

CRIM 490 009: *Analytical Writing and Briefing for the Intelligence Community*

Instructor: David Foster, PhD
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Office Hours: By appointment

Fall 2016
Monday 4:30 - 7:10 pm
Nguyen Engr Bldg 1103

Course Description

This course builds upon the foundational courses of CRIM 310 and CRIM 312 to help student finely hone their writing, briefing and analytic skills for careers in National Security and related fields. This course will enable students to practice a specific form of writing and speaking skills that are unique to the National Security environment while being beneficial across a range of other settings. This course is built around a series of in-class exercises and homework assignments that require students to research, analyze, write about and then present information on a complex National Security topic. Students will gain the skills and confidence to support their ideas in both verbal and written form, and to convey their core messages in high stress environments. Students will also have the opportunity to (re)learn proper writing techniques and to practice these over the course of the semester. Public speaking is a key component of this class, and students will be repeatedly challenged to defend their conclusions, think critically about complex and controversial topics, and to work collaboratively to strengthen their analysis and presentation skills.

Course Prerequisites

Strong analytical reasoning, research, writing, and oral communication skills. This is a 490-level course and requires a serious time commitment for readings and assignments.

Course and Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate the specific writing skills needed to craft well-reasoned written analyses in a National Security setting;
- Demonstrate proper briefing styles and effectively tailor a briefing to different audiences;
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of current events and how they relate to the Intelligence Community and larger National Security apparatus;
- Discuss major ethical and moral issues related to intelligence; and
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze and synthesize information, and effectively communicate the assessment in a variety of forms in a high-stress environment.

Required Book

Communicating with Intelligence: Writing and Briefing for National Security, 2nd edition.
(2014). James S. Major. Rowman and Littlefield publisher

Grading - 100 points total

- Attendance 10%
- Assessment One 10%
- Group Summary 10%
- Group Presentation 5%
- Combined Analysis 15%
- Assessment Two 15%
- Special Topics Assessment 15%
- Special Topics Presentation 5%
- Final Exam 15%

Attendance and Participation

Both attendance and participation are an integral part of your grade. Your goal should be to participate at least once per class, although the amount of participation is less important than reasoned, responsible, and quality participation. If you must miss a class, please let the professor know in advance. You will be responsible for the content delivered and handouts distributed for missed classes.

Readings

In addition to the chapters from the textbook, you will be assigned at least one, and often more external readings each week. Thorough preparation each week will enable you to participate fully in class discussions. Preparation must include taking notes on the readings and coming to class prepared to discuss them.

Intelligence Assessment Papers

You will be assigned four short papers over the course of the semester (1-5 pages in length each) that ask you to conduct an assessment similar to what you might do as an analyst within the Intelligence Community. There will be briefing opportunities linked to these assignments. More information about these assignments will be provided in class.

Laptop Policy

The use of laptops, tablets and cell phones is prohibited in this class, except for those students with a documented need. Numerous studies have found that student's use of laptops in college lectures detracts from their learning as well as distracts those around them. Current Intelligence Community professionals do not have the luxury of attending briefings with laptops, and as such, the ability to take good notes by hand is of clear importance.

Class Conduct

I expect courteous and professional behavior in class. This includes:

- arriving on time and being prepared for each class;
- **no use of laptops, tablets or cell phones**, except in support of a documented need;
- treating everyone with respect, even though you may disagree with their view;
- if you must eat/drink in class, please properly dispose of your garbage.

Grading Expectations

The grading scale is from A to F. A's are reserved for excellent or very good work—work that demonstrates not only a strong, insightful grasp of the material but also shows a high degree of complexity, originality, and independence of thought. Exam answers, assignments, and in-class exercises that demonstrate only a rudimentary or one-dimensional grasp of the material, or that show serious flaws in the analysis and presentation of ideas, will receive a below-average grade.

Grading Scale

98 - 100	= A+	87 - 89	= B+	77 - 79	= C+	60 - 66	= D
93 - 97	= A	83 - 86	= B	70 - 76	= C	Below 60	= F
90 - 92	= A-	80 - 82	= B-	67 - 69	= C-		

Academic Honesty

GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. One fundamental principle must be followed at all times: all answers on exams and work submitted should be your own. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. For more information, see: <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/honorcode.html>

Disability Resource Center

www.gmu.edu/student/drc/

703-993-2474 SUB I, Room 222

The Disability Resource Center assists students with learning or physical conditions affecting learning. If you have a disability documented by the Disability Resource Center that requires special conditions for exams or other writing assignments, **please see me the first week of class.**

Writing Center

<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

703-993-1200 Robinson A 114

The Writing Center provides tutors who can help you develop ideas and revise papers at no charge. It can sometimes accommodate walk-ins, but generally it is best to call for an appointment. The services of the Writing Center are also available online.

GMU Libraries

<http://library.gmu.edu>

The GMU Libraries employ Librarians who serve can help you find information to support your analysis project. Each Librarian is a subject specialist and can help with research topics of any area or discipline. The Library's web site provides electronic access to journal databases and many other resources.

GMU Career Services

<http://careers.gmu.edu/>

Career Services offers career education and planning, internship opportunities, resume service, job search assistance, and graduate school application preparation. They have an extensive library of print and online resources, and offer a number of interesting workshops.

Fall 2016 Class Schedule

August 29	Week One: ALPHA Course Overview and Intelligence Community refresher Assessment One assigned	
Sept 5th	Labor Day (no class)	
Sept 12th	Week Two: BRAVO Writing module #1 In-class exercise TBA Assessment One due (redux assigned)	Prefix & Chapter One
Sept 19th	Week Three: CHARLIE Assessment One redux due Group Assessment assigned	Chapter Two & Three
Sept 26th	Week Four: DELTA In-class exercise TBA Writing module #2	Chapter Four
Oct 3rd	Week Five: ECHO Group Assessment due Presentations in class	Chapter Five & Six
Oct 11th	Week Six: FOXTROT Columbus Day recess...our class meets Tuesday, Oct 11th this week Combined Analysis assigned	

Oct 17th	Week Seven: GOLF Writing module #3 Combined Analysis due	Chapter Seven & Eight
Oct 24th	Week Eight: HOTEL In-class exercise TBA Assessment Two assigned	Chapter Nine & Ten
Oct 31st	Week Nine: INDIA In-class exercise TBA Writing module #4	Chapter Eleven
Nov 7th	Week Ten: JULIET In-class exercise TBA Assessment Two due	Chapter Twelve
Nov 14th	Week Eleven: KILO Writing module #5	Chapter Thirteen
Nov 21st	Week Twelve: LIMA TBA	Chapter Fourteen
Nov 28th	Week Thirteen: MIKE Writing module #6	Chapter Fifteen
Dec 5th	Week Fourteen: NOVEMBER	
Dec 19th	Final Exam	