

# **GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

**CRIM 490-006, Fall 2012**

**Mondays, 1:30 – 4:15 PM**

**Prince William Campus, Occoquan 302**

## **RADICALIZATION AND RECRUITMENT**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dennis Pluchinsky

[dpluchin@gmu.edu](mailto:dpluchin@gmu.edu) and [dpluchinsky@rocketmail.com](mailto:dpluchinsky@rocketmail.com)

**Course Objective:** To provide the student with a set of analytical frameworks by which he/she can better understand the methods that terrorist organizations use to recruit members and how militant movements radicalize individuals to become adherents.

While the focus will be on how the global jihadist movement radicalizes individuals, the course will also examine the methods used by pre-9/11 secular and religious terrorist organizations to recruit and how violent movements like the animal liberation front, earth liberation front, anti-abortion movement, the militia movement, and the anarchist movement radicalized adherents. The emphasis will be on message construction, delivery methods, targeted audiences, and results.

The concept of “leaderless terrorism” will also be examined as the primary operational manifestation of radicalization. Case studies of individuals radicalized in Western Europe and the United States will be surveyed.

Counter-radicalization and de-radicalization approaches from the past and present will also be explored, as well as the concepts of propaganda and marketing. In addition, the course will look at the problems that law

enforcement and intelligence agencies confront in attempting to detect in advance radicalized individuals.

Class lectures, outside readings, power-point slides, and videos will be used to accomplish the above objectives. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TAPE LECTURES.**

**Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:**

- Understand, apply, and distinguish between, different conceptual and analytical frameworks related to radicalization, and critically examine their theoretical foundations;
- Interpret and assess relevant trends and patterns in Al Qaeda related radicalization and recruitment in Europe and North America;
- Recognize and evaluate different approaches towards preventing and “reversing” radicalization;
- Make effective and relevant contributions to the ongoing debate about countering violent radicalization and recruitment.

**Course Blackboard web site: You must frequently check the course web site for announcements and new files. All students will have access to this site.**

### **Required Textbooks (4):**

Magedah E. Shabo. Techniques of Propaganda and Persuasion (Delaware: Prestwick House, Inc., 2008).

J.M. Berger. Jihad Joe: Americans Who Go to War in the Name of Islam (Washington, D.C: Potomac Books, 2011).

J. Michael Waller. Fighting the War of Ideas Like a Real War (Washington, D.C: The Institute of World Politics Press, 2007).

Mitchell Silber. The Al-Qaeda Factor: Plots Against the West (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

**Additional weekly readings will be assigned on blackboard.**

**ALL COURSE TEXTS AND BLACKBOARD ASSIGNED READINGS MUST BE READ BY STUDENTS!!!**

## **Course Requirements:**

**Warning: Students are expected that in addition to the assigned general research question, they will fully and accurately apply to the papers all appropriate frameworks, models, contentions, and insights gained from course lectures and course texts up to the research paper due date.**

**Student Requirement #1** – *(12 text pages, double-spaced, research paper, Due October 22); minus 5 points for each class paper is late. = 25% of final grade*

Students will select a radicalization subject from the below course list and write a radicalization profile on the subject applying all concepts, frameworks, and insights from class lectures and course texts up to October 21. Apply the course radicalization model to these radicalized individuals. Also incorporate into your paper any other course assumptions, key points, or principles. If possible, note any radicalization signs that may have been missed by relatives, friends, colleagues, community, and law enforcement. You will be using only open source material so your ability to answer many questions will be limited. If you have selected an individual connected with a cell, please note if the subject was the cell builder or

not. If he was, how did he build the cell and if there were any tensions or disagreements within the cell.

