutional form (a state) committed to realizing this utopia—not a network of terrorists but a terrorist regime. How did Bolshevik terror against “class enemies” function? How, according to Kopelev, was collectivization organized and justified? And how, in light of Gross, is totalitarianism best understood?

Readings (about 70 pp.):

1. Lev Kopelev, *The Education of a True Believer*, trans. Gary Kern (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 224–86.
2. Jan T. Gross, “A Note on the Nature of Soviet Totalitarianism,” *Soviet Studies* 34/3 (1982), 367–76.

WEEK 8: FASCISM AND NAZISM

Italian Fascism and German Nazism developed in parallel with Soviet communism and to some extent mirrored it, though the movements were mutually hostile and distinct. What aims, practices, and dynamics set Fascism and Nazism apart from communism and from one another? In what sense were they “revolutionary” and “counterrevolutionary,” left-wing and right-wing—if such labels obtain? How was the Hitler regime, an administrative anarchy, able to carry out mass terror and the genocide of European Jewry? How does our study of communist, Fascist, and Nazi state terror enrich or complicate our understanding of non- or sub-state terrorism?

Readings (about 50 pp.)

1. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “The Futurist Manifesto,” 1909, [link](#) (about 4 pp.)
2. Giovanni Gentile, “Manifesto of the Fascist Intellectuals,” 1925, in Brian Copenhaver and Rebecca Copenhaver (eds.), *From Kant to Croce: Modern Philosophy in Italy 1800–1950* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2012), 706–12.
3. National Socialist propaganda excerpts: Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg (eds.), *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (Berkeley and Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1994), 124–26 (German Workers’ Party (DAP), “The Twenty-Five Points,” 1920), 130–33 (Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 1927), 137–38 (Joseph Goebbels, “Why Are We Enemies of the Jews?”, 1930), 142 (“German Farmer You Belong to Hitler! Why?”)
4. Ian Kershaw, “‘Working Towards the Führer’: Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship,” *Contemporary European History* 2/2 (1993): 103–18.
5. Christopher R. Browning, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 169–84.

Assignments:

- Reflection Paper #2 – due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of the week

WEEK 9: THE ZIONIST REVOLT IN MANDATE PALESTINE

The creation of the State of Israel, which was preceded by armed Jewish paramilitary campaigns against the British authorities in Mandate Palestine, was an early and dramatic episode of national liberation in the wake of the Second World War. How did the members of the Irgun and Lehi understand the Zionist project, what was their strategy in fighting the British and making use of global public opinion, and to what extent was their revolt successful?

Readings (about 70 pp.):

1. Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (1896), excerpts (about 4 pp.)
2. Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky, "The Iron Wall" and "The Ethics of the Iron Wall," November 1923, [link](#) (about 5 pp.)
3. Menachem Begin, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*, trans. Samuel Katz (Tel-Aviv: Hadar Publishing Co., 1964), 26-71, 372-80.
4. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 45-55.

Assignments:

- Midterm Examination (In Class) on the first class day of the week

WEEK 10: DECOLONIZATION IN ALGERIA

Algeria's war of independence (1954-1962) was violent and protracted, involving urban bombings and rural guerrilla warfare against French civilian colonists and military units alike, torture and forced confessions by the French, and appeals to world opinion. Why, according to Fanon, was the colonial "situation" itself violent? Why was violence redemptive, cathartic, and necessary for national liberation? Does Fanon's account cohere? How does the Algerian case compare to the Zionist example of national liberation and armed struggle against an imperial power?

Readings (about 70 pp.):

1. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 55-64.
2. Franz Fanon, "On Violence," in *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 1-62.

WEEK 11: RADICAL ISLAMISM

Violent Islamic revolutionaries, whether loosely organized in jihadi networks or coming to power in genuine states, have had an outsize impact in late twentieth and early twenty-first century history. Why and how? What is specifically “Islamic” about their beliefs and tactics and what is not? What unites and what divides these varied groups across the Middle East and the world?

Readings (about 65 pp.):

1. Sayyid Qutb, “Signposts along the Road” and “In the Shade of the Qur’an,” in Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds.), *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from al-Banna to Bin Laden*, 136–52.
2. “The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas),” 1988, [excerpts](#) (about 8 pp.)
3. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 65–72, 80–82, 90–100, 154–72.

Assignments:

- Experiential Learning Component (Interview Report or Film Review) – first draft due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the first class day of the week.

WEEK 12: THE AMERICAN EXTREMIST RIGHT

Domestic extremism of the right has been a recurring feature of American history. How have violent Christian identitarians, white nationalists, and philo-fascists organized, propagandized, and carried out attacks? What dangers do they pose to the country's civil fabric? What law enforcement, policy, and political strategies have been best at mitigating these dangers?

