

**PSCI 3510 Terrorism and Political Violence**  
**Mid-Term Study Guide**  
**Fall 2018**

**Exam Tips**

- Remember that your task on the midterm is to demonstrate knowledge *and* understanding.
- Hurried responses will not serve you well. The top reason for doing poorly on this type of exam is answers that are too brief.
- You will not do well on the exam if you have not done the reading.
- The questions have approximate times you should devote to answering them. As noted two points above, taking less time to answer will probably hurt you. But don't take more time per question than I have suggested; otherwise, you will not have time to finish the exam. And that is costly. For example, suppose you spend too long on one essay and do a brilliant job but don't leave time for the last one. An "A" and an "E" is worse than, say, two "BA" or even two "B" responses on the same two questions.

**Exam Book:** remember that you are required to bring an exam book. They can be purchased in the campus bookstore or at office supply stores (pick up one for the final while you are at it). Failure to bring an exam book will result in a 5% reduction in your grade (i.e., a half-letter grade).

**Short answer questions.** Know these. Some will be on the exam. One or two sentences are sufficient for an answer.

1. Who were the Thugs, the Assassins, and the Zealots-Sicari?
2. What are the three mindsets we discussed in class (also covered in Borum)? [Just be able to name them for this question, not explain them.]
3. What is *reductionism*?
4. What is *fictive kin*?
5. What is the difference between *strategy* and *tactics*?
6. What was the first occurrence of modern terrorism?
7. What book is Alexandr Solzhenitsyn famous for? What does the title refer to?
8. What does the human development index measure?
9. What is the index (coefficient) that measures inequality?
10. What is the "secularization thesis?"

**Short essay questions (10 minute responses).** Three of these questions will be on the exam; you'll be required to answer two. Note: a one or two-sentence "drive by" response will be inadequate. Use the full ten minutes to flesh out a detailed response.

1. Is there a meaningful difference between terrorism and hate crimes? If not, why? If so, how can we differentiate between the two?
2. How does modern terrorism differ from the earlier, historical examples we read about? What (if anything) is similar?
3. What is the "philosophy of the bomb?"
4. Who were the anarchists in Russia, Europe and the US? Why did they resort to terrorism?
5. What were the four waves of terrorism and how did they differ?
6. What is totalitarianism and how does it differ from other forms of non-democracy?
7. How does the Fragile State Index measure fragility? What is the significance of state fragility?
8. How do state and grass-roots terrorism differ (other than the obvious)?

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**Study questions for longer essays (20 minute responses).** These are not the questions you will have on the exam. But if you can provide detailed responses to these and demonstrate that you understand the material (not just memorize it), you will be prepared for what I ask on the exam. (Note: there will be three longer essay questions; you will choose two to answer.)

1. Is the distinction between old and new terrorism meaningful?
2. What is the link between poverty and terrorism?
3. What is the link between religion and terrorism?
4. Why must we make a distinction between the organizers of terrorist activities and those who commit terrorist acts?
5. What is Sen's argument about nationalism simultaneously serving as a positive and negative force? How can it lead to terrorism?
6. How does psychology help us understand terrorists?
7. What leads terrorists to choose from among the various strategies of terrorist activity?
8. What leads someone to commit suicide terrorism?
9. Archetti writes: "Whether an individual will join an extremist group depends on the compatibility between the individual's own narrative and the one of the group." What are "narratives" and "imagined communities," and why is the idea of a "lone wolf" terrorist not accurate?