

**MEDIA AND TERRORISM (3 credits)**  
**Comm 3597.02 section 0040**  
**Autumn 2016**

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Office Hours: 11 a.m. –12 p.m. Tuesdays and by appointment

Classroom: Macquigg Lab 160  
Tues/Thurs 1:50 - 2:45 p.m.

Required textbook:

Byman, Daniel. (2015). *Al Qaeda, the Islamic State and the global jihadist movement: What everyone needs to know*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Course description:

This is a “hybrid” course comprised of online learning (lectures, readings, and videos) as well as twice-weekly classroom sessions. As reflected in our schedule, you will be expected to keep up with a considerable amount of content outside of class which will require discipline on your end. All your exams, quizzes, and other assignments will be completed online, and all the teaching materials are provided online in Canvas. The classroom sessions will supplement your learning, as I will provide further explanations of material, and also challenge you in intelligently discussing complex concepts with your peers in-person.

This course helps you understand the problem of terrorism in our increasingly global, contemporary world. Our approach is communication-based but we draw upon literature from many disciplines to help explain the key issues in understanding the key issues related to terrorism, counter-terrorism and communication.

Students from many disciplines across campus are enrolled in our course. This is an important opportunity to examine scholarship from different perspectives and to interact with students from different majors. You will do this in part by writing and talking about terrorism and media in the contemporary world.

We will be studying the nature of terrorism, and considering questions such as who are terrorists, what are terrorists’ grievances with the larger society, and what are the best ways for societies and governments to combat terrorism. Because terrorism is a tactic that is calculated to create fear and influence public opinion, we are interested in the various roles of media. Of particular interest will be how people learn about events in society, how news reports about reality, and how officials and news workers attempt to explain the problem of terrorism.

Terrorism has unique links to communication and these will be explored in various ways – consideration of acts of terror, recruiting new terrorists, and issues in evaluating effective and ineffective means of fighting terrorism. We will also be interested, throughout the term, in media portrayals of terrorism and terrorists in news discourse as well as the forms of mediated communication such as films and televised dramatic portrayals. Controversial remedies for terrorism – rendition, torture, warrantless wiretapping and similar issues, will be examined, along with the implications of their portrayals in popular entertainment and news.

There are few topics in contemporary society as controversial as terrorism and we must be mindful of this as we proceed through the term. Communication media provide the tools for public officials to communicate with the public about terrorism, setting an agenda as well as framing the problem's causes and consequences. Issues of related interest involve media treatment of civil liberties and issues such as domestic surveillance, censorship, extraordinary rendition, and the use of torture. Public support for the war on terrorism is seen as a complex matter involving these issues as well as judgments about how successful the project is at any given time.

### GE Requirements and Goals:

This course fulfills the General Education requirements for Cross-Disciplinary Seminar and GE Diversity: Global Studies. The Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committees have specified certain learning outcomes for the course. These are as follows:

#### Diversity

Goals: Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

##### *Social Diversity in the United States*

1. Students describe and evaluate the roles of such categories as race, gender and sexuality, disability, class, ethnicity, and religion in the pluralistic institutions and cultures of the United States.
2. Students recognize the role of social diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values regarding appreciation, tolerance, and equality of others.

##### *Global Studies*

1. Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
2. Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

##### *Cross-Disciplinary Seminar*

Goals: Students demonstrate an understanding of a topic of interest through scholarly activities that draw upon multiple disciplines and through their interactions with students from different majors.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Understand benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives.
2. Understand benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives.
3. Synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to topic of interest.

### *Requirements:*

#### Attendance and participation:

In addition to the online component of this hybrid course, we will have with a lecture and discussion format in classroom sessions. Attendance is *required* at all class sessions. We will take attendance each day the class meets. You are responsible for signing the attendance sheet at each class meeting. Do not sign in for another person. Falsification of attendance records can be treated as an instance of academic misconduct.

You will need to participate actively in order to get maximum benefit from the course. Evidence clearly shows that students who come to class regularly and engage in discussion learn more and generally do

better in the class. This means you will need to come to the class, stay for the entire period, and be prepared for it by reading the assigned materials in advance. This is very important. Please make an effort to be on time for the class.

