

**Administration of Justice Program
2006-2007 Honors Seminar**

“The Collateral Effects of Counter-Terrorism Strategies on Specific U.S. Communities”

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Since September 11th, there have been massive increases in personal, commercial, and governmental expenditures on anti-terrorism strategies, as well as a proliferation of programs designed to fight terrorism. These increases in spending and counter-terrorism strategic development have not only focused attention on the central policy question of whether or not these programs are effective in reducing terrorism, but additionally, what are the collateral effects of these strategies. Collateral effects are wide-ranging and can involve effects across multiple social, economic and political sectors. This particular project is interested in the collateral effects that counter-terrorism strategies might have on individuals within specific communities. Collateral effects can include the violation of civil and human rights by authorities or other citizens, but also might include a reduction in legitimacy afforded to government by individuals, or perhaps even sympathy for those wielding terrorism. With September 11th in particular, it is hypothesized that the Arab, Asian, and/or Muslim communities have been affected the most by counter-terrorism strategies.

The important question, however, is whether there is empirical support for these claims. And, if there is, then what are the manifestations of these effects? In other words, have these communities been affected more so than others? Can we measure such effects? What are the policy implications for these affects? Does the broader community care? Has negative or positive treatment changed the perception of these communities towards terrorism, the United States, government officials, or other individuals? Are there differences across different groups, religions, genders, age levels, etc.? In democracies especially, questions of collateral effects are just as (if not sometimes more) important as those of efficiency and effectiveness – this project seeks to identify if there is empirical support for these claims.

POTENTIAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTS

Students in the honors seminar will work with Professor Cynthia Lum over the period of a year on designing and implementing a research project to explore these questions as well as preparing final projects for presentation within the academic and policy communities. The goal of this project will be to make an original contribution to the understanding of the collateral effects of counter-terrorism programs as well as to connect students with members of the Washington, D.C. community. Students accepted into the honors seminar may be involved in the following activities:

1. Exploring what is known about the collateral effects of counter-terrorism programs with the goal of developing research questions and placing the project into context;
2. Designing and implementing structured and semi-structured interviews and surveys as well as other types of interactions (for example, focus groups) with members of Arab, Asian, and/or Muslim communities in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area including individuals, organizations, government officials, members of the media;
3. If possible, creating a video documentary on some of the interviews and findings to be displayed at the George Mason website;
4. Collecting, analyzing and synthesizing information collected and developing written, oral, and media-based presentations on the subject matter.

OTHER INFORMATION

Students must have at least a 3.2 GPA to participate and there may be additional restrictions on applying to participate. Students who successfully complete ADJ 491/492 with a grade point average of 3.5 or above will receive the honors designation in Administration of Justice when the graduate. The seminar will meet on Tuesdays from 1:30 to 4:10pm at the Prince William Campus, although some of the class seminars and meetings will be substituted with field work assignments.