

# Political Science 4744

## Intelligence Analysis Workshop

### Spring 2015

## Course Info

**Instructor:** Steven Wilson

**Place:** McBryde 212

**Time:** Mondays and Wednesdays 2:30PM - 3:45PM

**Office Hours:** 1:00PM-2:00PM Mondays and Wednesdays in 527 Major Williams Hall

**Contact Info:** Email: slw42@vt.edu Phone: 540-231-6425

**Objectives:** Examines the impact of historical experience and bureaucratic structures on intelligence analysis. Discusses the contents of the intelligence agenda and explores issues pertaining to intelligence analysis. Focuses on the intelligence process and offers a target-centric approach to intelligence analysis. Emphasizes and evaluates the use of structured analytic techniques in intelligence analysis.

## Textbooks

The course has a single required textbook:

Robert M. Clark. *Intelligence Analysis: A Target-Centric Approach*

## Assignments & Grading

This is a workshop style course, which means that class time will be spent on exercises as opposed to lectures. Each student will be assigned to a group for the duration of the semester, though the majority of each grade will be determined by individual work.

Participation (20%) (Throughout semester)

Executive Briefings (15%) (6 over course of semester)

National Intelligence Estimates (15%) (6 over course of semester)

Debriefings (20%) (6 over course of semester, group grades)

Presentation (10%) (In class, one per student)

Final Exam (20%) (Wednesday, May 13, 2015 10:05AM-12:05PM)

## **Groups**

All students will be assigned to a group the first week of the semester. These groups will be the basis for in-class work, although most assignments will be turned in on an individual basis. Part of the class's goal is to teach how working within a bureaucratic agency structure affects intelligence analysis.

## **National Intelligence Estimates**

Modeled on national intelligence estimates constructed by intelligence agencies on specific topics, these 500-750 word papers are designed to summarize the intelligence findings and provide policy recommendations based on the work done in the student's group during the biweekly case study.

## **Executive Briefings**

Modeled on the daily presidential briefings written by intelligence agencies to summarize important intelligence parsed out of the day-to-day flood of incoming data. These are individually written, 500-750 word papers, based on the group exercises done on the Indications and Warning work on a biweekly basis.

## **Debriefings**

These are turned in on behalf of the entire group. They represent the summary and explanation of the work the group did on the case study. This is the "showing the work" element of the national intelligence estimates.

## **Presentation**

All students will give a ten minute presentation during the semester. Every other Thursday, we will debrief on the biweekly case studies. One student from each group will present their group's findings for that case study in a formal presentation.

## **Course Schedule**

The first two weeks of the semester will be examining historical case studies in order to learn the basic use of tools that will be used for the rest of the semester. These are warm-up exercises, so to speak, and involve a large amount of reading (due on the Monday of each week), but no assignments will be turned in.

After those two weeks, we will launch into the six case studies that will each last two weeks, and take up the rest of the semester. For each of these case studies, reading assignments

(generally one chapter from each textbook) will be due the first Monday of the case study. In addition, a single larger case study will be running in the background throughout the duration of the semester.

Each two week case study's schedule will follow this pattern:

1st Monday: Reading due. In class exercises based on the readings, focused on a new Indications and Warning (or "wire") packet of data posted on the course's scholar site. This serves to get students familiar with the particular techniques focused on for the particular case study, and learn how to identify important data among the large amount of incoming data that is typical in modern intelligence work. Students will independently produce their own Executive Briefing based on this work, due on Friday of this week.

1st Wednesday: Details of the case study assignment revealed. In-class work will focus on applying the lessons from Monday to this particular assignment, using the provided data packet and any open source intelligence. The deliverable at the end of class is the itemized and budgeted requisition of additional data from the Instructor. In addition, mini-lectures on a specific software tool will be provided in order to give students experience with actual software techniques used in the field.

2nd Monday: Requisitioned data is provided to each group in a packet. In-class work focuses on finishing the analysis in light of the new information. Individuals will individually produce Intelligence Estimates based on this work, due by Friday of this week.

2nd Wednesday: Debriefings due before class. Each group will present their findings formally (one student from each group will give each presentation), and at the end of class the resolution of the scenario will be revealed along with any policy implications.

The detailed schedule for the semester is listed below, along with the assigned readings.

## **Historical Case 1: Pearl Harbor**

Jan 26, 28.

*Readings:* Clark Chapters 1,2,3,4

## **Historical Case 2: Iraq WMDs**

Feb 2, 4.

*Readings:* Clark Chapters 5,6,7

## **Case Study 1: Chinese Nuclear Reactors**

Feb 9, 11, 16, 18.

*Readings:* Clark Chapter 15

*Tool focus:* Content Analysis

## **Case Study 2: Iranian Nuclear Program**

Feb 23, 25, Mar 2, 4.

*Readings:* Clark Chapter 9

*Tool focus:* ACH

## **Case Study 3: Sino-Russian War**

Mar 16, 18, 23, 25.

*Readings:* Clark Chapter 8

*Tool focus:* GIS

## **Case Study 4: Mexican Economic Crisis**

Mar 30, Apr 1, 6, 8.

*Readings:* Clark Chapter 12

*Tool focus:* Regression

## **Case Study 5: Fall of Putin**

Apr 13, 15, 20, 22.

*Readings:* Clark Chapter 11,13

*Tool focus:* *Network Analysis*

## **Case Study 6: Major Terror Attack**

Apr 27, 29, May 4, 6.

*Readings:* Clark Chapter 14

## **Final Exam**

Wednesday, May 13, 2015 10:05AM-12:05PM