Overview

**Welcome** to SRA 440W the Capstone course for the Security and Risk Analysis Curriculum. The SRA Capstone course is intended to provide an intensive experience in critical analysis, designed to broaden students’ perspectives beyond their culture or discipline and provide an opportunity for the integration of previous courses in the SRA major and the core curriculum. The Capstone will put into practice the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) developed in all of the previous SRA core courses. The course will require students to examine complex issues in substantial pieces of analysis, presentation and writing.

Goals

The broad objective of the course is to support overall curricular objectives of the Security and Risk Analysis program. 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.

**Framing the Capstone** – Why this course is relevant. Designed expressly for Security and Risk Analysis majors in the Baccalaureate degree, the SRA capstone represents the culmination of knowledge and learning for the curriculum. The capstone requires students to work collaboratively in teams, with each team comprised of students from both of the SRA options to research and analyze a significant real-world problem or issue in which security and risk is part of the solution. Teams will be expected to organize research and analytic efforts effectively and to communicate its results clearly in both written and oral form to an audience of security and risk professionals. Major topics within the course include: the research of a national, regional or global security issue; instantiation of the key driving forces that influence the issue; current state analysis and report of the issue; and derivation of a set of alternate future states. The course will culminate in an analytic decision scenario where student teams will transform the classroom into a command post and put into practice various structured analytic techniques in a team problem-solving exercise that represents on such alternate future state for the problem under consideration.
Requirements

SRA 111, SRA 211, SRA 221, SRA 231, SRA 311, ENGL 202C OR ENGL 202D and SEVENTH SEMESTER STANDING

Entrance into the Capstone course follows completion of the required core curriculum; therefore this course is designed for seniors. Topics of the Capstone will address the key disciplines of the two (2) options of the Security and Risk Analysis major - Information & Cyber Security, and Intelligence Analysis & Modeling. Issues relating to the SRA options will require the analysis of complex problems relating to security and risk as played out in a semester-long analytic problem. The analysis derived from the security and risk scenario will require an application of the varied skill sets across disciplinary.

The “W” in 440W

The “W” designation represents the writing requirement for the Capstone. As such, well-researched, well-written products will be the expectation and requirement throughout the course. Given the team construct, this requirement may represent a challenge for students who hang in the background and allow others to do the heavy lifting (writing). Therefore, each student is encouraged to take an active part in the preparation of written products and presentation materials. Correct formatting, spelling, grammar and references are all given at this point in the curriculum. Students are encouraged to use a reputable manual on style, such as Strunk’s The Elements of Style or Diana Hacker’s A Pocket Style Manual. An excellent manual that is focused on the writing of intelligence products is Mercyhurst’s, The Analyst’s Style Manual, which, as a government document, can down-loaded and used free.

Overview by Unit

Unit-1: Instruction & NIE Prep (Weeks 1-6)

In this unit we explore the foundational aspects of Driver and Warnings Analysis in six instructional lectures. Each is accompanied by one or more short-duration analytic problems.

Also during this unit, Students are formed into one of five research teams, each with a specific analytic focus dealing with Somali Piracy. Teams will combine their analysis and writing into a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on the Current State of Somali Piracy. This unit runs concurrent with the Instructional portion of the course.

Unit-2 High Seas Exercise (Weeks 7-15)

Unit-2 is dedicated to a large-scale team analytic exercise, High Seas Piracy. The class as a whole represents a Counter-Piracy Task Force made up of student analytic teams. The Task Force mission is to identify and track the threat. As the threat landscape matures, teams will be required to make specific analytic judgments and offer recommendations to mitigate the effects.

Course Materials
All required instructional materials (readings, course slides, lesson assignments and rubrics) are provided via the PSU CANVAS Course Management System.

CANVAS Tabs

Course Support Materials – Miscellaneous course material will be found here

Lesson Tabs are organized by Week

Course Instruction

Lecture/Topic
L-1: Course Intro
L-2: National Intelligence Estimate
L-3: Shaping Forces
L-4: Indicators & Warning
L-5: Scenarios & Indicators
L-6: Elements of Analysis
L-7: Task Force Mission Brief
L-8 Command Post Operations Brief

Course Deliverables

Individual Assignments/Points (400)

Bio Sketch Discussion Thread (Ungraded)
A-0 Brainstorming Drivers (Ungraded)
A-1 Shaping Forces (50)
A-2 Force Field Analysis (50)
A-3 Indicators & Warning (100)
A-4 Game Changers (100)
A-5 Inferential Analysis (100)
A-6 National Intelligence Est. (100)

NIE Peer Evaluation (100)
The CAPSTONE
Exercise Peer Evaluation (100)
Commander Inquiry Points (200)
Attendance (100)

COURSE POINT TOTAL = 1,000
National Intelligence Estimate: The State of Somali Piracy

The National Intelligence Estimate is written from three Geographic Views: Local, Regional and Global and according to three possible Outcomes: Most Favorable, Most Likely and Most Dangerous.