- Dritan Duka, Shain Duka, Eljvir Duka, Mohamad Shnewer, Serdar Tatar - Arrested in U.S. on May 8, 2007 – Ft. Dix plot - Cell.
- Amine El Khalifi - Arrested in U.S. on February 18, 2012 – Bomb plot against US Capitol.
- Daniel Patrick Boyd – Arrested in U.S. on July 27, 2009 – Convert - North Carolina. Cell
- Levar Washington - Arrested in U.S. on August 2, 2005 – Convert - New Folsom State Prison (Sacramento) plot - Cell
- Jason Walters - Arrested in the Netherlands in November 2004 – Convert - Hofstad cell
- Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad, aka Carlos Leon Bledsoe – Arrested in the U.S. on June 1, 2009 – Convert – Little Rock, Arkansas shooting.
- Collen LaRose, aka: “Jihad Jane” – Arrested in the U.S. in October 2010 – Convert – Europe plot – Cell.
- Zakaria Amara OR Shareef Abdelhaleem – Arrested in Canada in June 2006 – Toronto 18 cell.
- Arid Uka – Arrested in Germany on March 2, 2011 - Attack on U.S. military bus at Frankfurt airport.
- James Cromitie – Arrested in New York on May 29, 2009 – Convert – Plot to attack synagogues in Newburgh, New York – Cell
- Rezwan Ferdaus – Arrested in U.S. on September 28, 2011 - plot to damage Pentagon and U.S. Capitol w/ remote controlled aircraft.
- Omar Hammami, aka: Abu Mansoor Al-Amriki, “the American,” - From Alabama – a current leader in the Somali group “Al-Shabaab.”
- Beate Zschäpe (female) – Arrested in Germany in November 2011 – Neo Nazi cell (Zwickau Cell).
- Jubair Ahmad – Arrested September 1, 2011 in Virginia – for providing material support to a foreign terrorist organization.
- Naser Jason Abdo – Arrested in July 2011 in San Antonio, Texas – plotting bombing attack against restaurant near Ft. Hood.

Students may select another case study but must receive the instructor’s approval.

**Student Requirement #2** – (15 text pages, double-spaced, Due November 26); minus 5 points for each class paper is late = **30% of final grade.**

Students will analyze all 8 issues of the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's English-language online magazine *Inspire* applying course analytical frameworks (especially propaganda and terrorist narratives frameworks) and concepts from lectures and course texts up to November 25. Instructor will provide all 8 issues of *Inspire* to students via blackboard.

**Student Requirement #3** Class attendance = 10% of the final grade. Lose 1 point for each class missed.

**Student Requirement #4** Class participation (providing comments, asking questions, bringing up current events relevant to the course, making quality observations) = 10% of the final grade.

**Student Requirement #5** Final Exam = 25% of the final grade

**Grading:** I will use the following grading scale –

A = 95-100  
 A- = 90-94  
 B+ = 87-89  
 B = 84-86  
 B- = 80-83  
 C+ = 75-79  
 C = 70-74  
 D = 65-69  
 F = 0 – 64

**Statement on Academic Integrity:** I believe very strongly in the principle of academic integrity, and I will simply not accept any violations of the University Honor Code in my class. The Honor Code contains provisions on cheating, lying, plagiarizing, and stealing. If I witness any violations of the Honor Code, I will follow the standard reporting procedures as outlined in the University catalog. **Please read the Honor Code again for this class.**

The last day to add this course is September 4, 2012.

The last day to drop this course is September 28, 2012.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

## **COURSE LECTURE SCHEDULE**

**August 27** – Course objectives, requirements, map, terms, definitions, and analytical frameworks.

**September 3** – NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

**September 10** - *Lectures:* Five manifestations of political terrorism: the urban terrorist group, the rural-based insurgent organization, a state's intelligence service, the lone wolf terrorist, and the autonomous terrorist cell. Four stages in the emergence of a militant organization: grievance, activist cadre, militant analysis, and construction of the group.

Command vs. leaderless terrorism. Terrorist recruitment: what types of people join terrorist organizations? What are the incentives and deterrents? **Required reading**: Silber, chapters 1-2, Berger, chapters 1-2.

