

MWSU4433.2H1 Honors Seminar: Bioterrorism (Spring 2024)

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Office: Pierce Hall 213

Office Hours: Tuesdays 8:00 – 10:00am and 1:00 – 2:00pm; Thursdays 8:00 – 10:00am

Class sessions: MWF 12:00 – 12:50pm BH109

Course Overview

The term “bioterrorism” provokes a wide array of images in the minds of the public, especially in today’s chaotic world. Many of us are now forced to think about things that at one time only happened someplace else. Beginning in 2019, we became witnesses to the most significant event of our lives—the SARS CoV-2 pandemic. With all of the information out there, it is hard to discuss the subject of bioterrorism in any depth; this class therefore makes no attempt to do so. Rather, my goal is to give you enough information to prepare you personally and professionally to work in an environment where terrorism, especially domestic terrorism, is a real and growing possibility. We will examine the six major agents believed to have weapon potential alongside pandemic diseases such as influenza and SARS-CoV-2, discuss some of our offensive and defensive capabilities, take a hard look at the domestic terrorism landscape, examine existing policies regarding national security and bioweapons, and think about policy and ethical problems associated with bioterrorism. It will be assumed that all students believe the use of bioweapons is morally reprehensible.

Purpose of Syllabus

The purpose of the syllabus is to inform you of course expectations, policies, and content. Ignorance of course policies because you did not read your syllabus will not be an acceptable excuse for not adhering to these policies. Because the syllabus is also available online, you cannot lose it. By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in the course, you affirm that you understand the contents of this syllabus and that you will adhere to its requirements.

General Warnings About This Class

There are several things you should be aware of when taking this class:

1. This class will be flagged on your transcript in the event you ever seek a job that requires security clearance. This flag will result in an additional layer of security screening.
2. One of the class assignments will require you to people-watch. If you people-watch to the point you creep someone out and they have you arrested, I will not bail you out of jail.
3. Searches that you do for this class can be flagged by the university and law enforcement because your email, phones, and computer search engines are not secure. Please be careful of what you search and where you search it from.
4. This class will deal with the truth and not conspiracy theories. The truth may upset some people.
5. I don’t care what your politics are; we are going to discuss the truth. The truth may upset some people.
6. You may be upset by the contents of this course. You may be made to feel uncomfortable. Discomfort is necessary to being human.

Required Materials

1. There are many fine books on bioterrorism on the market, but none of them are required. Students are encouraged to select their own books and read them.
2. Access to **D2L** and other web resources as instructed **IS REQUIRED**. All of the papers we will discuss in class will be uploaded to D2L along with lecture slides.

3. Word or the ability to convert to Word **IS REQUIRED**. Please do NOT send me Google Docs or files generated by other word processors, especially macs. Do not try to link me to your Google drives or other cloud storage as MSU considers this a security risk.

War Game

The culmination of the semester is a live-action war game. Students will be assigned “roles” (governmental, military, medical, civilian) within the community by lottery. As a class, with each person playing their role, you will determine both the nature of the agent released into a population and devise appropriate solutions. As the game master, I will funnel information to you both in and outside of class and document how you respond. Your responses will shape the game, and so you will need to do a lot of careful thinking and working with others in the context of your appropriate role-relationships to avoid killing off your attacked population (which counts as a loss). Following the conclusion of the game, each student will prepare an **Attack Analysis** of the game and its relative success or failure. Everyone must participate. Once roles have been assigned, if you are truly uncomfortable with the role you get, you will be given one opportunity to swap out with someone else.

Assignments

In addition to the Attack Analysis, there will be several small/medium sized homework assignments scattered throughout the semester. These assignments are designed to get you to think about your surroundings in a reasonable way to consider how public policy shapes our ability to respond to biological threats.

Blue-Book Exam

There will be one (1) exam covering the material discussed in the course. The exam will cover all aspects of the course material (papers and discussions) and will thus be comprehensive. This is called a blue-book exam, but it will be take-home with the expectation that you will type your answers.

