

**POSC 235: The Endless War on Terror  
Winter 2021 (Hybrid)  
Tues/Thurs 10:20AM – 12:05PM CST**

Professor Summer Forester

Office: Willis 408

Virtual Office Hours ([click to sign up for a time](#))

Mondays 1:30PM – 3:30PM CST

Thursdays 1:30PM – 4PM CST

By appointment

[Zoom meeting link for class and office hours](#)

### Professor Forester's Welcome Message

In the aftermath of 9/11, the U.S. launched the Global War on Terror to purportedly find, stop, and defeat every terrorist group with a global reach. Without question, the Global War on Terror has radically shaped everything from U.S. foreign policies and domestic institutions to civil liberties and pop culture. In this course, we will examine the events of 9/11 and then critically assess the immediate and long-term ramifications of the endless Global War on Terror on different states and communities around the world. While we will certainly spend time interrogating U.S. policies from the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations, we will also examine reactions to those policies across both the global north and the global south.

I fully acknowledge and appreciate the exceptional circumstances facing us this term. I want to encourage you all to embrace chaos with a solid sense of grace, patience, and flexibility.

I have done my best to design the course so that everyone can be successful, regardless of personal circumstances. Communication will be key; please keep me updated about your situation in addition to reaching out to the other relevant offices on campus. If you experience significant technological problems that limit your ability to participate, please contact the ITS Helpdesk at 507-222-5999 or [helpdesk@carleton.edu](mailto:helpdesk@carleton.edu). For announcements of known technical issues, visit the [Helpdesk portal](#). If your personal situation (due to COVID-19 illness or other circumstances) begins to impact your ability to engage with the course, please contact the Dean of Students Office.

## Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes

### Course objectives:

1. Critically interrogate the origins and continuing effects of the Global War on Terror (GWOT)
2. Understand the radical changes ushered in by 9/11 and the GWOT
3. Humanize the people implicated in the endless war(s) on terror

### Learning outcomes:

1. Understand the origins and effects of the Global War on Terror on both domestic and international politics
2. Hone analytical skills necessary to critically assess narratives and discourses related to 9/11 and the Global War on Terror, as well as the concomitant policy decisions in response to and as part of these events.
3. Craft a polished qualitative research design

## Ethics & Expectations

### Confidentiality

I believe in transparency and open communication, and strive to ensure you understand the purpose and intent of the readings, activities, grading, and other course-related materials/decisions. My goal is for us to create a collaborative environment where we can grapple with difficult topics and sharpen our intellect in a trusted and secure space. As such, I require that you treat our course, course content, and all communication (e.g., emails, Moodle posts, discussion forums, etc.) with confidentiality. I will not share your comments, communication, or other submissions and ask that you do the same for your colleagues and me.

### Mutual Respect

Treat each everyone in the class with respect. We will be discussing a variety of politically charged issues and I expect all of us to interrogate, critique, and discuss these issues in a safe environment free from judgement or fear of reprisal from any member of the class. In other words, I hope that you feel free to disagree with your colleagues, but I will require that you disagree *respectfully*.

### What you can expect of me:

- I will return assignments in a timely manner

- I will be available and accessible during my office hours. If you cannot meet me during my office hours, please do not hesitate to contact me and we will arrange for an alternative time to meet.
- I will strive to make this course understandable and accessible for everyone. If you have any questions about the content or structure of the course or about specific assignments, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am always happy to help if you come to me *before* assignments or exams are due. Please do not wait to ask for help until after the due date – come talk to me before if you have lingering questions or would like me to elaborate on some aspect of the readings or an assignment.

### Other Additions?

As this is your class, too, I'd like to hear what you think we should include in our course's rules of engagement. Please reach out to me if you have additional ideas for building an inclusive and effective class.

## Course Structure

In general, we will meet synchronously and in person (once the initial two-week quarantine period ends). I will note the days for which you will have asynchronous activities or when we will meet virtually. You can find a link to zoom meeting at the top of this syllabus.

To be sure, this term necessitates flexibility and a hearty embrace of the unknown. We'll do our best and make adjustments as necessary throughout the term.

To be sure, this term necessitates flexibility and a hearty embrace of the unknown. We'll do our best and make adjustments as necessary throughout the term.

