COURSE DESCRIPTION

This team-taught course, which is planned in coordination with the spring colloquium series on the “Age of Terror,” will provide students with the opportunity to bring their own disciplinary expertise to bear in the design and implementation of a semester long project. Readings and class discussion will explore the various psychological, political, philosophical, and cultural ramifications of terror. Students will be expected to attend the various colloquium events, and will be given the opportunity to meet and discuss the age of terror with leading scholars, authors and policy makers.

COURSE GOALS

This course satisfies the Disciplinary Perspectives (DSP) requirement for General Education, where certain problems are addressed from the perspective of more than one discipline. Courses incorporate content and approaches from at least two disciplines and ask students to draw on their own disciplinary perspectives, and challenge them to view issues from various points of view.

The goals of this course are:

• to learn to articulate, analyze and critically evaluate, verbally and in writing, the ideas and arguments surrounding the nature of terror and terrorism.

• to identify and assess the treatment of terror and terrorism by the disciplines of political science, psychology and philosophy.

• to apply an intellectual understanding of terror and terrorism to our understanding of the various speakers and authors presenting as part of the colloquium series and the depictions of terror in its various forms through the colloquium film series.

• to bring one’s own disciplinary perspective to bear on the topic of terror and terrorism.

• to acquire and develop team oriented skills in order to construct and present a meaningful group project relating to one aspect of the discourse on terror.
READINGS AND COURSE CONTENT

There are no required books for this course. There are, however, a number of essays and readings available in PDF format on Blackboard that will supplement colloquium events and class discussions. You are required to print these articles and to read them for the day on which they are listed (see course schedule). Given the fluid nature of this course, readings could possibly change as topics and discussions arise. For each week of the course there will be a folder of readings under “course documents” on Blackboard. You are required to read whatever is in that folder the week before the class meeting. An updated bibliography of required and recommended sources will be maintained on the blackboard site for your reference.

Six films will be shown for the colloquium series. You are required to view all of them at the Allen Theatre or on reserve at the library:

- **Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality** (2003). Directed by Patrick Shen.
- **Brazil** (1985). Directed by Terry Gilliam.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

**Class Participation (25%)** You are expected to be an active and thoughtful participant in class. Class participation does not mean attending every class, sitting attentively, reading the required texts, and being respectful towards the thoughts and ideas of your classmates, as these are minimal expectations. Your class participation goes above and beyond those basic standards, and includes the following:

- asking questions in class that reflect your time spent reading and reflecting on the issues discussed in class.
- carefully and respectfully responding to questions and comments raised in class.
- preparing and submitting “questions for thought” prior to class meetings.

Your participation will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

4 = active and consistent participation; questions and responses demonstrate a prepared knowledge of the texts; able to build upon responses and comments of other students and further classroom discussion.

3 = same as above, but with less frequency or with a less prepared familiarity with the readings.

2 = same as above, with both less frequency and also a less prepared familiarity with the readings.

1 = asks questions, but unfamiliar with the texts; only sporadic participation in discussions.

0 = unprepared on a regular basis; unable or unwilling to participate in discussions.

**Critical Reflections (50%)** – you will be required to submit five (5) short papers (500-750 words) that will serve as critical reflections on the speaker presentation in the colloquium series. Attached to the syllabus you will find the requirements and grading rubric for these assignments. If you do not attend a speaker event, or you do not write the reflection that corresponds with the event, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

**Group Project (25%)** – each student will participate in a final group project that will involve research on a particular topic related to the theme of the course and a presentation to the entire class of your groups findings and reflections. Attached to the syllabus you will find a detailed description of the project requirements and deadlines.
**Final Grade:** All assignments will be graded on a 4 point scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0) and converted into a final letter grade according to the scale listed below. Number values are not rounded up, so 3.49999999999999999 is still a B+, etc.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>3.7-4.0</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>3.5-3.6</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>3.2-3.4</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>2.8-3.1</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>2.2-2.4</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>1.8-2.1</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>0.8-1.1</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>below 0.5</td>
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**ATTENDANCE**

You are expected to attend every scheduled class meeting and all of the colloquium scheduled events (speakers and films). If you cannot make a speaker event, you will be penalized as mentioned above. If you cannot attend a film, you are required to view the film on your own time (either with a copy from the library, or one procured on your own). Any other attendance issues during class meetings will be reflected in your class participation.

