

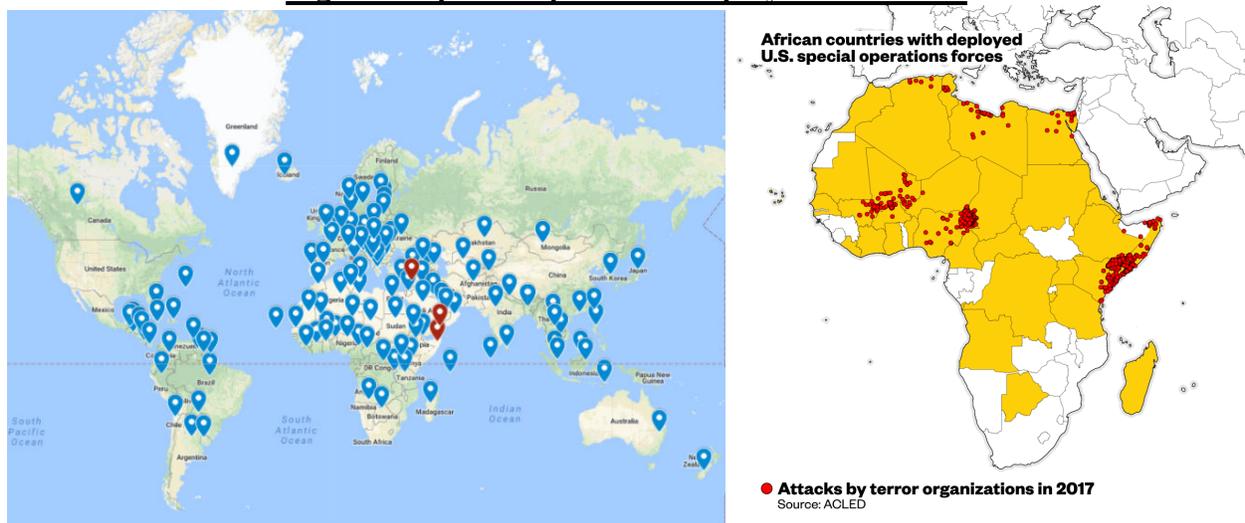


Middlebury Institute of  
International Studies at Monterey

## NPTG 8560 Special Operations And Counterterrorism Research Practicum

Fall 2019: 8-9:50 PST  
MW: MG 100

**Figure 1: Special Operations Deployments in 2017**



**Prof. Orion A. Lewis** ▪ [olewis@middlebury.edu](mailto:olewis@middlebury.edu) ▪  
by appointment via Outlook

Virtual Classroom:

<https://middlebury.zoom.us/j/8024435479>

## **Policy Backgrounder:**

**Current Situation:** The post-9/11 world has been characterized primarily by civil conflict, terrorism and various forms of asymmetric conflict also known as fourth-generation warfare. The same period has also coincided with the dramatic growth of Special Operations Forces (SOF), and has forced a rethinking of military doctrine, the role of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism within that, any skills and capabilities needed in order to succeed in those types of conflicts.

**Interests:** United States government and allied countries have a clear interest in learning the lessons of asymmetric conflict, so as not to repeat errors of the past. The department of defense, and US military have a clear interest in better communicating about the policy lessons of recent conflicts so as to inform policy across the military, and throughout the broader policy community.

**Goals:** 1. Provide an independent third-party mechanism for collecting data and evaluating key policy questions, 2. Facilitate research on key topics within the military, academia, and broader policy community, 3. Use the project as a platform to develop student skills, provide students with experience that will help them gain employment, 4. Develop this project as one of the pillars of a newly revamped terrorism studies research center at MIIS.

**Significance of this Project:** despite significant activity in this area, the military and broader policy community generally a lack adequate mechanisms for communicating the lessons of operations to other parts of the military. There's often a tension between conventional forces and more unconventional forces, said there is greater need for understanding of common challenges and lessons of unconventional warfare and grey zone conflicts that characterize the 21<sup>st</sup> century security landscape. Also important is the mission of historical preservation of important experience and knowledge.

## SOF Policy Dimensions: Connections to 4GW

Strategy Focus	Interdicting links	Denying exploitation	Interdicting flows	Denying sanctuary	Isolation from popular support	Disrupting inputs	Preventing sectarian conflict
<b>Direct Action</b>	<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>			
<b>Foreign Internal Defense</b>		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Surveillance Reconnaissance</b>			<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction</b>			<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Civilian Affairs Op</b>		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Military Info Support Op</b>		<b>X</b>			<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Hostage Res&amp;Recov</b>						<b>X</b>	

X-Axis: Kilcullen's Foci Within Strategy of Disaggregation (pp. 214-215)

Y-Axis: SOF Core Activities in COIN (JP 3-24 VII-8)

x = nexus of SOF capability and disaggregation strategy focus

## Research Methods and Skill Development

Skills Developed	Related Assignments (see details under requirements)
<b>Literature Review:</b> <i>ability to synthesize complex issues into something that is more easily digestible for an audience.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annotated Bibliography (5%)</li> <li>• Lit Review: Lines of Inquiry (15%)</li> <li>• Revisions to Research Questionnaire (5%)</li> </ul>
<b>Data Collection:</b> <i>knowing what type of data you need to collect for a project, how to collect that data in order to answer important questions, and how to manage that data collection process in a way that is compliant with protection of human subjects.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contacts List, Workflow, and recorded interviews (25%)</li> </ul>
<b>Mixed Methods Analysis:</b> <i>ability to conceptualize and organize data in a way that informs rigorous analysis and evaluation of key policy questions. Knowledge of software and techniques to leverage the qualitative and quantitative elements of ones data collection.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QDA Coding of interviews in NVivo (15%)</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Analysis:</b> <i>Ability to leverage different types of data and knowledge to make a persuasive case from a policy standpoint.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Policy Analysis (35%)</li> </ul>