Grading

Grades will be given only on final drafts of assignments and papers. Because what you turn in is supposed to be a final draft (of more than one working draft), you will not get to rewrite it once it is turned in. Please do not take this to mean you can turn everything in late, either. You are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions and during the wargame. All grades are individual grades, but failure to participate in the wargame in particular will have a class-wide impact.

Grades will be assessed via straight percentage with 90% and above = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C. Each assignment will receive a grade percent and points will be tallied at the end for an overall grade percent (no one assignment will weigh any more than another).

Late Work

Absolutely NO late work will be accepted. Deadlines are hard deadlines. There will be no make-ups nor extra credit given to compensate for missing assignments.

Attendance and Participation

It is expected that students will make every effort to attend class and participate fully in classroom discussions. Assignments are not optional and students are expected to do them even if you are asked to write about something contrary to your own views and beliefs. Every student in this class has the fundamental, democratic right to express their opinions without fear of retribution or attack from other students and everyone should feel safe to say what they feel. Since YOU have YOUR right to speak your mind, so does EVERYONE ELSE. Disagreements are fine, but we will all act like civilized adults when discussing them. This is especially true for every discussion that brings up the current political landscape.

Attendance is vital to this class, especially during the wargame. Students are only allowed 3 absences, and absences during the war game affect everyone, not just you. If you cannot get out of bed, you should not be in this class. If you have a truly legitimate reason for missing class (you are verifiably ill, you are in the hospital, you are at model UN, etc.), then you need to email me with proof. Unexcused absences and more than 3 absences for any reason will result in a loss of 1 grade category from your final grade.

Participation means turning in assignments on time, active involvement in class discussions, and full effort given during the wargame sessions. Neither the course nor the wargame can succeed if students do not participate. Please read all assigned articles, etc. prior to coming to class so that you can discuss them.

Instructor Class Policies

1. Do not walk through the classroom or leave once class has begun (exception: sudden illness) and **NEVER WALK IN FRONT OF ME ONCE I HAVE BEGUN TO LECTURE.**
2. **Be respectful of other students.** Do not talk while other students are talking (or me), but listen to what is being said. You will be given your turn to voice your opinion so there is no need to talk over other students.
3. Do not play games on your electronic devices or play with your social media sites, do homework for other classes, read books or newspapers, sleep, listen to music, etc. during the lecture; pay attention to the lecture!
4. Do not eat or drink in class unless you can do so quietly.
5. **Turn off or silence (note: vibrate is not the same as silent) all cell phones, pagers, music devices, and other electronic devices that make noise or have the potential to disrupt the class before you walk into the room.** NO cell phones are permitted to be out and/or in my (or your) sight in this class UNLESS you are given permission to use it.
6. No laptops/tablets are allowed UNLESS you are using them for access to course materials. ALL ear buds, blue-tooth buds, and headphones to phones and music devices must be turned OFF during class AND REMOVED FROM YOUR HEAD and put in your backpacks.

University Teams and Organizations

All members of in-season sports teams or other campus organizations who will be missing class because of university sanctioned events MUST present to me a written statement on university letterhead and signed by a university official indicating those dates that will be missed because of travel or participation in the university-sponsored event. Athletics documentation must be presented to me within the first 2 weeks of the beginning of the semester. Other documentation (such as for theater, etc.) must be presented to me at least one week prior to the time that will be missed. NOTE: if you KNOW you will be missing more than 3 classes during the semester, you MUST come talk with me the first week.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. The instructor then needs to be notified by the student of the nature of these accommodations.