## Course Components & Assessment

The requirements for this course involve both the completion of assignments on your own and your active and informed contributions to our class discussions. All of your assignments will be submitted electronically via Moodle. I will often provide in-text commentary or line edits for your written work. **Please submit your documents in Word (.doc or .docx).**

### Course components & points possible for each component:

1. Participation 25
2. Methods Exercises

a. 9/11 Interview & transcription	15
b. Historical analysis & public facing scholarship	15
c. In-class discursive analysis	10
3. Qualitative Research Proposal	<u>35</u>
	<b>100 points possible</b>

### ***Participation (25)***

A large portion of your grade is based on your willingness to contribute to and engage in our class. What does this require of you? You should prepare for and participate meaningfully in class every week, to the best of your ability. In a mixed mode environment, your participation is especially crucial. “Meaningful” participation comes in a number of forms: asking questions to clarify course topics, answering questions that I pose in class, drawing connections between course topics and current events, and/or participating respectfully in class discussions. We have all experienced those classes when the discussion seems to drag on and on and on and on. As an engaged participant, you’ll be the tour-de-force ensuring that the conversations and discussions connect to the readings, are lively, and are not reliant on (or dominated by) any single group member.

Additionally, your successful completion of the ungraded course components will contribute to your participation grade.

### ***Methods Exercises (total 40)***

In this course, I will ask you to complete a series of qualitative methods exercises over the duration of the term, and your final project is a qualitative research design. Why qualitative methods? As you’ll see, many of the questions and developments connected to the GWOT rely on images, discourses, and historical processes that are best answered by deep qualitative research. As such, I will push you to develop and hone your skills as rigorous qualitative researchers. Over the course of the term, you will:

1. Conduct a semi-structured interview with someone about 9/11
2. Use archives, news sources, memoirs, previously recorded interviews, declassified documents, etc. to investigate some surprising aspect of what the US (or another government) has done with regards to the global war on terror. As part of your investigation, you will create a Twitter thread in which you creatively (and succinctly) share your findings with the public.
3. Conduct a discursive analysis of the PATRIOT Act

I will provide more information about each of these exercises in a separate document.

### ***Qualitative Research Proposal (35)***

For your final project, you will create a qualitative research proposal. Your proposal will include:

- A literature review
- Proposed research questions
- Proposed research methods

You will submit your research proposal in stages and will receive feedback from me and your classmates. I will provide more information about each section of the proposal in a separate document.

### **Citation Style:**

Please adhere to the APA citation guidelines in your papers and other assignments:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_style\\_introduction.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html)

### **Grading Scale**

The course will follow a standard grading scale:

A: Achievement outstanding relative to the basic course requirements

A 93 or higher

A - 90-92

B: Achievement significantly above the basic course requirements

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82

C: Achievement meeting the basic course requirements

C+ 77-79

C 74-76

C- 70-72

D: Achievement worthy of credit but below the basic course requirements

D+ 67-69

D 63-66

D- 60-62

F Below 60

### **Additional Grading Policies**

I will not consider grade complaints if more than one week has passed after the assignment has been returned to you.

Before I review your grade, you must first:

1. Wait 24 hours.
2. Schedule a time to meet with me to discuss your grade.
3. Submit a formal appeal in writing (email is sufficient—but be clear that it is the appeal in the subject heading) that clearly identifies content in the assignment and the reasons why you think your grade should be changed. These appeals should refer to specific things in the assignment, and not vague reasons like “I worked really hard.”

The second grade, higher or lower, will become your grade on the assignment.

**Murphy's Law<sup>1</sup> Deadline Extension:** Over the course of the term, you have one no-questions-asked opportunity to submit an assignment 48 hours after the deadline has passed. You may only use this grace period once per term. However, we are showing up for classes in a pandemic. If you are struggling to meet a deadline, then please talk to me and I will do my best to accommodate you. But please be respectful of group-work situations. No one person should carry all the weight of the group!

## Resources & Well-Being

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Carleton College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Services office (Henry House, 107 Union Street) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, autism spectrum disorders, chronic health, traumatic brain injury and concussions, vision, hearing, mobility, or speech impairments), please contact [disability@carleton.edu](mailto:disability@carleton.edu) or call Jan Foley, Student Accessibility Specialist (x4464) or Chris Dallager, Director of Disability Services (x5250) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

### **Academic Integrity**

In writing course papers, students must document all passages, paraphrases and/or ideas that are borrowed from any source, and direct quotations must be placed within quotation marks. Similarly, papers must represent research conducted for the course in which they are assigned and no other; it is not appropriate to submit a paper that has already been or will be submitted to another course. Finally, papers must be the product of students' own work. Papers written by anyone other than the student, including those purchased from commercial research services, are unacceptable.

All work is expected to be your own. Cheating, plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them), and all forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated and will be strictly handled according to university policy. If you are uncertain, cite your sources! A discussion of plagiarism can be found at: <https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/>.

