



Terrorism and Counterterrorism

SEPTEMBER 24, 2015 – DECEMBER 2, 2015

LEARNING CHECKLIST

This guide lists the learning goals and objectives for each section of the *GeorgetownX Terrorism and Counterterrorism Course* (September 24-December 2, 2015). Use this guide as your own learning checklist while engaging with the course.

If you are planning to get a Certificate, all graded activities have to be submitted by December 2 at 9:00 EDT/13:00 UTC.

WHAT IS TERRORISM AND WHO ARE THE TERRORISTS? – SECTION 1: SEPTEMBER 24-30

- Recall the working definitions of terrorism and recognize their analytic limits.**
- Identify a range of causes of terrorism, and as importantly, distinguish what commonly cited issues are not usually causes.**
 - Explain how terrorism has changed throughout history and how it is hard to define.
 - Recognize how terrorism differs from other forms of conflict and violence like guerilla warfare.
 - List the core elements of the definition of terrorism.
 - Indicate how someone becomes a terrorist and how he or she might justify and rationalize the violence they commit.
 - Recognize the diversity of reasons that account for someone becoming a terrorist.
 - Recognize the distinct psychological processes and policy measures associated with each level on the staircase to terrorism.

STRATEGIES, TACTICS, AND TECHNOLOGY USE – SECTION 2: OCTOBER 1-7

- Understand the strategies and tactics of terrorist groups.**
 - Identify the different strategies that terrorist groups use and their associated strengths and weaknesses.
 - Describe the most common types of terrorist attacks and how terrorists use technology

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AL-QAEDA – SECTION 3: OCTOBER 8-14

- Identify important terrorist groups in the Middle East and South Asia with an understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness. These include Palestinian groups, Pakistani groups, and Al-Qaeda.**
- Identify a range of causes of terrorism, and as importantly, distinguish what commonly cited issues are not usually causes.**
 - Identify one or more accomplishments, weaknesses and/or problems of each group.
 - Identify the various main militant groups and their objectives.
 - Recognize the diversity of reasons that account for someone becoming a terrorist.

ISLAM – SECTION 4: OCTOBER 15-21

- Understand the relationship between religion and terrorism.**
 - Describe jihad and ways in which it has been used and/or exploited.
 - Identify the attitudes most Muslims have today towards Islamic law and terrorism in the name of Islam.
 - Identify the causes of terrorism and its relationship to religion.
 - Explain the emergence of global jihad inspired by Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda.
 - Explain the ways in which Islam can be viewed as the problem, the primary catalyst, and the driver of terrorism.
 - Define Salafism.
 - Explain the place of Saudi Arabia in global Salafism.
 - Recognize that conservatism in religion and violence are not necessarily linked.
 - Identify the attitudes most Muslims have today towards Islamic law and terrorism in the name of Islam.

AREA STUDIES

Section 5: October 22-28: [The Terrorist Threat to Israel and the Israeli Response](#)

- Understand how counterterrorism is constrained in a democratic society and several important legal debates related to counterterrorism.**
 - Recognize the strengths and limits of different counterterrorism instruments, including intelligence, economic punishment, and different uses of military force (drones/targeted killing of terrorists).
 - Explain how intelligence is collected against terrorist groups and recognize different means (human intelligence, signals intelligence, etc.).
 - Describe the impact of counterterrorism on peace negotiations.

Section 6: October 29-November 4: [Terrorism and Counterterrorism in South Asia](#)

- Identify important terrorist groups in the Middle East and/or South Asia with an understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, and overall effectiveness. These include Palestinian groups, Pakistani groups, and Al-Qaeda.**
- Understand the relationship between religion and terrorism.**
 - Describe the evolution of political Islam.
 - Describe what state supporters do and do not offer groups.
 - Identify the various main militant groups.
 - Explain ways in which Islam can be viewed as the problem, the primary catalyst, and the driver of terrorism.
 - Identify the attitudes most Muslims have today towards Islamic law and terrorism in the name of Islam.

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COUNTERTERRORISM AND THE RULE OF LAW – SECTION 7: NOVEMBER 5-11

- Understand how counterterrorism is constrained in a democratic society and several important legal debates related to counterterrorism.**
 - Identify the best sources for understanding U.S. counterterrorism law;
 - Describe how who defines an act of violence, and how the act of violence is understood, affect the response;
 - Explain how the Constitution allocates different branches of government powers relevant to counterterrorism;
 - Describe why terrorism is such a challenge for international law;
 - Describe the nature of treaties, and how they contribute to the fight against terrorism;
 - Describe the nature of customary international law, and how it contributes to the fight against terrorism;
 - Describe the nature of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and how they contribute to the fight against terrorism; and
 - Identify the various military and law enforcement tools available to promote enforcement of international law.

INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTERTERRORISM – SECTION 8: NOVEMBER 12-18

- Understand how counterterrorism is constrained in a democratic society and several important legal debates related to counterterrorism.**
 - Explain how intelligence is collected against terrorist groups and recognize the different means (human intelligence, signals intelligence, etc.).
 - Identify the types of governmental organizations that contribute to counterterrorism intelligence and how they have changed.
 - Describe the principle controversies in recent years involving intelligence used for counterterrorism.

COUNTERTERRORISM INSTRUMENTS – SECTION 9: NOVEMBER 19-25

- Understand how counterterrorism is constrained in a democratic society and several important legal debates related to counterterrorism.**
 - Recognize the strengths and limits of different counterterrorism instruments, including intelligence, economic punishment, and different uses of military force (drones/targeted killing of terrorism).
 - Identify the tradeoffs in the use of each counterterrorism.

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