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This course will explore the forces that led to the 9/11 attacks and the policies the United States adopted in response. We will examine the phenomenon of modern terrorism, the development of the al Qai'da ideology, and the process by which individuals radicalize towards violence.



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Beginner Level



Approx. 13 hours to complete



English

Subtitles: French, Portuguese (European), Russian, English, Spanish



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David Schanzer

Associate Professor of the Practice
Sanford School of Public Policy

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— Siddhant S.

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Syllabus - What you will learn from this course

Content Rating  96% (1,151 ratings) 

WEEK 1

Week 1: Course Overview and the 9/11 Attacks

In this course, we will examine why al Qai-da attacked America. We will also examine the phenomenon of terrorism, in general, and the radical ideology developed and propagated by Osama bin Laden through al Qaida, more specifically. We will consider why individuals are attracted to this ideology and how they radicalize to violence. We will also explore how the United States addressed terrorism prior to 9/11 and the policy changes the US (and its allies around the globe) faced in the immediate aftermath of the attacks.

1 hour to complete

3 videos (Total 26 min), 4 readings, 6 quizzes
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Week 2: What is Terrorism?

Our topic for this week is, what is terrorism. We will try to define terrorism and understand the actions that we're going to be studying in this course, 9/11 and its aftermath. We will examine one of the key debates in this area; can terrorism be executed by a state, or is it only the use of political violence by a non-state actor. You will also learn how to write a policy memo.

1 hour to complete

8 videos (Total 59 min), 1 reading [See All](#)

WEEK 3

Week 3: A Primer on Islam

This week we have a special treat: we will have an extensive conversation with Imam Abdullah Antepli, the Islamic Chaplain here at Duke. We'll cover a wide range of topics, including Islamic history, law, the role of women and the Muslim experience in the post - 9/11 world.

2 hours to complete

13 videos (Total 96 min), 1 reading [See All](#)

WEEK 4

Week 4: The al Qai'da Ideology

Our topic for this week is the al Qaeda ideology. An ideology is essentially the set of beliefs that an individual, a group, or an organization has to either motivate them or to give that organization purpose. For al Qaeda, of course this is incredibly important because they're trying to motivate individuals to sacrifice their lives for what they view as a great cause.

2 hours to complete

9 videos (Total 87 min), 1 reading [See All](#)

WEEK 5

Week 5: The Radicalization Process

This week we'll examine how individuals become radicalized. We'll see that there are multiple paths to radicalization where opportunity and chance play a significant role. Thus, radicalization is a complex process that defies simple explanation. We'll conclude with a conversation with Peter Neumann, Professor of Security Studies at the Department of War Studies, King's College London, and director of the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization.

2 hours to complete

6 videos (Total 70 min), 1 reading, 1 quiz [See All](#)

This week we'll examine the three main US political philosophies that underlie the country's approach to counterterrorism. We'll look at the beginnings of the US response to this growing threat and how US agencies involved in counterterrorism have adapted over time. Finally, we'll examine how the US attempted to combat Osama bin Laden's growing threat to US security.

2 hours to complete

8 videos (Total 83 min), 1 reading **See All**

WEEK 7

Week 7: September 12, 2001

In this final week of the course we'll speak with Juan Zarate , one of the key White House counter terrorism advisers in the second Bush administration, about US counterterrorism efforts since 9/11. We'll look at the current state of threats to US interests from emerging actors, such as ISIS. Finally, we'll look at the recent developments in the Middle East that affect US security.

3 hours to complete

8 videos (Total 111 min), 1 reading, 1 quiz **See All**

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Reviews

4.6  41 reviews

5 stars	73.63%
4 stars	18.18%
3 stars	6.36%
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TOP REVIEWS FROM UNDERSTANDING 9/11: WHY 9/11 HAPPENED & HOW TERRORISM AFFECTS OUR WORLD TODAY



by SB Mar 25, 2018

Outstanding course and content; the interviews really enriched my learning.



by DB Mar 28, 2021

An excellent course that has helped gain invaluable knowledge as well as skills ,the course content and dsign was captivating enjoyed.



by AT Mar 23, 2022

WORDERFUL LEARNING . AMUST COURSE FOR DEFENCE PLANNING AND POLICY MAKING



by DD Jun 15, 2021

It is a good course to learn more about terrorism but largely from US perspective and the role of various American agencies. Also, I think the policy memo exercise is not very useful.

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