Students will be responsible for researching and writing about one major Area of Influence: Governance, Economics, Conflict, Legal, Geo-Political and Commerce. The NIE research and writing effort serves to promote collaboration in a team setting. It is incumbent on each team to organize for this effort right from the start of the semester beginning with a communication methodology that promotes collaboration across the entire team. 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 team objectives.

Team Briefs

Teams will be required to brief on several occasions throughout the course of the semester.

NIE Report

Each Team will be responsible for submitting the results of their Country Security Posture research. Teams should refer to the report guidance in DTP-6 and utilize the template provided. The Final Team Country Security Report is due in Week-8.

Daily Operations-Intelligence Brief

Beginning with the exercise in Week-7 the start of each class session begins with the Daily Ops-Intel Brief. The Instructor will conduct a mock Daily Ops-Intel Brief to introduce students to the techniques of the daily brief. Each class day thereafter (Thursday to Tuesday) a specified team will be responsible for conducting the brief, focusing on their research focus area with an eye on exercise events. The briefing period is set such that teams bridge a weekend to accomplish analytic tasks.

The Ops-Intel Brief is related directly to the threat landscape as it plays out in the exercise. To ensure continuity between briefs, teams will be required to conduct a hand-off to the next team who should pick up where the prior team left off. Teams will be given one-week notice to prepare for their Op-Intel Cycle.

Evaluation

This course will incorporate collaborative and action-learning experiences wherever appropriate. Emphasis will be placed on the development of critical thinking and critical writing as expressed in numerous analytic assignments. Instructor derived solution will be provided for the more extensive individual and group assignments.

SRA 440W was designed as a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) course. As a PBL participant, you will be assessed on your comprehension of the analytic processes introduced throughout the semester and by your ability to put the course material into
practice. To achieve this goal, various practical application assignments have been created all specifically tailored to the task.

The second element of assessment is participation, which is judged in two components: individual participation in classroom discussions and activities and individual participation during group work. It is essential that each student achieve success in both of these areas to maximize the learning experience.

**Grading Scale:**

- **93-100%**  -- A
- **90-93%**   -- A-
- **86-89.99%** -- B+
- **82-85.99%** -- B
- **80-81.99%** -- B-
- **77-79.99%** -- C+
- **70-76.99%** -- C
- **60-69.99%** -- D
- Below 59.99%  -- F

### The Exercise Environment

The threat scenario for this semester’s capstone course deals with Somali piracy. Working in teams, the student collective represents the Intelligence Section of a Counter-Piracy Taskforce operating in a command post environment. The format of the exercise is fairly straightforward. Intelligence is distributed each week in the form of “exercise traffic.” Exercise traffic is loosely defined as various information products such as, intelligence and law enforcement reports, observations and media messages. The goal for each team is keep the commander appraised of current and emerging threats and to offer mitigation recommendations.

The High Seas Exercise is divided into 3 – operational periods. The release of Exercise messages for each operational period will mark the transition from one operational period to the next. Each segment represents a different set of operational & intelligence issues.

Teams are self-organized and led; members should be assigned various analytic roles and responsibilities and be expected to contribute equally to the exercise solution. A vast majority of the initial analysis will be performed in the classroom; however production of the analytic deliverables will require work and collaboration outside the classroom.

### Top Analyst/Top Team Designation

The exercise is a not a competition per se, but students will vie for the title Top Analyst spot and Teams will vie for the Top Team designation. Designation as the Top Analyst/Top Team will be determined based on individual problem knowledge and the culmination of individual member achievement for each team.
Peer evaluations will be the basis for a large portion of the final assessment for the course. Attendance is required for successful completion of SRA 440W.

Deliverables

During the Instructional portion of the course each student will be responsible for completing various individual assignments. These assignments are intended to reinforce overall course learning objectives and set the stage for both the group research effort and the High Seas exercise. Students should give due attention to completion of this work. Later, as the High Seas exercise progresses, assignments are by and large team assignments, however depending on how teams organize; individuals may be responsible for specific portions of a given team deliverable. When organizing teams and the assigning of roles, consideration should be given to individual student skills, responsibilities, and their contributions to the overall effort.

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 Unit 1. The due date for each assignment has been published in the Course Calendar, which can be found in the Student Support Folder in ANGEL. Deviations from this document will be discussed in class. Each student should make note of deliverable due dates when problems are assigned. 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 due date, 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 the TA to make it up BEFORE the end date for that assignment. With this many students and this many assignments it 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.

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 class 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 assignments should be submitted via 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 CANVAS. With the large number of assignments, this is the only way to ensure you get credit for your work.

When submitting a team assignment, the names of all team members must be on the assignment.

**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.

**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 web site at www.equity.psu.edu/ods/. Please notify me as early in the semester as possible regarding the need for reasonable academic adjustments.