Web site:

We will use Carmen for maintaining records such as the syllabus, course announcements, handouts, and grades. All papers must be turned in to the appropriate Carmen dropbox.

Assignments:

We will have five quizzes (all multiple choice), a midterm, and a final exam. These will be conducted online using Carmen’s quiz function and will deal with the readings, videos, and lecture materials.

Response Papers. Each of you will pick *three* class session’s materials and prepare essays dealing with the themes contained in those readings and/or videos. Each paper should be about 500 words (about one page, single-spaced). You will sign up for a due date for these essays, and they should be uploaded to Carmen before the start of the class that you are writing about. I want your reactions to the course materials—not the lectures—so the idea is that you write these before hearing lectures or classroom discussions. The best essays will articulate a *point of view* with respect to the materials and then use facts from the materials to support this argument. These papers should *not* be a summary of the main points. I am more interested in your reaction to the information. This might involve the usefulness of the information, the level of interest you have in it, anything that you found particularly surprising or disappointing, etc. Note that although these essays are short, they should contain the elements of any well-written essay: a good creative title, introduction, transitions, and conclusion. I will take off points if you exclude any of these components. Your point of view should be clearly identified and appropriate evidence should be cited.

Grades:

The OSU “standard scheme” of points grading as implemented by Carmen is used and all grades will be kept on Carmen’s grade book.

**GRADING SCALE:**

<b>A</b>	93-100%	<b>B</b>	83-86.9%	<b>C</b>	73-76.9%	<b>D</b>	60-66.9%
<b>A-</b>	90-92.9%	<b>B-</b>	80-82.9%	<b>C-</b>	70-72.9%	<b>E</b>	Below 60.0%
<b>B+</b>	87-89.9%	<b>C+</b>	77-79.9%	<b>D+</b>	67-69.9%		

The point breakdown listed here will be strictly followed. Points are not “rounded.”

When completing your assignments and receiving the evaluation of your work, keep the following criteria in mind:

*A = Superior.* Greatly exceeds the basic requirements, by demonstrating high standards of creativity, skill, analysis, initiative and effort.

*B= Above average.* Exceeds basic requirements by demonstrating above average creativity, skill, analysis, initiative and effort. May have technical weakness in some areas.

*C= Average.* Meets basic course requirements but does not demonstrate extra initiative regarding the assignment.

*D= Below average.* Some requirements are deficient. Shows an effort worthy of credit, while not meeting the basic requirements in every respect.

*E=Poor work.* Deficient in most or all requirements.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Graded Activities

Midterm Exam .....	25%
Final Exam .....	25%
Quizzes (5 @ 5 points each).....	25%
Response papers (3 @ 5 points each) .....	15%
Attendance and Participation .....	10%
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b>100%</b>

Your grade will be determined according to your performance on these items. There will be no opportunities to re-take exams, redo assignments, or complete additional or extra credit work.

Quizzes must be taken on the designated days/times. No early or late exams are allowed except in the case of an illness or family emergency. In the rare event that an illness or emergency arises, it is your responsibility to (1) inform me *prior* to the scheduled exam time in-person or via e-mail, (2) provide me with written documentation of the emergency, including all contact information and legible names of authorizations, and (3) provide me with written documentation from someone else who can further corroborate what is stated in the documentation. If these three steps are not adhered to, you will get a zero.

### Participation

Attendance and Participation are worth 10% of your final grade. Students will be evaluated on their ability to **intelligently** discuss the assigned materials. The first, minimum component of participation is class attendance. I expect students to attend all class sessions unless serious circumstances make doing so impossible. ALL students will be expected to participate fully in the class by both asking questions AND answering them. While a reasonable quantity of verbal participation is a necessary condition for a positive evaluation, it is not sufficient. The quality of questions and answers will be considered when evaluating student participation, and quality will be judged by how informed the questions are by the assigned readings and quality thinking. Participation might also be assessed through relatively easy in-class pop quizzes (distinct from the other graded quizzes) that will simply appraise whether you prepared for class by familiarizing yourself with that day's materials.

