Course Description

This course introduces deception and counter-deception and their role in support of security risk analyses in competitive environments. The course covers fundamental theories of deception, cognition and the vulnerabilities of humans to deception. It also addresses the vulnerabilities of technical collection systems and sensors to deception. The course discusses deceptive practices in use by attackers and defenders, including both non-technical and technical means. A fully immersive semester-long exercise: “Legends: Network of Deception” provides practical, hands-on experience in detection of both technical and non-technical deception & counter-deception techniques. During the 10-week exercise, students, working in analytic teams, work to solve a Cold War deception operation and locate missing FBI agent; Code Name, Rafael.

Goals

The broad objective of the course is to support overall curricular objectives of the Security and Risk Analysis program through the application and practice of the core knowledge skills and abilities (KSAs) acquired in the qualifying SRA courses. By so doing the course helps to prepare future leaders to address the many security and risk challenges that face our nation and the world. The course also supports the core values of the College of IST: respect for technology, cultures, and the law. This course helps the student become familiar with the vocabulary, written form and skills of the analytic field. The individual goals of SRA 433 are summarized by the four learning objectives around which the course was designed. They include:

- **Deception Theory** (25%): Students will be able to define, recognize and put into practice the fundamentals that comprise deception theory across the three levels of engagement: strategic, operational and tactical.
- **Counter-deception Methods and Tools** (25%): Students will be able to define, recognize and put into practice the fundamentals of counter-deception techniques across the three levels of engagement: strategic, operational and tactical.
- **The Deception Environment** (25%): Students will be able to derive, analyze and apply the elements that define the deception environment at the individual, group and organizational level, including the characteristics, and strategies of deception at each level.
- **Bridging Theory & Practice** (25%): Students will apply their KSA’s to realistic geo-political deception exercises and be able to communicate the results of their
analysis in cogent written and oral form. Students will also demonstrate their understanding by constructing realistic deception analytic products.

Materials

Text: Counter-deception: Principles and Applications for National Security, 2007. Other Instructional materials (supplemental readings, course slides, lesson assignments and rubrics) are provided via the PSU CANVAS Course Management System.

Prerequisites

SRA 211, SRA 221, SRA 231 & SRA 311

Course Overview

Unit-1: Deception Theory (Weeks 1-6)

In this element of the course we explore the foundational aspects of deception theory and introduce the basic elements of deception: goal, target, reaction, and channels along with the various tools, methods and techniques used in deception planning and counter-deception operations. These concepts will be reinforced in a series of individual, short-duration analytic problems.

Unit-2 Team Deception Exercise (Weeks 7-15)

Students working in teams, act as FBI Counter-deception analysts. Your mission: Locate FBI Special Agent, Robert James THOMPSON, Code Name, and Rafael. To do so, you must identify the various members of the Soviet Legends Network, their individual roles and their connection to Rafael. The time is 1985. Ronald Reagan is President and the U.S. is locked in an arms race with the U.S.S.R. The key to Reagan’s Cold War strategy is his Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which will effectively shield the United States from Soviet ballistic missiles. The Russian have no counter to SDI so they must rely on their Legend network to gather intelligence and influence U.S. policy before they fall too far behind. In the middle of counter-deception operations is Rafael, who at the start of our scenario has gone missing. Your goal, and the goal of your team, is to find out how & why. The outcome of this assignment is a formal presentation and supporting narrative & associated deception analysis products.

Evaluation

This course will incorporate collaborative and action-learning experiences wherever appropriate. Emphasis will be placed on the reinforcing critical thinking, and critical writing through the application of structured analytic techniques as expressed in numerous deception/counter-deception assignments. Analytic templates will be provided to guide the deception analysis process.

SRA 433 was designed as a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) course and as a structured analytic course. The course was envisioned free of exams & quizzes; however, experience has proven that this approach is not foolproof. Some students need encouragement to read, do homework and maintain situational awareness during the course deception exercise. To encourage participation and evaluate knowledge students will respond to a Director’s Inquiry each week of the exercise.
**Director’s Inquiry (DI).** The DI is a quiz of sorts, designed to prompt critical reading, thinking, analysis and to increase overall situational awareness of the intricacies of the deception exercise. The Director’s Inquiry focuses on the week’s exercise message group. The DI is comprised of short answer/multiple choice questions and a bonus analytic question. The Director’s Inquiry has two assessment functions: 1) comprises 20% of the overall course grade and 2) is used to determine the Counter-Deception Analyst of the Year. Team composite scores will for calculated to determine the Counter-Deception Team award.

