

SIPA WORKSHOP

Thursdays, 2:10-4:00
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12:30-2:00, 1338 IAB

Professor Stuart Gottlieb
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Client

Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State

Project Title

**Countering Terrorist Finance: Methods and Effectiveness
(Course Title: “Countering Terrorist Finance”)**

Description of the Client

The mission of the State Department’s Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism (S/CT) is to forge partnerships with non-state actors, multilateral organizations, and foreign governments to advance the counterterrorism objectives and national security of the United States. Working with our U.S. Government counterterrorism team, S/CT takes a leading role in developing coordinated strategies to defeat terrorists abroad and in securing the cooperation of international partners. S/CT also takes the lead in designating Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists for the U.S. Government.

Summary of the Project

S/CT would like the SIPA Team to complete an in-depth analysis of historical and current methods terrorists use to finance their activities, methods used by governments and other actors to counter terror finance, and offer suggestions for improving the counter terror financing polices of the United States. Specific questions to explore include (but are not limited to):

- How are terrorists evolving in their methods of securing funds?
- How do different types of terrorist organizations finance operations? E.g., do anarchists raise funds differently from ethno-nationalist organizations? From religion-based groups?
- Do religious-based groups have more disposable money for operations than other groups?
- How has Kidnapping for Ransom evolved over time? How, and how effectively, are groups like al-Qa’ida in the Islamic Maghreb and Boko Haram using this method today?
- Which counter terror financing methods are the most successful? Why do others fail?
- Which FTOs are currently the most adept at securing funds? How do they do this? Why have governments failed at stopping the flow to these groups but succeeded elsewhere?
- How can sanctions and other methods be improved upon in an effort to stem the flow of finance to terrorist organizations?
- How can governments alert the public to the dangers of terrorist charities without either seeming unsympathetic to humanitarian needs or discouraging overall charitable giving?

The Team will work directly with the S/CT, including a series of in-progress-reviews. The end goal of the consultancy is to provide a detailed assessment of terrorist financing, its evolution over time, and recommendations, as appropriate, on how the U.S. can more effectively block terrorists from financing activities. The deliverables for this project include an executive summary of the Team's findings, a comprehensive written analysis, and a formal briefing to the S/CT in Washington, DC.

Description and Objectives of the Workshop

ISP concentrators are preferred though others may be admitted with instructor permission. Students will function as a small consulting Team tasked with assisting the S/CT in its efforts to assess terrorism finance and the utility of counter finance efforts in achieving foreign policy objectives.

Structure, Format, and Deliverables

There will be a preliminary Team meeting in December, for the purpose of pre-planning for the spring semester. This will include assigning preliminary research to be conducted, and background reading to be completed, before the commencement of the spring semester, as well as a general discussion of the goals and expectations of the Team.

During the semester, the Team and I will meet every Thursday at 2:10. Early in the semester there will be an initial meeting between myself, the client, and the Team that will be set up prior to the semester. For the remainder of the semester the Team will work directly with the client.

The goal is to provide the client with a roughly 25-page Strategic Report (not including supporting appendices) and a formal presentation of findings and recommendations. The Team will be responsible for: 1) developing a "work plan" to guide the project, including a division-of-labor for the Team; 2) drafting a "working proposal" (~ week 3) and "status brief" (~ mid-semester) to assess the progress of your work and the proposed organization of your final Report; and 3) participating in a practice oral briefing prior to your final meeting with the client toward the end of the semester.

The specific due dates for these deliverables will be determined in the course of our preliminary meetings, and our initial meeting with the client.

Method of Evaluation

Grades will be assigned to the Team and to individuals. Final grades will be based upon: 1) quality of the Team's final Report and formal briefing (30%); feedback from the client (20%); quality of the Team's "work plan," "working proposal" and "status brief" (20%); overall individual participation and professionalism (20%); individual "de-briefing memo" (10%).

Background Readings

- *Linda Stroh and Homer Johnson, Basic Principles of Effective Consulting (Erlbaum, 2006).
- *Thomas Biersteker and Sue Eckert, Countering the Financing of Terrorism (Routledge, 2007).
- *CRS Report, "Terrorist Financing: Current Efforts and Policy Issues," Aug. 20, 2004.
www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl32539.pdf
- *9/11 Commission, Financing Staff Monograph, Al Haramain Case Study
www.9-11commission.gov/staff_statements/911_TerrFin_Ch7.pdf
- *FATF Special Recommendations on Terror Finance:
www.fatf-gafi.org/document/9/0,3746,en_32250379_32236920_34032073_1_1_1_1,00.html
- *Treasury Department's Terrorist Assets Report
www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Documents/tar2010.pdf