Bio:
Kurt Braddock is an Assistant Professor of Public Communication in the School of Communication at American University. Kurt also holds a faculty fellow position at the SOC's Center for Media and Social Impact (CMSI). His research focuses on the persuasive strategies used by violent extremist groups to recruit and radicalize audiences targeted by their propaganda. Kurt also explores how theories of communication, persuasion, and social influence can be used to inform practices meant to prevent radicalization among vulnerable audiences. His first book, titled *Weaponized Words: The Strategic Role of Persuasion in Violent Radicalization and Counter-Radicalization* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), provides examples of how terrorist groups persuade audiences to adopt their ideologies, and how this process can be fought. Kurt is presently interested in the development of communicative counter-radicalization strategies that prevent white supremacism, neo-Nazism, and the adoption of other violent far-right ideologies.

In addition to publishing his work in key communication and security journals (e.g., *Communication Monographs, Terrorism and Political Violence, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*), Kurt also provides input to key institutions in D.C. to inform how they fight terrorism. Some of these institutions include the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Defense. His work has also been used at the international level, where Kurt has advised the U.K. Home Office, Public Safety Canada, the United Nations Counterterrorism Executive Directorate, and others.

Training synopsis:
Effectively stemming the threat posed by violent extremism and terrorism requires that we use all strategic tools at our disposal. This means that we cannot rely exclusively on security-based solutions to deal with those who have already turned to violence; we must also use proactive communication strategies to prevent vulnerable individuals from becoming violent in the first place. It is not enough that we challenge extremist propaganda after it has already reached target audiences; we must also try to undermine that propaganda before it takes hold.

Attitudinal inoculation is one form of strategic counter-persuasion that achieves this very goal. Based on decades of social-scientific evidence, attitudinal inoculation uses target audiences' innate dislike of being persuaded to undercut the appeal of extremist messaging.

In this training module, Dr. Kurt Braddock of American University's School of Communication and Center for Media and Social Impact describes the foundations of attitudinal inoculation so trainees may apply it in any context in which they wish to prevent violence.

Across the training session, Dr. Braddock:

1. Explains the history of attitudinal inoculation and how it came to be the preeminent counter-persuasion tool in strategic communication
2. Outlines research he has conducted to scientifically demonstrate how inoculation can be used to prevent violent radicalization
3. Describes how to identify audiences that can benefit from attitudinal inoculation targeting extremist ideologies
4. Details how you can develop your own inoculation messages, tailored to specific operational contexts
5. Engages with trainees about their own goals and helps determine how inoculation can be used to achieve them
6. Provides trainees with tangible tools with which they can develop and deliver inoculation messages on their own, helping to reduce violence among target audiences