Readings (about 65 pp.):

1. David C. Rapoport, "Before the Bombs There Were the Mobs: American Experiences with Terror," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 20:2 (2008), 167-94.
2. Louis Beam, "Leaderless Resistance," 1983, [link](#) (about 7 pp.)
3. Timothy McVeigh, "An Essay on Hypocrisy," 1998, [link](#) (about 1 p.)
4. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, 107-27.
5. Arie Perliger, *American Zealots: Inside Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 70-89.
6. "Proud Boys Lead Major Breaches of Capitol on Jan. 6, Investigation Finds," *New York Times*, June 17, 2022 (17-minute video).

Assignments:

- Experiential Learning Component (Interview Report or Film Review) - final draft due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of the week.

WEEK 13: NON-VIOLENCE?

What are the alternatives to political violence? How, according to Lincoln and to King, should we relate to unjust or imperfect domestic institutions? According to King, why is non-violence potentially such a powerful political and moral weapon? Why, in his view, should we be skeptical of social movements that indulge in violence?

Readings (about 65 pp.):

1. Abraham Lincoln, "Lyceum Address," 1838, [link](#) (about 6 pp.)
2. *The Radical King*, ed. Cornel West (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015), 75-96, 127-46, 181-200

Assignments:

- Reflection Paper #3 - due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of the week

WEEK 14: COUNTERTERRORISM AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Our course concludes by rethinking conventional counterterrorism. Considering our analytical frameworks and historical case studies, how can we take a broader view of the challenges to civil peace and the threat of political violence, in the US and globally? What counterterrorism principles and strategies seem most promising and how do we choose among competing policies given limited knowledge and available resources? How can we as citizens and community members cultivate a clear-eyed, dispassionate, and useful understanding of political violence in today's world?

Readings (about 70 pp.):

1. Robert Malley and Jon Finer, "The Long Shadow of 9/11: How Counterterrorism Warps U.S. Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2018, [link](#) (about 15 pp.)
2. "National Strategy for Counterterrorism of the United States of America," October 2018, [link](#) (about 26 pp.)
3. "National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism," June 2021, [link](#) (about 28 pp.)

Assignments:

- Policy Memo first draft due to Canvas by 11:59 P.M. on the last class day of the week
- Policy Memo final draft due to Canvas due during Examination Period (to be scheduled)

IV. Grading Scale and Rubrics

Grading Scale

For information on UF's grading policies for assigning grade points, see [here](#).

A	94 - 100%		C	74 - 76%
A-	90 - 93%		C-	70 - 73%
B+	87 - 89%		D+	67 - 69%
B	84 - 86%		D	64 - 66%
B-	80 - 83%		D-	60 - 63%
C+	77 - 79%		E	<60

Grading Rubrics

Participation Rubric

A (90-100%)	Typically comes to class with pre-prepared questions about the readings. Engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others and consistently elevates the level of discussion.
B (80-89%)	Does not always come to class with pre-prepared questions about the reading. Waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.
C (70-79%)	Attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant in discussion. Is only adequately prepared for discussion.
D (60-69%)	Fails to attend class regularly and is inadequately prepared for discussion. Is an unwilling participant in discussion.
E (<60%)	Attends class infrequently and is wholly unprepared for discussion. Refuses to participate in discussion.

Examination Rubric: Essays and Short Answers

	Completeness	Analysis	Evidence	Writing
A (90–100%)	Shows a thorough understanding of the question. Addresses all aspects of the question completely.	Analyses, evaluates, compares and/or contrasts issues and events with depth.	Incorporates pertinent and detailed information from both class discussions and assigned readings.	Presents all information clearly and concisely, in an organized manner.
B (80–89%)	Presents a general understanding of the question. Completely addresses most aspects of the question or address all aspects incompletely.	Analyses or evaluates issues and events, but not in any depth.	Includes relevant facts, examples and details but does not support all aspects of the task evenly.	Presents information fairly and evenly and may have minor organization problems.
C (70–79%)	Shows a limited understanding of the question. Does not address most aspects of the question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating accurate, relevant facts.	Includes relevant facts, examples and details, but omits concrete examples, includes inaccurate information and/or does not support all aspects of the task.	Lacks focus, somewhat interfering with comprehension.
D (60–69%)	Fails fully to answer the specific central question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating vague, irrelevant, and/or inaccurate facts.	Does not incorporate information from pertinent class discussion and/or assigned readings.	Organizational problems prevent comprehension.
E (<60%)	Does not answer the specific central question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events.	Does not adduce any evidence.	Incomprehensible organization and prose.