As a PBL/WIC participant, you will be assessed on your comprehension and application of deception theory and analysis knowledge and in your ability to translate the course material into cogent analytic judgments. To achieve this goal, various practical application assignments have been created all specifically tailored to the task:

- **Deception Theory Problems (DTP):** are short analytic assignments that stress the practical aspects of a specific deception analysis concept or technique. These problems are designed to reinforce various lesson-learning objectives.

- **Deception Analyst Journal:** The Deception Analyst Journal (DAJ) is a tool used during team analysis (Legends’ Exercise). It is used to capture team and individual analytic judgments, taskers and questions. The DAJ is an informal analytic diary of sorts where team members collaborate, trade hypotheses and capture their analytic progress during team brainstorming. There is no specific template for the journal; however, Google Docs has been used in the past with good results. Collaboration is the essential goal of the Deception Analyst Journal.

**Feedback on Analytic Work:** Students receive feedback throughout the course and on each facet of their analysis. Each assignment is reviewed in class where trends are discussed. Each analytic assignment is reinforced with a fully executed Instructor Solution. After the in-class review & trends discussion, students are encouraged to compare their work with the instructor’s and seek additional feedback as necessary. Early in the semester, instructor feedback emphasizes course content over written form. As the semester progresses and the assignment become more specific, emphasis gradually shifts toward the more stringent elements of analytic writing and in the presentation and defense of analytic judgments.

**Evaluation of Written Work:** For assignments that fall early in the semester, assessment focuses on the comprehension of course content over the strict rules of analytic writing. For these early assignments, students are also judged on their ability to follow assignment guidance. To reinforce this notion, 10% of each assignment grade is set aside for “adherence to instructions.” From the analytic side, however, at this stage, I am more interested in “what you say then how you say it,” but the adherence to instructions is paramount to sound intelligence analysis. As the course progresses, greater emphasis will be placed on the application of the principles of sound analytic writing (cohesion and concision). By semester’s end students will be judged on their ability to integrate deception theoretic concepts with the analysis process as expressed in analytic form and style. Emphasis at this stage is balanced between what is said (analytic judgments & findings) and how it is presented (tight analytic prose and oral presentation).

**Grading Scale:**

- 93-100% -- A
- 90-92.99% -- A-
Submitted Work

In order to get **FULL** credit for any assignment it **MUST** be completed by the due date designated for that assignment. **ALL** assignments **MUST** be completed and accounted for by the end of Week-6. Students missing two (2) or more assignments will be required to take the Deception Exam. The due date for each assignment is published in the Course Calendar in the Student Support Folder in CANVAS. Deviations from this document will be discussed in class. While I do make provisions for “justified” late submissions, I ask that you keep these to a minimum. If you know you will miss a deliverable, please communicate your intentions to me and to your assigned Learning Assistant before the due date. Ensure you keep track of **ALL** assignments so that you don’t fall behind. If you miss a due date for any assignment you must make arrangements with your LA to make it up BEFORE the end of Week-6. This is the only way to maintain a fair and equitable system of assessment. Teaching and evaluating is the role of the instructor; learning and participation is the role of the student. You can track assignments via the Key Deliverables document found in the Student Support Folder.

**PEER Reviews**

Two Peer Evaluations will be conducted during the Legends Exercise. Each student will a Peer Review on the each member of their respective analytic team in order to assess member effectiveness to participate, collaborate, communicate and conduct analysis. Peer Evaluations account for 20% of the Course Grade.

**Course Lectures**

**Unit-1 Deception Theory**

L-1: Course Overview
L-2: Intro to Deception
L-3: Cognitive Aspects of Deception
L-4: Technical Deception Methods
L-5: Principles of Counter-deception
L-6: Nontechnical Approaches
L-7: Elements of Analysis
L-8: Future of Deception
Unit-2 Deception Exercise

Team Final Out-brief

Course Deliverables

**Individual Assignments**

Student Bio Sketch (I) (N/A)
DTP-1 Elements of Deception (I) (100)
DTP-2 Whaley-Bell Model (I) (100)
DTP-3 Social Media Project (I) (100)
DTP-4 Technical Deception (I) (100)
DTP-5 Media Enabled Deception (I) (100)
DTP-6 Non-Technical Deception (I) (100)