### **Well-Being**

During these particularly rough times, I urge you to make yourself – your own health and well-being – a priority throughout this ten-week term. It is important to recognize stressors you may be facing, which can be personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic (along with the global pandemic, struggles for racial justice, and a tense US election). Sleep, exercise,

---

<sup>1</sup> Murphy's Law = whatever can go wrong, will go wrong

and connecting with others can be strategies to help you flourish at Carleton. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, feel free to contact me and/or pursue other resources, such as [Student Health and Counseling](#) or the [Office of Health Promotion](#).

An additional word<sup>2</sup> on wellness and health: Audre Lorde once said, “Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.” Please see your wellness as an act of power and perseverance. The core to your success. Hold each other – and me – accountable. Go for walks. Let your mind wander. Take a deep breath. Drink water. All of your work will wait for you, and your final product will be better when you are in balance.

### **Tentative Weekly Readings & Due Dates**

Refer to the Moodle page for additional activities (e.g., videos, discussion forums, collaborative reading guides, etc.)

#### **Week 1: Introduction to the Endless War on Terror**

**Tuesday, January 5:** Course introduction

Ahead of our class, please take some time to consider the title of the course:

- What does a war entail?
- Why describe this as the “endless” war on terror?
- Is it actually endless? What would an end look like?
- “On Terror”: How do you declare war on something as nebulous as terror?

Required reading: [“The Fateful Choice”](#)

**Thursday, January 7: The Prelude to 9/11 & the Global War on Terror**

1. Blindspot: [The Road to 9/11 – NPR podcast, episode 1](#)

2. [9/11 commission report, chapter 2: the foundation of the new terrorism](#)

3. Rubin, B., & Rubin, J. C. (Eds.). (2002). *Anti-American terrorism and the Middle East: A documentary reader*. Oxford University Press.

Excerpts from chapters 4: Usama bin Laden & His Movement

Introduction to the chapter

Declaration of War (August 1996)

Al-Qa’ida Recruitment Video (2000)

---

<sup>2</sup> Thank you to Dr. Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve at Brown University and Dr. Simon Weffer at Northern Illinois Univ for this addition

Excerpts from chapter 5: Al-Qa'ida's War on America  
Introduction to the chapter  
Worldwide Threat 2001: National Security in a Changing World (February 7, 2001)

## Week 2: 9/11

### **Tuesday, January 12**

Methods readings & exercise:

Maxwell, J. A. (2012). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Vol. 41). Sage publications, pages 117 – 137. \*Note: this book is on reserve in the library. I encourage you to peruse it – especially the appendices, which include examples of qualitative proposals.

Leech, B. L. (2002). Interview methods in political science. *PS-WASHINGTON-*, 35(4), 663-664.

Interview someone about their experience of 9/11 (see handout). **Due Tuesday, Jan 19.**

Required Readings & Videos:

9/11 Commission Report, chapter 8: [“The System was Blinking Red”](#)

9/11 Commission Report, chapter 9: [Heroism & Horror](#)

[TSA video on 9/11](#)

[Short video on 9/11](#)

[Bush on 9/11](#)

### **Thursday, January 14**

**Research proposal topic due**

Readings & Videos:

[Director Tenet's Statement to CIA Workforce About Terrorist Attacks](#)

[Director of Central Intelligence George J. Tenet and President George W.](#)

[Bush's Remarks to the CIA Workforce](#)

[Tribute to Heroes Telethon](#)

Choose a few songs and videos to watch, though I highly recommend:

Will Smith & Muhammad Ali

Relatives of the Victims of 9/11

The People of the World – America

Julia Roberts

Willie Nelson's Finale

Rubin, B., & Rubin, J. C. (Eds.). (2002). *Anti-American terrorism and the Middle East: A documentary reader*. Oxford University Press, **chapter 6**



Tickner, J. (2002). Feminist perspectives on 9/11. *International Studies Perspectives*, 3(4), 333-350.

### **Week 3: Aftermath & War In Afghanistan**

#### **Tuesday, January 19 – Competing Reactions**

**Interview assignment due**

Required Readings:

[Our grief is not a cry for war](#)

[From the editors of MERIP](#)

Astri Suhrke (2012) Waging War and Building Peace in Afghanistan, *International Peacekeeping*, 19:4, 478-491.

[George W. Bush: Foreign Affairs](#)

[Background on 2001 Authorization of the Use of Military Force](#)

#### **Thursday, January 21**

Methods readings & exercise:

Thies, C. G. (2002). A pragmatic guide to qualitative historical analysis in the study of international relations. *International Studies Perspectives*, 3(4), 351-372.