## Course Requirements and Grading

### Readings

This will not be a reading heavy course outside of the reading that you do to complete the assignments. All readings for our class discussions will be posted electronically on the course Canvas site: <http://go.miis.edu/canvas>. Always check the Canvas site for the most up to date readings and schedule. Some flexibility is built into the schedule to accommodate issues as they emerge, some adaptability and our schedule is required. I will almost always follow any schedule changes and assignments via email.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>% of grade</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Annotated Bibliography</b>	5%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full bibliography information for sources to be used in the literature review.</li> <li>• Organized thematically</li> <li>• Provides abstract or other summary to inform readers what the main points are of each citation</li> </ul>
<b>Lit Review: Lines of Inquiry</b>	15%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesis of the literature in terms of the common patterns and themes that reoccur throughout readings and studies.</li> <li>• Help to clarify what is known about a particular field, but also what the unknown questions are.</li> <li>• Theme of this semester is: how does global counterinsurgency impact not only special forces but military doctrine as a whole.</li> </ul>
<b>Revisions to Research Questionnaire</b>	5%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on bibliography and lit review assignments, You will be asked to provide 15 new additional research questions.</li> <li>• These questions will add to the existing research designed particularly in terms of the broader perspective on military doctrine and security policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Contacts List, Workflow, and Recorded Interviews</b>	25%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Prof., GA, and others on research team to develop a list of between five and ten people that we should seek to interview as part of the project.</li> <li>• Set up and conduct five recorded interviews, or 10 hours of interviews, whatever comes first.</li> <li>• Evaluated based on application of the following skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Fieldwork interview techniques and methodology</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Knowledge of the literature and application of research design in terms of key policy questions.</li> </ul>

<b>Coding of Interviews in QDA Software</b>	15%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will train on NVivo, a software platforms that also facilitates mixed method analysis.</li> <li>• Students will be asked to annotate and code their recorded interviews</li> <li>• Provide modifications of the coding framework the team will use to code interviews.</li> <li>• These are basically research terms, questions or concepts, as well as suggestions related on how codes are organized conceptually.</li> <li>• Application of qualitative data analysis coding framework</li> <li>• These codes are applied to the written transcripts of the interviews, so that all of the interviews can be easily sorted unfiltered along these research questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Final Policy Brief</b>	35%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three pages single spaced</li> <li>• Policy brief or working paper format similar to those used by think tanks</li> <li>• Tackles some policy question related to the overall project</li> <li>• Utilizes data collected as part of the project, either in terms of literature review or primary data.</li> </ul>

## Policies

**Attendance:** regular attendance is expected but not required. Failure to regularly attend class will result in a lower participation grades.

**Late policy: No late assignments accepted.** The only exceptions to this are in the event of an emergency, such as a medical problem or death in the family. Documentation of such emergencies should be provided and alternative arrangements made in such events.

### ACADEMIC CONDUCT:

All students will be held to all policies and procedures listed in the most current Policies and Standards Manual (PSM). This includes but is not limited to our Student Honor Code and regulations on plagiarism. A complete copy of the Policies and Standards Manual (PSM) can be found here: <http://www.miis.edu/system/files/miis20psm20sep-2015-2.pdf>

Self-Plagiarism: Re-use of a student's work, in part or in its entirety, for another course without the express permission of the course instructor may be considered a form of plagiarism.

**POLICY FOR STUDENT DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Students with documented disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in class are encouraged to contact Assistant Dean of Student Services, Ashley Arrocha, as early in the semester as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. Assistance is available to eligible students through the Office of Student Services. Please contact [aarrocha@miis.edu](mailto:aarrocha@miis.edu) or 831-647-4654 for more information. All discussions will remain confidential.

## Approximate Schedule

- 26-Aug** Introductions, Briefing, Terrorism and 4GW
- 28-Aug** Key issues in CT and COIN; Philosophy of Science
- 9-Sept** Woodson: Backgrounder on SOF, the military and key issues  
Backgrounder on SOF, the military and key issues; Annotated
- 11 Sept** Bibliography Due
- 17-Sept** Writing Literature Review
- 19 Sept** Lit Review: DoD Doctrine and SOF History
- 23 Sept** Lit Review: Whole of Government and Spec Ops
- 25 Sept** Lit Review: Intelligence and Spec Ops
- 30 Sept** Lit Review: International Relations, Diplomacy and International  
Coalitions
- 2 Oct** Lit Review: Cyber and Spec
- 7 Oct** Research Design; Research Questions; Fieldwork Techniques;
- 9 Oct** Mock Interviews; Fieldwork review; Lit Review Due
- 14 Oct** Interviews; in-class and outside class; Contact List Due
- 16 Oct** Interviews; in-class and outside class
- 21 Oct** Interviews; in-class and outside class
- 23 Oct** Interviews; in-class and outside class
- 28 Oct** Interviews; in-class and outside class
- 4 Nov** Interviews; in-class and outside class
- 6 Nov** Interviews; in-class and outside class
- 11 Nov** NVivo and Qualitative Data Analysis
- 18 Nov** NVivo and Qualitative Data Analysis
- 20 Nov** NVivo and Qualitative Data Analysis

**25 Nov -  
31 Nov MIIS Thanksgiving Break**

**2 Dec NVivo and Qualitative Data Analysis**

**4 Dec NVivo and Qualitative Data Analysis**

**9 Dec NVivo and Qualitative Data Analysis; Coding of Interviews Due**

**11 Dec End of semester evaluation; Discussion of Final Projects**

**30- Final Written Policy Brief Due Tues Dec 30:  
Dec Midnight PST**