College Policies

1. **Campus Carry Rules/Policies:** Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's Campus Carry homepage. If you have questions or concerns, please contact MSU Chief of Police Patrick Coggins at patrick.coggins@mwsu.edu.
2. **Smoking/Tobacco Policy:** College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.
3. **Alcohol and Drug Policy:** To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.
4. **University Code of Conduct:** In general, students are to attend all meetings of all classes; instructors may drop students for excessive absences, indifference, disruptive behavior, or failure to complete class assignments; students are prohibited from cheating, plagiarizing, or colluding. Students are expected to have read the Student Handbook.
5. **Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion (as well as several other forms of conduct) are all strictly prohibited at MSU. Please read the MSU Student Handbook definitions of cheating, plagiarism, and collusion and MAKE SURE that you do not engage in any of these behaviors. If you are unclear on what may count as cheating, plagiarism, or collusion after reading the material below, please see the instructor or the Dean of Students.
 - a. **Student Honor Creed:** "As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so."
 - b. **See additional note below on plagiarism.** Plagiarism is NEVER ok.
6. **Safe Zones Statement:** The professor considers this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.
7. **Instructor Drops:** According to the MSU Student Handbook, "An instructor may drop a student any time during the semester for excessive absences, for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude, or for disruptive conduct." For the purposes of this course, "consistently failing to meet class assignments" includes consistently not turning in assigned work or turning in work that consistently receives a failing grade.
8. **Intellectual Property:** By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a "limited right" in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes.

Plagiarism

All forms of plagiarism are to be consciously and methodically avoided at all costs. Plagiarism is NEVER acceptable and there is no such thing as 'accidental' plagiarism. Any assignment submitted in this class that is found to contain any form of plagiarism, no matter how minor an infraction, will receive a zero for a grade and you will receive no participation credit for that assignment. A second infraction will earn you an "F" in the course.

Problems with the Mechanics of Writing

You will be asked to write several papers in this course. If you require help with the basic mechanics of writing, you will need to work with the Writing Center. I will help you with the content of your papers, but I will not typically edit student work at the sentence level since that is what YOU are supposed to be learning to do. You may work with other students in the class on issues of grammar, etc., or with anyone else willing to work with you (please do not bug other faculty members), but ultimately you should have learned basic writing skills long before now. Final copies of assignments that are turned in with basic writing problems will be graded harshly and will result in poor grades in the class.

AI Assistance

You are prohibited from using any or all AI assistance in this class. This includes, but is not limited to, ChatGPT, GrammarlyGo, Chegg, Google, Socratic, etc. If I determine that you have used AI Assistance on your papers, you will be dismissed from the class with an F. You are Honors students.

General Formatting Requirements

All assignments must be typed using the following formatting:

- 12pt Times New Roman font
- Double-spaced
- 1-inch margins all the way around
- Page numbers on all pages
- Justified left margin, ragged right margin (do NOT use full justification)
- In the header, your name, date, title, and assignment number

All assignments are to include a suitably descriptive title and should be consistent throughout for things most people never pay attention to, such as using or not using the Oxford (terminal) comma. Consistency is as important as the words on the page.

Special Note: This syllabus and the schedule herein is subject to change by the instructor should circumstances arise that require such changes.