**Historical analysis assignment: Deploying your political curiosity: It's 2021, do you know what your government is doing? (see handout, due Tuesday, February 2)**

Required Readings & Videos

TBD

Supplementary: Laura J. Shepherd (2006) [Veiled references: Constructions of gender in the Bush administration discourse on the attacks on Afghanistan post-9/11](#), *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 8:1, 19-41, DOI: 10.1080/14616740500415425

### **Week 4: Domestic (Ripple) Effects, part 1: The PATRIOT Act**

#### **Tuesday, January 26**

Methods readings:

Herrera & Braumoeller "Symposium on Discourse & Content Analysis"

Crawford, "Understanding Discourse: A Method of Ethical Argument Analysis"

Laffey & Weldes, "Methodological Reflections on Discourse Analysis"

**In-class exercise on discourse analysis & The PATRIOT Act**

Required Readings:

Ibbetson, P. A. (2007). *Living under the patriot act: Educating a society*. AuthorHouse, chapters 2 & 3

Review the [PATRIOT Act](#)

### **Thursday, January 28**

Introduction + Literature Review outline due

Required readings:

Saito, N. T. (2002). Whose liberty-Whose Security-The USA PATRIOT Act in the context of COINTELPRO and the unlawful repression of political dissent. *Or. L. Rev.*, 81, 1051.

Maria A. Simone (2009) Give me liberty and give me surveillance: a case study of the US Government's discourse of surveillance, *Critical Discourse Studies*, 6:1, 1-14

### **Week 5: Domestic (Ripple) Effects, part 2: Social & Institutional Changes**

### **Tuesday, February 2**

Historical analysis assignments due

Brian C. Schmidt & Michael C. Williams (2008) The Bush Doctrine and the Iraq War: Neoconservatives Versus Realists, *Security Studies*, 17:2, 191-220

Additional readings TBD

### **Thursday, February 4**

Read your colleagues' public facing scholarship

TBD

### **Week 6: War in Iraq, Wars in Peripheral States**

### **Tuesday, February 9**

Required readings:

<https://merip.org/behind-the-drive-to-war-in-iraq-a-background-er-on-the-crisis/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/sep/16/iraq.iraq>

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PPP-2003-book1/pdf/PPP-2003-book1-doc-pg277.pdf>

<https://www.iraqbodycount.org/>

*The Corpse Exhibition*, Blasim 2014

Listen to: [Episode 29, "Higens,"](#) from the "This is War" podcast

### **Thursday, February 11**

Introduction + Full Literature Review + overview of research questions & methods due

Required readings:

Ryan, Maria 2011. 'War in countries we are not at war with': The 'war on terror' on the periphery from Bush to Obama

Ayla Göl (2010) Editor's introduction: views from the 'Others' of the War on Terror, *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 3:1, 1-5, DOI: 10.1080/17539151003594160

Asim Qureshi (2010) 'War on Terror': the African Front, *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 3:1, 49-61, DOI: 10.1080/17539151003594202

### **Week 7: Torture & Detention**

**Tuesday, February 16**

[The Legal Campaign Against American Torture](#)

*Guantanamo Diary* (pages 1 - )

**Thursday, February 18**

*Guantanamo Diary* (pages – end)

[Art from Guantánamo](#)

### **Week 8: The Obama Era**

**Tuesday, February 23**

**Complete draft of research proposal due**

Required readings:

2009, [John Kerry Tora Bora and how we failed to get bin laden](#)

Additional readings TBD

**Thursday, February 25**

TBD

### **Week 9: The Trump Era**

**Return comments to your writing partner**

**Tuesday, March 2**

Additional readings TBD

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/02/us/politics/trump-forever-war.html>

<https://www.newstatesman.com/white-house/2020/09/would-biden-or-trump-end-americas-forever-wars>

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2019/10/31/as-trump-pushes-to-halt-endless-wars-the-war-on-terror-continues-unabated/>

**Thursday, March 4**

Connecting the threads: Racism, militarism, anti-democracy, and the GWOT

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/how-trump-brought-home-the-endless-war>

Additional readings TBD

### **Week 10: Any End in Sight?**

**Tuesday, March 9**

<https://millercenter.org/issues-policy/foreign-policy/presidency-endless-war/even-endless-wars-can-be-ended>

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R45122.pdf>

**Thursday, March 11:** Reading day

**Final research proposal due by 9PM on Sunday, March 14.**