**THINGS TO AVOID**

**Academic Dishonesty:** As stated in your Student Handbook, “Cheating and plagiarism are acts of academic dishonesty. Cheating is an act that deceives or defrauds. It includes, but is not limited to, looking at another's exam or quiz, using unauthorized materials during an exam or quiz, colluding on assignments without the permission or knowledge of the instructor, and furnishing false information for the purpose of receiving special consideration, such as postponement of an exam, essay, quiz, or deadline of an oral presentation. Plagiarism is the act of submitting as one's own, the work (the words, ideas, images, or compositions) of another person or persons without accurate attribution. Plagiarism can manifest itself in various ways: it can arise from sloppy, inaccurate note-taking; it can emerge as the incomplete or incompetent citation of resources; it can take the form of the wholesale submission of another person's work as one's own, whether from an online, oral or printed source.”

In this course you may be asked to submit some or all of your assignments for review by an on-line plagiarism service. This service will compare the content of your work to content found on the internet and several proprietary databases. Any work submitted to this service may become part of the service’s permanent collection of submitted papers. After your work is submitted, the service will generate an originality report which will be sent to your instructor. Any student who submits plagiarized work will fail the course and be subject to the penalties outlined in LVC’s Academic Honesty Policy found on pages 113-114 of the Student Handbook.

**Cell Phones, PDAs, MP3 players, assorted electronic devices:** Don't even dream about having these devices turned on in my class – they are disruptive to other students and to your own learning.

**ARE YOU HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH THE COURSE?**

If at any time during the quarter you are in need of extra help, have special learning needs, or just have some questions about the course material, please come to one of our offices. If you cannot make our regular office hours, please set up an appointment.

We encourage everyone to take advantage of our availability during scheduled and non-scheduled office hours. If you have a brief question we are happy to answer it by email. If, however, your question will take more than a couple of sentences to answer, or if you would like one of us to comment on your written work (a thesis, a draft, a final version), we ask that you visit one of us so that we can discuss your work fully and properly, as your professors always have questions too.

Disabilities Services: If you have a physical, medical, psychological, or learning disability that is going to impact your attendance or require accommodation, please let me know. In order to ensure that your learning needs are appropriately met, you will need to provide documentation of your disability or medical condition to the Director of Disability Services in Humanities 206-D, 867-6071. The Office of Disability Services will then provide a letter of verification of disability that describes the accommodations needed for this class.
Class Schedule for Colloquium Course

Week 1:
No Class

Week 2:
M 1/26  Course Introduction: Professors Valgenti, Dolan, and Kitchens

Week 3:
M 2/2  Pr. Dolan: Political Power, War, and the Politics of Fear

**Readings** (on Blackboard):
- Niccolo Machiavelli, Chapters XIV-IXX, *The Prince*
- Thomas Hobbes, Chapters XIII-XV, *Leviathan*
  [http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa51.htm](http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa51.htm)

- T 2/3  Film Series: *28 Days Later* (introduced by Pr. Laura Eldred)
  (all films will be shown at the Allen Theatre at 6pm)

- Th 2/5  Conversation with Pr. Corey Robin, author of *Fear: The History of a Political Idea*
  7pm, Chapel 101

Week 4:
M 2/9  Pr. Kitchens

* Critical Reflection #1 Due

**Readings** (on Blackboard)
- Earnest Becker “The Nature of Social Evil” in *The Earnest Becker Reader* (pp. 210-217)

Week 5:
M 2/16  Pr. Valgenti: Terror and Ethics of Collective Responsibility

**Readings** (on Blackboard)
- Plato, *Crito*.

- T 2/17  Film Series: *The Weather Underground* (introduced by Pr. Chris Dolan)

- W 2/18  Rick Ross, “American Subculture of Hate: from Neo-Nazis to White Supremacists and Racist Skinheads.”
  7pm, Zimmerman Recital Hall
Week 6:

M  2/23  Prs. Valgenti, Dolan, Kitchens – Cultures in Conflict

*  Critical Reflection #2 Due

Readings (on Blackboard):


Week 7:  SPRING BREAK

Week 8:

