

Course Policies and Expectations

Extremism in American Society

MW 3:30-4:40pm

TLC 023

Instructor: Kristin Haltinner, PhD

Office Hours: 3:30-5pm Friday and by appointment

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Course Description: This course explores sociological perspectives on extremism in American society. We will consider the socio-structural factors that contribute to a rise in extremist activism, that motivate people to join these organizations, and that provide political opportunity for organizational growth. The class will also explore the historical and contemporary circulation of extremist discourse and ideology in more mainstream spaces. Finally, the course will examine the impact these organizations have on broader society: culture, ideology, political discourse, etc. To accomplish this, the course will focus on case studies of past and current reactionary groups, including hate groups (KKK, neo- Nazi), militia and patriot groups (Posse Comitatus), terrorist groups, and other examples of extremism.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Learn and integrate

Students will acquire basic knowledge about American extremism and learn to apply it to their own lives and the world around them. For example, students will learn the structural factors that give rise to extremism and to use this information to interpret and explain events in broader society. These skills and understanding will facilitate greater engagement with the broader world and provide a solid basis for later scholarly, professional, and personal experiences.

2. Think and create

Upon learning about the fundamental challenges facing contemporary American extremism, students will learn to draw deeper connections. They will think independently about broader interrelatedness and social dynamics. They will explore and consider the challenges of poverty, masculinity, social institutions and psychological forces in the rise of extremism. Students will also create novel solutions to these problems and develop potential ways of ameliorating contemporary the forces that lead to extremism.

3. Communicate

Students will practice communicating about issues related to American extremism. They will do this through class discussion, written papers, and [ideally] conversations held outside of the classroom.

4. Clarify purpose and perspective

Through having a better foundational knowledge regarding American extremism, students will better understand broader institutional, psychological, and social forces. Students will critically examine a variety of perspectives on these topics and find their own place within the puzzle.

5. Practice citizenship

Through having greater knowledge of historical oppression and its residual effects, students will develop greater analytic skills to evaluate social, cultural, political and economic events vis-à-vis American extremism.

Grading and Assignments

The final course grade is determined according to the following requirements:

Participation and Classroom Etiquette (20%)

Midterm Exam (30%)

Research Proposal (5%)

Rough Draft of Paper (15%)

Final Paper Draft (30%)

Late Assignments/Grading Information:

All assignments can be turned in using BBLearn or handed in at the beginning of class, whichever works best for each individual student. I will not accept assignments turned in via email. Complete information about how to submit materials is explained on each assignment and available on BBLearn.

All assignments must be typed and turned in on time unless otherwise noted.

Assignments are handed back as quickly as possible. Assignments are returned in the same format they were turned in as, meaning if you turned in an assignment via BBLearn, your assignment will be returned to you via BBLearn. Each assignment will have comments for improvement on them as well as a score.

Late work will be penalized for each day that it is late.

- > Assignments are due at the beginning of class.
- > Turning in a paper late results in the loss of 5% per day.

>Emergency situations are handled on an individual basis. Computer or printer problems, conflicts with work or other courses, events, transportation problems etc. do not constitute emergencies. Plan ahead and do not wait until the last minute to print your work. If in doubt the best thing to do is to talk to me.

If you have any questions about grades, please feel free to ask me at any time.

Participation and Classroom Etiquette (10%)

Participation

While attendance will not be formally taken in this course, participation matters. One cannot participate if they are not present.

Participation will be evaluated based not on frequency of participation but on the quality of engagement. That is, students shouldn't speak simply to get a "count" but to critically and meaningfully extend discussion. Students are encouraged to connect course readings with personal experience of current events. It is expected that students will come to class on Mondays having completed the course readings and prepared for discussion.

Recognizing that not all students feel comfortable speaking in groups, participation will also be measured through in-class writings, responses to active learning activities, and participation in small group discussion. Note: In-class activities cannot be made up if a student is absent. There will be a substantial number of these over the term and students will be able to miss three without it effecting their participation grade.

