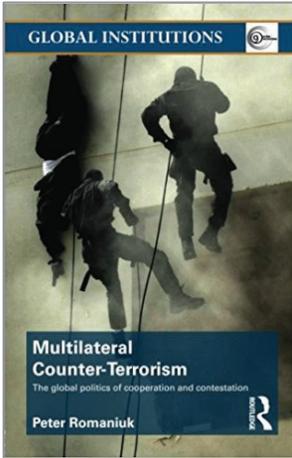


Peter Romaniuk is an Associate Professor of Political Science at John Jay College and will be teaching at the Graduate Center in Fall 2017.

By **Matthew Thomas**



Matt: Please describe the general themes of your research and some of your past projects. What led you to become interested in your area of research?

Professor Romaniuk: My research focuses on different aspects of terrorism and counterterrorism. I entered grad school in Fall 2000 intending to write a dissertation on the international frameworks governing refugees. (I had previously worked for Australia's Immigration Department and had some exposure to those issues.) But in my first semester in grad school, I was fortunate to get a research assistant position on a project that focused on the use of targeted financial sanctions by the UN Security Council. Then 9/11 happened and that project transitioned into a project on countering terrorist financing. I wrote my dissertation on the implementation of newly emerging



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counterterrorism-related norms and rules (in the areas of terrorist financing, maritime security and migration control) in different countries (India, Indonesia and Malaysia). Since then, I have published mostly on multilateral counterterrorism and countering terrorist financing, with a current interest in debates surrounding “countering violent extremism” or “CVE.”

M: What projects are you currently working on? Do you work exclusively within academia, or is there an applied aspect to your research as well?

P: For the last few years, I have worked closely with colleagues from a local think-tank, the Global Center on Cooperative Security. Projects are often government-funded and comprise applied research, with outputs addressed primarily to a practitioner audience. This has meant travel for research and conferences, and interaction with policy makers from governments and international organizations, as well as civil society practitioners. CVE is a relatively recent development in counterterrorism policy and reflects an effort to utilize “soft power” measures in this field, following the unintended consequences of traditional counterterrorism approaches in the first decade after 9/11, especially regarding engagement at the community level. Various governments and international organizations have advanced CVE initiatives, both at home and abroad, and have faced plenty of challenges in doing so.

Our work has focused on how to assess violent extremism problems and the effectiveness of CVE measures. In 2015, I published a report on this subject with the Global Center titled “Does CVE Work?” Additionally, I and some colleagues are wrapping up a project for the UK government’s Department for International Development that assesses terrorism and violent extremism in ten East African countries, and features original interview research from Tanzania and Uganda. We also offer recommendations on whether and how to implement CVE measures. Specifically, we suggest that CVE programs have only a modest role to play (except in Somalia and Kenya, where the problem of violent extremism is gravest), and that existing development priorities should be maintained.

M: How is your time divided between teaching and research? What types of courses do you normally like to offer? Will you be offering any at the GC in the near future?

O: One of the virtues of an academic career is that there are a variety of options in terms of how you can divide your time. The last few years have been very research-intensive for me, with a lot of writing. But I am back in the classroom more this semester, and that suits me fine. I will teach my terrorism class at the GC in the fall. That class is a critical review of contemporary knowledge on terrorism and counterterrorism from the disciplinary perspective of political science. I have taught this class twice before at the GC and really enjoyed it. I was also just appointed to the GC faculty a year ago, so I am looking forward to being more engaged with GC students and colleagues in the future.