**Legends Exercise**

Peer Evaluations (100)
Director’s Inquiry (200)
Attendance (100)

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required for this course. Role will be taken each day. There are legitimate reasons to cause a student to miss class (illness, sport team commitments, emergency situations, and others). Rather than the Instructor or Learning Assistants attempting to keep up with the myriad students and their reasons for missing class, I would much prefer that each student manage his or her own attendance. To that end you can bank up to three unexcused absences (no questions asked) before points are lost. Any student that misses more than five days is in jeopardy of losing major points. Finally, any student missing more than 8 classes across the semester will not receive a passing grade. If you should find yourself falling behind for any reason, please make an appointment to see me before you drop the course. Life happens, so we must be able to adjust fire – if you are willing to work – I am willing to work with you!

**Reading Assignments**

You can expect a short reading assignment to prepare for each lecture session. Complete all required reading to get ready for class discussions, assignments and exercises. You will be expected to keep up. There is a lot of material to cover and we will not have a lot of time to retrace old ground. Most reading assignments should take no more than 30 minutes to complete.

**Course Submissions in CANVAS**

All course deliverables should be submitted via their designated assignment in CANVAS. Please DO NOT e-mail assignments directly to me or to the Learning Assistants, as this may cause your work to be misplaced. ALL grading is conducted directly through the CANVAS.
When submitting a team deliverable, the team name and all member names must be on the work.

**Timeliness and thoroughness of assignments.** This is a senior course and as such the expectation is senior-level quality. Late work has no place in the analytic business - late work equals mission failure. You can expect due dates to be enforced; with a penalty assessed for late work.

**Student Presentations.** In order to promote student engagement and presentation skills, each student will have an opportunity to present his/her DTP solution. Given the large number of students in the class, not all students will be able to present all assignments; but be prepared none-the-less to engage in this activity. The key here is – assignment submission close once the student review process begins. If you know you will not make a deadline – you MUST inform the LA’s and instructor ahead of the due date. Anyone who has not submitted an assignment, but who intends to, will be asked to leave the classroom during student assignment reviews.

**Analytic Products**

**Deception Analysts’ Journal.** The Analysts’ Journal represents a chronology of your team’s analytic work. The journal serves to promote team collaboration, brainstorming, problem identification and deception analysis. It is incumbent on each team to establish the analyst journal at the start of the Legend’s exercise. The Journal will be evaluated at the end of the semester to help determine the Counter-Deception Team Award. In practice, the journal can be used for all manner of coordination and collaboration, whether passing guidance, tracking tasks, making observations or just capturing individual/team analytic thoughts. Making it openly viewable to all team members is essential.

**Command Post Analytic Products.** Given the wide range of analytic products necessary to solve this problem – each team will be responsible for establishing and maintaining one or more Command Post Analytic Products which will be shared across all teams and updated each week. Google Docs is an excellent platform for such collaboration, but teams can choose alternatives as they see fit as long as the chosen format meets the program requirements AND is accessible by all Command Post members.

**Deception Discussion Forum**

We will utilize the Deception Discussion Forum in CANVAS to exchange views on various topical items and to demonstrate our understanding of deception & counter-deception. Students can also nominate deception issues for discussion. Students are also encouraged to post general questions to the group to seek clarification on lesson topics. **DO NOT use this space to collaborate on individual graded assignments.**

The forum is open (and encouraged) for the discussion all **team products.** Any student can answer a post. If you have a comment or the answer to a question – please post it!

**Note to Students with Disabilities**

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University’s educational programs. If you have a disability related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, please contact Susan Anderson, Disability Specialist, by email at: **sma17@psu.edu** or by phone at 814-863-1807, or in her office, 116 Bouke. For
further information regarding The Office for Disability Services, please visit the website at www.equity.psu.edu/ods/. Please notify me as early in the semester as possible regarding the need for reasonable academic adjustments.

**Academic Integrity**

**Definition and expectations:** Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Academic integrity includes a commitment by all members of the University community not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others. The Code of Conduct may be found at: http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct.

**Statement of Nondiscrimination**

The Penn State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Penn State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at the Penn State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Penn State University, 201 Willard Building, University Park, PA 16802-2801, Tel 814-865-4700/V, 814-863-1150/TTY.