Classroom Etiquette

This course explores issues that provoke strong emotions. Students are expected to respect others by challenging the ideas discussed and not individuals themselves. We all bring to the class distinct histories and perspectives – these differences will enable us to better understand each other and society at large. Individuals who fail to behave respectfully will be asked to leave the class.

Furthermore, respect for your peers is essential to have a class environment that is conducive to learning. As such, you are expected to come to all class sessions, arrive to class on time, have completed the assigned readings, and be an active participant in discussion. If you do not wish to pay attention in class, you should not come to the session (it will be reflected in your grade). Additionally, distractions such as cell phones, instant messaging, knitting, fidget spinners, etc, will not be tolerated. In this class we will all teach each other; therefore, you need to be mentally and physically present to share your ideas and learn from your peers.

Also, please refrain from using photography or recording devices during class. This is a violation of your peers' privacy.

Finally, while I encourage group learning through discussions and debates, plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are caught cheating on a paper you will receive an F for that assignment. If there is a second offense you will fail the class. We will discuss plagiarism

more during the first class session.

University of Idaho Classroom Learning Civility Clause

In any environment in which people gather to learn, it is essential that all members feel as free and safe as possible in their participation. To this end, it is expected that everyone in this course will be treated with mutual respect and civility, with an understanding that all of us (students, instructors, professors, guests, and teaching assistants) will be respectful and civil to one another in discussion, in action, in teaching, and in learning.

Should you feel our classroom interactions do not reflect an environment of civility and respect, you are encouraged to meet with your instructor during office hours to discuss your concern. Additional resources for expression of concern or requesting support include the Dean of Students office and staff (5-6757), the UI Counseling & Testing Center's confidential services (5-6716), or the UI Office of Human Rights, Access, & Inclusion (5-4285).

Midterm Exam (30%)

The midterm exam will be on BBLearn. It will be an open note/open readings test. There is no time limit.

The bulk of the questions will be multiple choice or true/false, with a few short answer questions. The questions will center on the course readings and class discussions.

Final Project Assignment (50%)

This assignment will consist of three parts:

1) A proposal (due February 9th) (15 points)

A proposal is a statement about the intent of your research project. For this stage, select a topic that you are excited about and develop the topic into a preliminary research design, including a precise research question.

Assignment Components:

1. Briefly state your general research topic.
2. State your specific research question(s) and sub-question(s), if applicable. If you include multiple questions (as my example below does), *make sure* that your question(s) and sub- question(s) comprise a single, coherent research project.
3. Briefly describe how you think you might proceed to answer your question(s). How feasible is it to attempt to answer this question? What sources might you use (try to do a preliminary library search or Google scholar search)?

4. Speculate on what you think you might find in your research. What are two potential answers to your question(s)? You can keep this simple (e.g., parents of low-income children will have lower rates of school involvement).
5. Identify *at least 5* keywords or concepts you will use to conduct an online search for existing research on your question(s).

Grading Criteria:

You will be evaluated on the quality and thoroughness of your responses relative to the assignment requirements described above. Because the clarity of your thoughts and ideas are contingent upon your ability to express yourself in writing, poor spelling and grammar will negatively affect your grade.

Length/Formatting: 1-2 pages; assignments should be word-processed, written in 12-point font, double-spaced, and use standard margins.

Note: Feel free to structure the assignment in sections. In other words, you do not need to write a flowing paper with transitions and so on. Simply respond to each component in a separate section if you prefer.

2) A complete rough draft (due April 20th) (45 points)

Grading Criteria:

You will be evaluated on the quality and thoroughness of your full draft relative to the assignment guidelines associated with the paper option you select. Because the clarity of your thoughts and ideas are contingent upon your ability to express yourself in writing, poor spelling and grammar will negatively affect your grade. This assignment is worth 45 points.