To earn full credit for participation, you should (1) be prompt and attend all classes, (2) complete all readings prior to class, (3) consistently participate in class discussion, and (4) display an understanding of the readings and demonstrate an ability to apply course concepts.

## COURSE POLICIES

### E-mail and Carmen

Throughout the semester, expect to receive e-mails from me regarding the course. As such, it is important that you check your OSU e-mail account regularly and make sure that course e-mails are not going to your junk folder.

All e-mail is automatically sent to students' osu.edu accounts. Therefore, you must regularly check your OSU e-mail. Of course, you can forward your OSU e-mail to another account if you wish. Note, though, that OSU has good firewalls. You must use your OSU e-mail to contact your instructor. Your instructor will not reply to e-mails sent from non-OSU accounts. Plus, e-mail from accounts other than your OSU account may not get through anyway.

**NOTE:** Allow *at least* 24 hours for your instructor to get back to you. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours (or 48 hours on weekends), assume your e-mail was not received and try again.

Readings outside of the textbook are available online or Carmen.

**IMPORTANT:** If you discover any broken links or other issues in our course content, please let the instructor know immediately.

To succeed in this hybrid course which is largely online, it is essential that you have regular and reliable online access. Your instructor may post announcements and/or send out individual and class e-mails with updated information about the class. Consequently you should regularly (*i.e., daily*) check Carmen.

### **Late Work**

Computer and/or system problems do NOT excuse late work or missed quizzes or exams.

Students who wait until the last minute to submit assignments are taking a huge risk. Computer, internet, and life-related problems happen every day, and they are almost always unexpected and seemingly beyond one's control. Be prepared by completing your assignments early. In general, you should prepare your work *ahead* of deadline. Penalties will apply to all late work unless *advance* arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Deadline extensions will be considered ONLY for those who immediately provide **written and verifiable documentation** of severe illness, death in the immediate family, or official OSU-related business.

### **Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct**

OSU's Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc>) defines academic misconduct as "any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process."

While many people associate academic misconduct with "cheating," the term encompasses a wider scope of student behaviors which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violation of course rules;
- Violation of program regulations;
- Knowingly providing or receiving information during a course exam or program assignment;
- Possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during a course exam or program assignment;
- Knowingly providing or using assistance in the laboratory, on field work, or on a course assignment, unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor or, where appropriate, a project/research supervisor;
- Submission of work not performed in a course: This includes (but is not limited to) instances where a student fabricates and/or falsifies information for an academic assignment. It also includes instances where a student submits data or information (such as a term paper) from one course to satisfy the requirements of another course, unless submission of such work is permitted by the instructor;
- Submitting plagiarized work for a course/program assignment;
- Serving as or asking another student to serve as a substitute while taking an exam.

Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's *Code of Student Conduct* and this syllabus may constitute "Academic Misconduct." Ignorance of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

## Disability Services

If you have a documented disability, please register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations, so they may be implemented in a timely fashion. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Disability Services at 614-292-3307 or [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu)

## **Technology Use and General Politeness**

This is a hybrid course which is largely based online. Accordingly, our classroom meetings should be focused on discussion—not for texting, web browsing, e-mailing, etc. Technology use such as noisy cell phones, Internet shopping, and text messaging at your desk are a distraction to the instructor and your fellow students. Please be respectful of those around you by turning off or silencing your phone and putting it away before class.

Laptops and other portable electronic devices should NOT be used in the classroom unless explicitly required as part of the day's topic. This is becoming standard practice in courses in our department by most every instructor. Violation of this policy may result in the student being asked to leave the classroom.

Notes may be taken with paper and pen. Not only is this courteous for those around you who are spending their time and money in the classroom without being distracted by those around them, it is also beneficial for you as a student. Here's why:

Although laptops or tablets can be used for productive purposes in a classroom, it is my observation (reinforced by growing academic research) that they primarily serve as distractions—to those who use them, those nearby, and the person leading the class. Although some might argue that laptops are beneficial for taking notes, considerable scientific research demonstrates that using laptops for note taking impedes learning compared to paper and pen note taking. If you'd like to read a brief summary of just some of the evidence, check out the *Scientific American* article "A Learning Secret: Don't Take Notes with a Laptop":

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>

To maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning during the discussion-based classroom meetings of this hybrid course, please be courteous to other members of the class and treat them with the dignity and respect that you expect from others.

