Course content

What is terrorism? Who becomes a terrorist and why? Where, when, and how is terrorism most likely to occur? These are some of the questions students will be able to provide answers to having completed this course. Terrorism has become one of the most salient and contentious issues in contemporary Western politics. The aim of the course is to give a general introduction to the field, and in doing so, enable students to work with terrorism-related topics within government agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia, or the security sector.

Rather than looking at terrorism globally, we will focus on terrorism and political violence in the context of Western liberal democracies. One reason for doing so is that explanations of terrorism and political violence vary considerably across regime types and regions. By incorporating the broader category of political violence, we will also be looking at violent militants who do not necessarily qualify as terrorists, but may still pose a challenge to Western democracies.

During the course, students will obtain more in-depth knowledge about selected topics. These include radicalization and recruitment to terrorist groups, theories on the causes of terrorism, terrorist group dynamics, and counter-terrorism challenges. Finally, the course will look into the particularities of specific actor types, including jihadists, left- and right-wing militants, and lone actors.

Learning outcome

**Knowledge**

The students will be able to:

* Define terrorism
* Outline the history of terrorism
* Describe different terrorist actor types
* Outline dominating theories on the causes of terrorism

**Skills**

The students will be able to:

* Use existing terrorism datasets to identify trends and carry out comparative analyses
* Develop new terrorism datasets covering specific research gaps
* Apply relevant theories to analyse past and current terrorist events, patterns, and actors
* Critically assess news coverage of terrorist events, threats or actors
* Critically assess the effectiveness of different counter-terrorism initiatives against different types of terrorist threats

**Competences**

The students will able to:

* Analyse emergent security threats
* Evaluate opportunities and limitations for countering terrorism
* Appraise the methodological difficulties of studying rare phenomena with high societal impact
* Communicate key findings from academic research on complex and contested issues to new audiences

Admission

Students who are admitted to study programmes at UiO must each semester [register which courses and exams they wish to sign up for](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/registrations/course-registration/) in Studentweb.

Students enrolled in other Master's Degree Programmes can, on application, be admitted to the course if this is cleared by their own study programme.

If you are not already enrolled as a student at UiO, please see our information about [admission requirements and procedures](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/admission/).

[Apply for guest student status](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/admin/guest-student/isv.html)if you are admitted to another Master's programme.

**For incoming students**

All Master's courses in Political Science must be registered manually by the Department, they will not appear in Studentweb. Contact your international coordinator at UiO.

Prerequisites

Recommended previous knowledge

Bachelor's degree in Political Science or similar.

Teaching

Lectures.

The lectures are not compulsory, but we strongly recommend you to follow them.

**Mandatory activities**

Students must hand in three response paper (800-1000 words) reflecting on the various topics covered by the mandatory readings. To pass this activity, the response papers must be approved by the course lecturers. More information on writing response papers will be given during the introductory lecture.

**Absence from compulsory activities**

If you are ill or have another valid reason for being absent from the compulsory activities, your absence may be approved or the compulsory activity may be postponed.

* [Report absence from or the need for a postponed deadline on a compulsory tuition activity](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/admin/compulsory-activities/sv-absence-from-compulsory-tuition-activities.html)

Examination

Term paper.

The term paper must:

* be between 3000-3500 words
* have a self-chosen topic (pre-agreed with the course convener) related to the course
* meet the [formal requirements for submission of written assignments](http://www.sv.uio.no/english/studies/resources/submission-written-assignments/isv.html" \t "vrtx-preview-window)

Submit assignments in Inspera

You submit your assignment in the digital examination system Inspera. [Read about how to submit your assignment.](https://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/submissions/)

Use of sources and citation

You should familiarize yourself with the rules that apply to [the use of sources and citations](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/sources-citations/). We strongly recommend using the most common style guides for your references, i.e. Chicago or Harvard. If you violate the rules, you may be suspected of [cheating/attempted cheating](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/cheating/).

Language of examination

The language of the examination will be English. Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail. Read more about [the grading system](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/grading-system/).

Explanations and appeals

* [Explanation of grades and appeals](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/explanation-appeal/)

Resit an examination

If you are sick or have another valid reason for not attending the regular exam, we offer a [postponed exam](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/illness-postponed/) later in the same semester.

See also our information about [resitting an exam](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/new-exam/).

Withdrawal from an examination

It is possible to take the exam up to 3 times. If you [withdraw from the exam](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/withdrawal/) after the deadline or during the exam, this will be counted as an examination attempt.

Special examination arrangements

Application form, deadline and requirements for [special examination arrangements](http://www.uio.no/english/studies/examinations/special-arrangements/).

Evaluation

The course is subject to continuous evaluation. At regular intervals we also ask students to participate in a more comprehensive evaluation.

SCHEDULE – RESOURCES AND CURRICULUM