You will need to turn in the rough draft (with my marks) along with the final draft. Failure to turn in the rough draft with the final draft will result in a loss of 10 points.

The sources used in the paper need to be reliable: scholarly, news, or verified NGO documents.

Length/Formatting: Approximately 10-12 pages (not including references or appendices); tables and graphs should follow ASA formatting guidelines; paper should be word-processed, written in 12-point font, double-spaced, use standard (1 or 1 1/4 inch) margins, and include page numbers.

3) A final draft (due May 11th) (90 points)

Grading Criteria: You will be evaluated on the quality and thoroughness of your final draft relative to the assignment guidelines associated with the project option you select.

There is a clear expectation that your final draft will incorporate feedback received on the rough draft. Note that *you are required to turn in the graded copy of your rough draft*. Because the clarity of your thoughts and ideas are contingent upon your ability to express yourself in writing, poor spelling and grammar will negatively affect your grade. The final draft is worth 90 points.

The sources used in the paper need to be reliable: scholarly, news, or verified NGO documents.

Length/Formatting: Approximately 12-12 pages (not including references or appendices); tables and graphs should follow ASA formatting guidelines; paper should be word-processed, written in 12-point font, double-spaced, use standard (1 or 1 1/4 inch) margins, and include page numbers.

Option 1: Research Project

People choosing this option will compete a traditional research paper on an extremist social movement, “lone wolf”, cult, or conspiracy. It will be approximately 10-12 pages in length.

The first part of the paper will be an overview of the rise of the organization/individual/cult/conspiracy, discussing structural-level socio-historical factors that contributed to its emergency.

The second part of the paper will provide an overview of the beliefs and goals of the organization/individual/cult/conspiracy.

The third part will analyze a sociological force operating in the organization/individual/cult/conspiracy. This could be: the role of emotions, the role of stories, an overview of the frames used, recruitment strategies, the movement cycle, individual psychological factors, etc. (These will be discussed in class).

Option 2: Action Project

People choosing this option will create a project that seeks to either a) educate others about an extremist movement, the phenomena of the lone wolf, cults, or conspiracies or b) help a community group solve a problem related to extremism in the United States. For example, you could create a project to educate, inform, and guide law enforcement seeking to prevent domestic terrorism in the United States.

This project need not be a formal paper (it could be a lesson plan, a plan for a community event, a plan for a training, etc). However, it does need to engage with scholarly sources and intellectual processes. In other words, you’ll need to talk about the structural factors that give rise to the phenomena you’re focusing upon. You’ll need to talk about the group and its actors. You’ll also need to use scholarly data to support the ideas you develop for combatting extremism or fixing a social problem.

Writing Your Final Project:

Consider the resources at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/class/english/WritingCenter>. The Writing Center is a collaborative learning program dedicated to providing one-on-one assistance to student writers. The Writing Center also provides a library of handbooks and style manuals, three student computers, a collection of handouts about writing, and a comfortable place to sit, read, and write.

Library Resources:

Become very familiar with our library, as it will become a second home. To become more familiar with and fully utilize the resources of the library, take the **Information Literacy Tutorial** at: http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/info_literacy/.

Study Skills and Resources

Remember, you should spend, on average, at least 3 hours of study time (textbook reading, reviewing class notes, etc.) for each hour you spend in class. There is additional time devoted to researching and writing papers, and to developing projects. Plan accordingly. If you need help with note-taking, strategies for studying, writing, time-management, or tutoring assistance, please do not hesitate calling on your professor.

Other Essential Information

Communication & Technology

Telephone

The best ways to communicate with me is either through email or in person. However, my office number is 208-885-8079.

Email

Please check your email regularly as it is the best means for me to contact you. Please remember, no assignments will be accepted via email (only via BBLearn or in class). In turn, I will check my email regularly. Please, when sending me message, use proper email etiquette (do not use all caps, use formal English, etc).

