Intelligence Analysis for Homeland Security RPAD 557

Instructor: Dr. James E. Steiner
Public Service Professor
Rockefeller College
SUNY Albany
518-708-4183
Office hours: by appointment
423 State Street

Course Summary:

In the more than a decade since the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, a revolution has been underway in the relationship among federal, state, and local homeland security, law enforcement and intelligence organizations. At the federal level, a new Department of Homeland Security has been created, the “wall” between law enforcement and intelligence has been nearly obliterated, some law enforcement organizations are being directed to become more like intelligence agencies, and the foreign intelligence community is being fundamentally reformed. The impact at the State level has been even larger. State Government’s have been assigned the lead role in Homeland Security. Most States have responded by bringing together existing public security, law enforcement, and emergency response capabilities, linking them to similar local assets, and opening channels to adjoining States. But there has been a missing piece. Prior to 9/11, none of the States had a robust all-source intelligence analysis capability. Most now have created multiple intelligence cells in existing structures, as well as fusion centers which, for the first time, connect state and local homeland security and law enforcement—and especially the new intelligence organizations--with the federal community.

This course examines intelligence analysis at the Federal and State levels. We begin with an overview of the US foreign intelligence community, its mission, history, structure, and capabilities, with special emphasis on its analytic components. We examine how this community’s composition and structure have changed as its mission was fundamentally altered, first with the end of the Cold War and then with the rise if terrorism. Next, we look at intelligence analysis as it is
conducted by federal law enforcement and at the Department of Homeland Security. We will then look briefly at the various models used for conducting analysis by State-level homeland security and law enforcement. With this background, and based on the instructors career as an intelligence analyst at the CIA, the remainder of the course will be devoted to the intelligence analysis function.

We first examine the various types of “intelligence analysis” and the criteria for evaluating the quality of analysis. We will learn the psychology of intelligence analysis and the danger posed by mental mindsets. We then move into the fundamentals of intelligence analysis tradecraft as practiced within the CIA and other federal intelligence agencies. Extensive time is devoted to learning and using structured analytic techniques through student-led analytic exercises on terrorism and major crimes. These tools were developed for the most part at CIA and now are being taught throughout the Intelligence Community, including the FBI.

The course focuses on the following questions:

--What are the roles and functions of the CIA and the Intelligence Community? What is the role of State level intelligence? What can intelligence analysts do to assist national and state executive, policy, homeland security and law enforcement officials?

--Why does the intelligence community have its current array of analytic capabilities and to what degree should these be emulated or complemented at the State level to support homeland security and law enforcement?

--How do the Department of Homeland Security intelligence shop and the National Counter-Terrorism Center interface with intelligence at the national level? At the State level?

--What can intelligence provide to assist homeland security and law enforcement in the areas of terrorism, counter narcotics, illicit finance, and international organized crime?
--What is analysis? What is intelligence analysis? What is critical thinking? Why isn’t an intuitive approach adequate for the most important intelligence challenges?

--What are mental mindsets? What analytic traps grow out of them? How can they be overcome?

--What are the best techniques for developing scenarios for examining alternative futures? Why are these tools critical for assessing future terrorism threats?

--What role can intelligence play in developing homeland security simulation exercises?

Course Content and Sequence

We will begin each class with a brief discussion of articles/op ed pieces in the previous week’s NY Times and Albany Times-Union that relate to the nexus between intelligence, homeland security, and law enforcement. Students will highlight the differences between the relevance of these issues to federal vs state customers (executives and law enforcement).

Week 1. Course overview and administration. Discuss class assignments, including student presentations and student-led exercises. Walk through syllabus to ensure a shared understanding of approach and course goals. Discuss “intelligence” and the challenges it faces. Discuss federal and state homeland security structures. The events of 9/11 and what went wrong for intelligence and law enforcement. Required readings for each class are provided on BLACKBOARD.

web sites for DNI.gov, CIA.gov, NSA.gov, NGA.mil, NRO.gov, DIA.mil, and intelligence.gov.


Week 6. Intelligence Analysis – the fundamentals, part 2. The analyst’s craft. In-class analytic writing exercise. Dealing with
information and sources. Analytic standards. Each student will prepare an intelligence article on a topic to be assigned. Read: Jack Davis, “Sherman Kent’s Final Thoughts on Analyst-Policymaker Relations” on the CIA website and George and Bruce, Analyzing Intelligence, Introduction, Part 1, and Treverton chapter. Student presentations on the Luna case in preparation for next week’s exercise.


Week 10. Analysis of Competing Hypotheses. Wen Ho Lee Case and Luna Case. Argument mapping. Student presentations on the FARC for next week’s exercises.


Week 12. FARC in New York (1). Alternative futures exercise. Simulation exercise (part 1). Strategic warning. Large package of intelligence reports. Student teams formed. Students use any/all analytic techniques. Each group prepares a report on alerts to be provided to local law enforcement/public and a set of collection requirements for the IC and federal, state and local law enforcement.
Week 13. FARC in New York (2). Simulation exercise conclusion. Turning concepts and principles into action. Each team will receive a second package of intelligence (3 weeks later in game time) and, during the course of deliberations, will receive specific intelligence generated by their collection requirements. Each team will present its findings on its estimate of likely FARC attack plans and recommended alerts to local law enforcement and the public.

Weeks 14. Student presentations on their major paper.

Course Requirements and Grades: In addition to class presentations, participation, and role-playing, each student will prepare a 20 page major paper on an approved topic. All papers are due at our final class.

Student grades will be based on a combination of class presentations and participation (two-thirds) and the major paper (one-third).

Readings:

In addition to the required texts, there will be weekly reading assignments from CIA monographs, web sites, articles and books on Blackboard. Readings will average over 150 pages per week.

Required Texts:

George, Roger and Bruce, James *Analyzing Intelligence*
Mark M. Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*
Heuer, Richards J. *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (available on-line)

There is also a course reader required and available at Maryjane’s bookstore.