M  3/9  Pr. Valgenti – How to Remember the Event of Terror

Readings (On Blackboard):


T  3/10  Film Series: *Flight from Death: The Quest for Immortality* (introduced by Pr. M. Kitchens)

F  3/13  7pm, Arnold Sports Center. Conversation with Miroslav Volf (Yale Divinity School, Director of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture, [http://www.yale.edu/faith/about.htm](http://www.yale.edu/faith/about.htm)) to speak about his book *The End of Memory: Remembering Rightly in a Violent World*

Week 9:

*  M  3/16  Sheldon Solomon (Skidmore College) to speak on Terror Management Theory

7pm, Leedy Theatre

*  Critical Reflection #3 Due

Week 10:


*  Critical Reflection #4 Due

Readings (On Blackboard):


*  T  3/24  Film Series: *The Dancer Upstairs* (introduced by Pr. R. Chamberlain)
### Week 11:

- **M 3/30** Pr. Dolan: Politics of Rogue States and Utility of Terror

**Readings (On Blackboard):**
- Philip Gordon, “Can the War on Terrorism Be Won?” *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2007).

- **F 4/3** Matt Wuerker (political cartoonist for Politco.com)
  - 7pm, Zimmerman Recital Hall

### Week 12:

- **M 4/6** Group Meetings about projects

  * **Critical Reflection #5 Due**

- **T 4/7** Film Series: *Brazil* (introduced by Pr. Jeff Ritchie)

### Week 13:

- **M 4/13** Present Abstract/Project Ideas & Methods of Research

### Week 14:

- **M 4/20** Prs. Valgenti, Dolan, Kitchens: How to Respond to Terror?

**Readings (On Blackboard):**

- **T 4/21** Film Series: *The Prisoner or: How I Planned to Kill Tony Blair*

### Week 15:

- **M 4/27** Group Presentations

### Week 16:

- **M 5/4** Group Presentations
Rochrimic Valdokitch
DSP 320-21: Age of Terror
Critical Reflection #1
Conversation with Corey Robin
February 9, 2008

Requirements and Grading Rubric for Critical Reflections

The primary written assessments for this course will be your critical reflections on the five speakers who present this semester as part of the Colloquium series (see course schedule for dates, time, and locations). These reflections are your opportunity to explain how well you understand the general topic of this course in light of the speaker’s presentation, as well as the supplementary readings, films, and class lectures that comprise the content of this course. As a critical reflection, your paper should attempt to identify and articulate one specific idea, theme, or argument in the speaker’s presentation and then evaluate it as deeply and thoroughly as you can—this can be done through comparison/contrast to similar themes in films and readings, through a comparison/contrast to earlier speakers, through an evaluation of that theme through the lens of one or more particular academic disciplines, etc. The general requirements for the paper are as follows:

-- Typed, double-spaced, following the format you see on this page.
-- 500-750 words
-- Due at the beginning of class the first Monday after the speaker’s presentation.

The critical reflections will be graded according to the following goals:

1. to clearly identify and articulate one specific idea, theme, or argument from the presentation and thus demonstrate a thorough and accurate understanding of the speaker’s position in his/her presentation.
2. to take a position/reflective stance as expressed through a thesis statement that operates as the guiding idea of the reflection from start to finish.
3. to consider the reasons that support and/or challenge the central idea of the reflection by
   - incorporating into your reflection elements of prior readings, films, and discussions.
   - bringing one or more disciplinary perspectives to bear on the topic of your reflection.
4. to write according to the accepted rules of grammar, punctuation and style.

“A” These reflections are considered “excellent” because they accomplish every goal of the assignment with an exceptional level of clarity, depth, and insight.

“B” These reflections are considered “good” because they accomplish every goal of the assignment with clarity, depth, and insight.

“C” These reflections are “satisfactory” because they meet the 4 goals stated above, but do so in the most minimal way and often with lapses and shortcomings. These essays, while complete, lack real depth, clarity, and insight.

“D” These reflections are unsatisfactory because they are either missing 1 of the 4 goals above, or because 2 of those elements are either inaccurate or unacceptable.

“F” These reflections fail because they are either lacking 2 or more of the 4 goals above, or because 3-4 of those elements are either inaccurate or unacceptable.