**September 17** – *Lectures*: Dynamics of recruitment / radicalization: transmitter – delivery channels – receivers. Transmitter or Message construction: sender, content, core messages, accessory themes, historical ingredients, framing, resonators, defining target audiences or receivers, and packaging. Delivery channels: documentary, in person speeches, radio / TV / audio cassettes, virtual or Internet. Receivers or targeted audience: collective vs. individuals, mental wiring differences, how message discovered, timing of reception, critical thinking skills, and peer pressure. Possible outcomes/ results: Accept message, reject message, mull message, recruitment (organizational), radicalization (militant movement), external indicators, and detection (family, friends, community, law enforcement), possible profiles, monitor progress of message reception, adjust message. **Required reading**: Silber, chapters 3-5, Berger, chapters 3-5.

**September 24** – continued from previous class. Recruitment / radicalization locations: home, mosque, community center, religious school, friend's apartment, and prisons. Radicalization vs. Mobilization. Factors driving radicalization: personal factors, community factors, group factors, specific external events, sociopolitical factors, and ideological factors. **Required reading**: Silber, chapters 6-9, Berger, chapters 6-9.

**October 1** - *Lectures*: How did pre-Internet terrorist organizations recruit and how did pre-Internet militant movements radicalize? **Required reading**: Silber, 9-10, Berger, chapters 10-12, Waller, chapter 1.

**October 8 – NO CLASS – COLUMBUS DAY – HOWEVER, CLASS WILL MEET ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9**

**October 9** – continued. **Required reading**: Silber, chapters 11-12; Waller, chapter 2; Shabo, chapters 1-5.

**October 15** - **Video**: Earth Liberation Front recruitment video. 24 minutes. **Required reading**: Silber, chapters 13-14; Shabo, chapters 6-11; Waller, chapter 3.

**October 22** - **Video**: The Weather Underground terrorist organization (left-wing group active in the U.S. from around 1969 – 1977). 90 minutes. Example of “specific external event.” Discussion of video. **Required reading**: Silber, chapters 15-16; Waller, chapter 4. **Student Research Paper #1 Due Today.**

**October 29** – *Lectures*: The Global Jihadist Movement: Master narratives, Virtual or E-Recruiters (case studies: Anwar al-Awlaki, his acolyte Samir Khan, and Adam Gadahn), Face to face or personal recruiters (Pierre Vogel, Abu Qatada and Abu Hamza). **Required reading**: Waller, chapter 5; Shabo, chapters 12-15.

**November 5** – continued. **Required reading**: Waller, chapter 6 & conclusion.

**November 12** – *Lectures*: Global jihadist movement audio /visual enhancers (types of jihadist videos, effectiveness, the E-Terrain (producers and distributors). **Required reading**: Shabo, chapters 16-19.

**November 19** – Samples of global jihadist videos – entire session. **Required reading**: Shabo, chapters 20-23 & conclusion.

**November 26** – *Lectures*: What is to be done? De-Radicalization and Counter-radicalization approaches and programs. Snapshots: Saudi



Arabia and Indonesian de-radicalization programs. Counter-marketing videos. **Student Research Paper #2 Due Today**

**December 3 – Lectures:** What is useful for law enforcement agencies, families, friends, and local communities to use to detect radicalization as it is taking place and completed? Are there any hints or indicators that are useful? **LAST CLASS MEETING.**

**December 11- Final Exam** – Course will have an online, no notes, no open book exam posted on blackboard

*Syllabus could change between date posted and beginning of first class.*

-----

**Dennis Pluchinsky**

He was a senior terrorism analyst in the U.S. Department of State's Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis from 1977-2005 where he was responsible for analyzing terrorism in Western Europe, the Former Soviet Union, and the Middle East and Asia. He was selected in 1992 and 2004 for the Director of Central Intelligence's Exceptional Intelligence Analyst Program. He is a contributing editor for the international journal "Studies in Conflict and Terrorism" and an associate of the Intelligence Community's Global Expertise Reserve Program. He presents recurring lectures on terrorism at CIA University, the Kent School for Intelligence, the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, the Joint Military Intelligence Training Center, and the FBI Academy. Since 1990, he has taught courses on terrorism, U.S. counter-terrorism policy and programs, homeland security, ethnic conflict, and al-Qaeda and the global jihad movement at George Washington University, the University of Mary Washington, James Madison University, Missouri State University, Georgetown University, and George Mason University.