BBLearn

Readings, 'tips', assignments, announcements and other class related materials will be posted on BBLearn. If you have difficulties accessing this, please let me know.

Academic Integrity and Honesty

One of the core foundations of being a member of an academic environment is that we assume that everyone operates with the highest level of honesty and integrity. One of your main purposes for being here is to learn and develop you own intellect, beliefs and ideals. All students are expected to adhere to the student code of conduct and all school policies concerning academic honesty. Plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, and facilitation of dishonesty will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to improper (including

incomplete) citation/referencing, working on individual projects with others, using someone else's work, using work from one class for another, using an assignment more than once (all assignments must be original) and fabrication of materials including false excuses. It is far better to turn in poor (a.k.a. 'crappy') work than to panic and turn in something that someone else has done.

If you are caught cheating on an assignment you will receive an F for that assignment. If there is a second offense you will fail the class. Any student suspected of violating academic honesty policies will also be reported to the university. The university will then make a determination as to the seriousness of the situation. Depending on the severity of the breach you may face additional sanctions.

There will be a citation/format sheet posted on BBLearn and we will discuss this in class. It is much better to ask questions than to assume you are citing material correctly. All students are required to follow one of the citation styles and format parameters outlined for this course: APA, Chicago, MLA or ASA.

Accommodations

If you have special needs that may affect your academic performance, please speak with me within the first two weeks of the semester so that I can better ensure that your needs are met.

Questions About Technology:

Visit the ITS Help Desk at their office in the Administration Building room 133, contact them by e-mail helpdesk@uidaho.edu, or call at 208-885-HELP (4357) with any technology questions they may have. The website is at <http://support.uidaho.edu/>.

Food and Housing Security

Any student who has difficulty affording or accessing sufficient food, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office or myself for support. Information on the Vandal Food Pantry can be found here: <http://www.uidaho.edu/current-students/student-involvement/volunteer/food-pantry>

Diverse Abilities

Contact Disability Services for information and assistance in obtaining proper documentation for disabilities and/or other issues that may affect your academic performance. I will make every appropriate effort to accommodate your learning needs, and I will keep all personal information confidential.

Disability Support Services: Idaho Commons, Room 306
(208-885-6307) <http://www.uidaho.edu/studentaffairs/asap/dss>

It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact DSS to discuss their individual needs for accommodation.

Disability Support Services Reasonable Accommodations Statement:

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have documented temporary or permanent disabilities. All accommodations must be approved through Disability Support Services located in the Idaho Commons Building, Room 306 in order to notify your instructor(s) as soon as possible regarding accommodation(s) needed for the course.

Phone at: 885-6307

Email at: dss@uidaho.edu

Website at: www.uidaho.edu/dss

Students should present a completed and signed Accommodation Checklist for the current semester, from our office when requesting accommodations. If they do not, please refer them to the Disability Support Services office (Idaho Commons, Room 306) to obtain one. If you have any questions regarding a student(s) with a disability(s), or how to best work with a particular student in class, please contact our office.

General Academic Support

For more general assistance with achieving academic goals, or for help with personal issues that may influence your academic performance, consider seeking help from Counseling and Consulting Services:

Counseling & Testing Center: Mary E. Forney Hall, Room 306
(208-885-6716) <http://www.uidaho.edu/CTC/counseling-services>

The Counseling program helps students with their concerns and offers an opportunity to talk with an experienced counselor who can help students select and achieve goals for personal and career development. The center offers a variety of counseling types including personal counseling, crisis intervention, and group counseling.

Fieldtrip

We will be taking a class fieldtrip to visit the former Aryan Nations Compound in Hayden Lake, Idaho on April 30th. While there, we will meet with members of the Kootenai County Human Rights Task Force, who organized against the Aryan Nations, ultimately leading to their dismantlement.

While I understand that people may have family, sports, or other obligations that make this fieldtrip possible, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. Your grade will not be adversely affected if you are unable to attend.