Schedule

Week	Date	Topic/Assigned Paper
1	Jan 15	MLK HOLIDAY NO CLASS
	Jan 17	Course Introduction, Syllabus, Introduction to the Wargame
	Jan 19	Slide Show 1: History Riedel S. (2004) "Biological warfare and bioterrorism: a historical review." <i>Baylor University Medical Center Proceedings</i> . 17(4): 400 – 406.
2	Jan 22	Barras V. and Greub G. (2014) "History of biological warfare and bioterrorism." <i>Clin. Microbiol. Infect.</i> 20: 497 – 502.
	Jan 24	Wheelis M. (2002) "Biological Warfare at the 1346 Siege of Caffa." <i>Emerging Infectious Diseases</i> . 8(9): 971 – 975.
	Jan 26	Nunn, S. (2007) "Incidents of Terrorism in the United States, 1997 – 2005." <i>The Geographical Review</i> . 97(1): 89 – 111.
3	Jan 29	Slide Show 2: Biological Agents and Their Problems Thavaselvam D. and Vjayaraghavan R. (2010) "Biological warfare agents." <i>J. Pharm. Bioall. Sci.</i> 2(3): 179 – 188.
	Jan 31	Tin D., Sabeti P., and Ciottone GR. (2022) "Bioterrorism: An analysis of biological agents used in terrorist events." <i>American Journal of Emergency Medicine</i> 54: 117 – 121.
	Feb 2	Cunha BA. (2022) "Anthrax, tularemia, plague, ebola or smallpox as agents of bioterrorism: recognition in the emergency room." <i>Clin. Microbiol. Infect.</i> 8: 489 – 503.
4	Feb 5	Morens DM., Folkers GK., and Fauci AS. (2004) "The challenge of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases." <i>Nature</i> . 430: 242 – 249.
	Feb 7	Koch L, Lopes A-A., Maiguy A., et al. (2020) "Natural outbreaks and bioterrorism: How to deal with the two sides of the same coin?" <i>Journal of Global Health</i> . 10(2): 020317.
	Feb 9	Ansari I., Grier G., and Byers M. (2020) "Deliberate release: Plague – A Review." <i>Journal of Biosafety and Biosecurity</i> . 2: 10 – 22.
5	Feb 12	Mangili A. and Gendreau MA. (2005) "Transmission of infectious diseases during commercial air travel." <i>The Lancet</i> . 365: 989 – 996.
	Feb 14	Ulrich MR. and Mariner WK. (2018) "Quarantine and the Federal Role in Epidemics." <i>SMU Law Review</i> . 71: 391 – 444.
	Feb 16	General Discussion
6	Feb 19	Slide Show 3: The Terrorism Landscape FBI and DHS. (2023) "Strategic Intelligence Assessment and Data on Domestic Terrorism."
	Feb 21	Jasko K., LaFree G., and Kruglanski A. (2017) "Quest for Significance and Violent Extremism: The Case of Domestic Radicalization." <i>Political Psychology</i> . 38(5): 815 – 831.
	Feb 23	Albert C., Baez A., and Rutland J. (2021) "Human security as biosecurity: Reconceptualizing national security threats in the time of COVID-19." <i>Politics and the Life Sciences</i> . 40(1): 83 – 105.
7	Feb 26	Fortunato O., Dierenfeldt R., Basham S., McGuffee K. (2022) "Examining the Impact of the Obama and Trump Candidacies on Right-Wing Domestic Terrorism in the United States: A Time-Series Analysis." <i>Journal of Interpersonal Violence</i> . 37(23-24): NP23397 – NP23418.
	Feb 28	United States Government Interagency Domestic Terrorism Concept of Operations Plan
	Mar 1	United States Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit. <i>United States of America v. Timothy James McVeigh</i> . No. 97-1287. Decided: September 8, 1998.
8	Mar 4	U.S. Department of Justice. (2010) "Amerithrax Investigative Summary." (FOA)
	Mar 6	General Discussion
	Mar 8	General Discussion
9	Mar 11	SPRING BREAK NO CLASS
	Mar 13	
	Mar 15	
10	Mar 18	Slide Show 4: COVID-19 and Dark Winter National Intelligence Center Report: Updated Assessment on COVID-19 Origins

	Mar 20	O'Toole T., Mair M., and Inglesby TV. (2002) "Shining Light on 'Dark Winter'" <i>Clinical Infectious Diseases</i> . 34: 972 – 983.
	Mar 22	General Discussion/Wargame Prep
11	Mar 25	General Discussion/Wargame Prep
	Mar 27	General Discussion/Wargame Prep
	Mar 29	HOLIDAY BREAK NO CLASS
12	Apr 1	Wargame: Project Tennis Court The wargame will last the rest of the semester.
	Apr 3	
	Apr 5	
13	Apr 8	
	Apr 10	
	Apr 12	
14	Apr 15	
	Apr 17	
	Apr 19	
15	Apr 22	
	Apr 24	
	Apr 26	
16	Apr 29	
	May 1	
	May 3	Debriefing