Disruptions: Disruptions and distractions (including talking during lecture; text messaging or other phone or computer use), threatening behavior, and negative participation (e.g., use of inappropriate language or derogatory speech) will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behavior may be asked to leave class, and be reported to the Dean of Students and/or University Police. Cell phones are considered a disruption. Turn your cell phone off completely before the start of class. Not just the ringer—completely off.

**If you object to these policies or do not feel that you can adhere to them, please do not enroll in this class.**

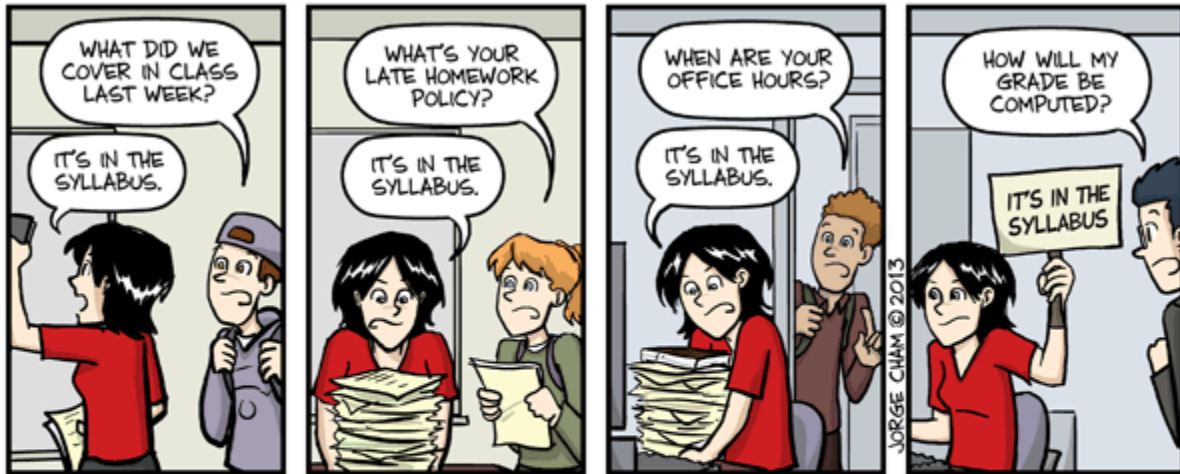
Attendance while having flu and other flu-like illnesses:

You should *not* attend class while ill with influenza. Students with flu-like symptoms will be asked to leave class. The illness and self-isolation period will usually be about a week. It is very important that individuals avoid spreading the flu to others. Most students should be able to complete a successful semester despite a flu-induced absence. If you are absent due to the flu, you will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to make up missed work. Completion of all assignments and exams assures the greatest chance for students to develop heightened understanding and content mastery. The opportunity to complete all assignments and exams supports the university's desire to enable students to make responsible situational decisions, including the decision to avoid spreading a contagious virus to other students, staff, and faculty, without endangering their academic work. Students with the flu do not need to provide a physician's certification of illness. However, ill students should inform their teachers (but not through personal contact in which there is a risk of exposing others to the virus) as soon as possible that they are absent because of the flu.

Diversity statement:

The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people. Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Read this syllabus carefully. By remaining enrolled in the class, you have accepted the conditions and requirements of the course. The requirements and rules indicated in this syllabus are non-negotiable. You should drop the class immediately if any aspects of the course, its rules, and/or requirements are not acceptable to you.



# IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS





Students enrolled in Comm 3597.02 must sign this document and submit it to the instructor before the end of the second week of classes.

**Statement of Understanding of the COMM 3597.02 Academic Misconduct Policy**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print your name legibly), have read the section of the course syllabus describing the academic misconduct policy for COMM 3597.02 and understand the potential consequences of violating it. I understand that a lack of familiarity with the academic misconduct policies as spelled out in the section of the syllabus on academic misconduct and the Ohio State University Code of Student Conduct is not a valid excuse for violating these policies.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (your signature)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_