Writing Rubric

	Thesis and Argumentation	Use of Sources	Organization	Grammar, mechanics and style
A (90–100%)	Thesis is clear, specific, and presents a thoughtful, critical, engaging, and creative interpretation. Argument fully supports the thesis both logically and thoroughly.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are well incorporated, utilized, and contextualized throughout.	Clear organization. Introduction provides adequate background information and ends with a thesis. Details are in logical order. Conclusion is strong and states the point of the paper.	No errors.
B (80–89%)	Thesis is clear and specific, but not as critical or original. Shows insight and attention to the text under consideration. May have gaps in argument’s logic.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are incorporated but not contextualized significantly.	Clear organization. Introduction clearly states thesis, but does not provide as much background information. Details are in logical order, but may be more difficult to follow. Conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all loose ends.	A few errors.
C (70–79%)	Thesis is present but not clear or specific, demonstrating a lack of critical engagement to the text. Argument is weak, missing important details or making logical leaps with little support.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are mostly incorporated but are not properly contextualized.	Significant lapses in organization. Introduction states thesis but does not adequately provide background information. Some details not in logical or expected order that results in a distracting read. Conclusion is recognizable but does not tie up all loose ends.	Some errors.
D (60–69%)	Thesis is vague and/or confused. Demonstrates a failure to understand the text. Argument lacks any logical flow and does not utilize any source material.	Primary and/or secondary texts are almost wholly absent.	Poor, hard-to-follow organization. There is no clear introduction of the main topic or thesis. There is no clear conclusion, and the paper just ends. Little or no employment of logical body paragraphs.	Many errors.
E (<60%)	There is neither a thesis nor any argument.	Primary and/or secondary texts are wholly absent.	The paper is wholly disorganized, lacking an introduction, conclusion or any logical coherence.	Scores of errors.

V. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the Quest the General Education student learning outcomes for Humanities (H).

Social and Behavioral Sciences (S) Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

Content: *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline(s).*

- Define and apply key terms and concepts of sociological research, analyze historical case studies, weigh the relative value of different social-scientific methodologies and theories, and reflect on the ethical conundrums posed in political life (Quest 2, S). **Assessments:** Active Class Discussion, Interview Report, Film Review, Reflection Papers, Midterm Exam, Policy Memo
- Form a nuanced, defensible understanding of the terrorism category and of the broader phenomenon of political violence (Quest 2, S). **Assessments:** Active Class Discussion, Interview Report, Film Review, Reflection Papers, Midterm Exam, Policy Memo

Critical Thinking: *Students carefully and logically analyze information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*

- Identify, describe, explain, and offer thoughtful proposed solutions at the level of policy, political action, or human praxis to problems of political violence. Do so by drawing on and assimilating a range of genres (testimonies, journalism, scholarship), social-scientific frameworks, and normative perspectives (Quest 2, S). **Assessments:** Active Class Discussion, Interview Report, Film Review, Midterm Exam, Policy Memo

Communication: *Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*

- Communicate concisely, clearly, and cogently in writing and in discussion when dealing with fundamentally contested and controversial topics related to political violence. Advance non-obvious, specific, arguable, and original claims supported by social-scientific analysis, qualitative and quantitative evidence, and sound logic in terms accessible to an educated public (Quest 2, S). **Assessments:** Active Class Discussion, Interview Report, Film Review, Policy Memo

Connection: *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*

- Thoughtfully reflect on how students, as community and family members, citizens, and future leaders, can best understand and most effectively confront problems of political violence faced in contemporary societies. Understand key rights, responsibilities, and ethical dilemmas of modern political life, above all in free societies (Quest 2). **Assessment:** Active Class Discussion, Reflection Papers

VI. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Experiential Learning Component

As discussed under “II. Graded Work” above, students will have a choice of two assignments with a major experiential component outside the classroom. Through the Interview Report, students record personal testimonies and memories of political violence among family members, friends, or acquaintances. Through the Film Review, they examine one of the greatest films about decolonization, political violence, and (counter)insurgency ever made. In both cases, students will step into the shoes of other people (past and present) and practice imagining and analyzing a range of competing perspectives and narratives.

2. Details of Self-Reflection Component

Self-reflection is explicit in the Reflection Papers and is built into class discussions, the Experiential Learning Component options (Interview Report and Film Review), and the Policy Memo. Students will be continuously asked to reflect on how course activities and readings change their perspective on salient themes (politics, violence, power, ethics, social inquiry) and affect their view of themselves in the contemporary world.

VII. Required Policies

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found [here](#).

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the [Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available [here](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [this link](#). Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at [GatorEvals Public Data](#).

Electronic Device Policy

Use of phones, tablets, and laptops is discouraged during class. You are encouraged to take notes by hand and to bring copies of the readings to class.