

Information Science in the Intelligence Community
INF 350G / INF 385T – Spring 2020
Friday 12:00-3:00 PM

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Course Overview

This course is designed to introduce you to the complex world of intelligence and espionage. We'll explore this topic from several perspectives, but not nearly as many as we could. Specifically, the class will focus on the United States intelligence community (IC) and we'll look at intelligence and espionage from the standpoint of information science and information studies. Other perspectives and approaches will be considered, and are welcome, but we only have a semester...

Thanks to recent history, people are probably more aware of the U.S. intelligence community (IC) than ever before. Intelligence failures leading up to 9/11 and the subsequent invasion of Iraq to look for weapons of mass destruction, the exposure of secrets by individuals such as Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden, and allegations of Russian hacking of the 2016 Presidential Election among other covert actions have brought espionage and the IC to our living rooms and mobile devices (as news and quite literally).

But this increased general awareness doesn't mean people have a full, detailed picture of how the IC works, or what it is even supposed to do, or for whom. These are the themes we will be exploring during this semester, with a definite information-centric bias befitting an iSchool.

Assignments

Assignments can vary from semester to semester, depending on the size and inclination of the students taking the class. I try to come up with assignments that stimulate the specific curiosities of all the students taking the course over the semester. To this end, we may work together to come up with the best mix of assignments, which range from group projects to more traditional research papers.

In general, assignments can take several forms:

Assigned Readings – we will read several required texts, including books and articles that are assigned during the semester (some by the students themselves.) I expect everyone to have completely read each all assignments prior to class and come ready to discuss.

In-class Films – there are too many espionage movies to count, and intelligence work is so embedded in popular culture that it would be wrong not to explore it a bit. We may watch a movie or two over the course of the semester and analyze them against what we have learned of how the IC and spying really works.

Discussions – Similarly, I expect everyone to participate in class. Actively. You are all graduate students (or undergrads volunteering for a graduate-level class) and that means any classes that turn into three hour lectures by me represent a failure on both our parts. The reality is that only one of the parties in that relationship is penalized for the failure, so it is incumbent upon all of you to keep me from lecturing.

News Tracking and Journaling – in order to keep our eyes on the ball and to emulate the constantly moving world of intelligence, I will be asking the class to monitor the news and social media for items of interest. Similarly, I'll ask you to keep track of your thoughts and perspectives on these topics as we move through the semester, and to bring those insights back into class.

Papers, Projects, and Exercises – in order to apply the readings and discussions, I'll be asking you to undertake papers and projects over the course of the semester. There will be some choice and flexibility involved here. We'll talk more about these assignments in class.

Live Action Simulations – where class size allows it, we will undertake a simulation of a real-world event where the class must come together in different roles, assess the available information and intelligence available on the issue, and model activities or make recommendations regarding appropriate action.

Grades

Given that the class only meets once a week, it is critical that you attend each scheduled class session. If you must miss a class, you must let me know at least one week ahead of time and arrange with one of your colleagues to take notes for you or cover any assignments due. ***If you miss a class session without giving me the above notice, I reserve the right to deduct 5 percentage points from your final grade for each class missed.***

Class Participation – keeping up with the readings, resulting in regular and engaged participation in class discussions, is required and counts for 25% of your final semester grade.

Assignments – grade ratios for assignments will be announced as those assignments are finalized, once we see how large the class will be.

Per University policy, the grading scale for this class is A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, and F.

Office Hours: By Appointment – please email me to set up a time

Required Text

Lowenthal, M. M. (2020). *Intelligence - from secrets to policy* (8th ed.). Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Canvas Readings

Additional required readings will be assigned through Canvas during the course of the semester.

Optional Texts

You will have the opportunity (which is a nice way of saying you'll be required) to read and analyze one or more additional texts over the course of the semester. There are just too many good explorations of intelligence and espionage and we can't read them all, so you'll get to pick specific areas of interest as part of individual and/or group projects. We'll discuss this more during the semester, but I've taken the liberty of listing some pre-approved texts in case you want to explore themes ahead of time, although the list below is by no means exhaustive.

- Andrew, C. (2018). *The secret world: A history of intelligence*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Garton Ash, T. (1997). *The file: A personal history*. New York: Random House.
- Mattis, P. and Brazil, M. (2019). *Chinese communist espionage: An intelligence primer*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press.
- Macintyre, B. (2018). *The spy and the traitor: The greatest espionage story of the cold war*. New York: Crown.
- Olson, JM. (2019). *To catch a spy: The art of counterintelligence*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Pomerantsev, P. (2019). *This is not propaganda: Adventures in the war against reality*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Warrick, J. (2011). *The triple agent: The al-Qaeda mole who infiltrated the CIA*. New York: Doubleday.
- Wylie, C. (2019). *Mindf*ck: Cambridge Analytica and the plot to break America*. New York: Random House.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please view the University catalog:

<http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/the-university/#universitycodeofconduct>

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

Calendar:

Class	Activity	Reading & Assignments
Jan 24	Course Introduction Readings and Assignments	<i>Syllabus</i> <i>Something to set the mood...</i>
Jan 31	Information, Intelligence, & Espionage	<i>Canvas Readings</i>
Feb 7	IC Organization & Function	<i>Lowenthal: 1-4</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Feb 14	Collection	<i>Lowenthal: 5</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Feb 21	Analysis	<i>Lowenthal: 6</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Feb 28	Counterintelligence & Covert Action	<i>Lowenthal: 7-8</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Mar 6	Policy & Politicization, Oversight & Accountability	<i>Lowenthal: 9-10</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Mar 13	IC Agendas & Priorities	<i>Lowenthal: 11-12</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Mar 20	SPRING BREAK	
Mar 27	Ethics, Morals, & IC Reforms Due – Project Proposals	<i>Lowenthal: 13-14</i> <i>Canvas Readings</i>
Apr 3		
Apr 10	Due – Project Draft #1	<i>Canvas Readings</i>
Apr 17		
Apr 24	Due – Project Draft #2 Project presentations	
May 1	Project Presentations	
May 8	Last Day Due – Final Projects	<i>Closeout and goodbye!</i>