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# NSST 475: Security in the 21st Century—A Peer Review of Teaching Project Benchmark Portfolio

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# **NSST 475: Security in the 21st Century**

A Peer Review of Teaching Project  
Benchmark Portfolio

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## Abstract

This benchmark course portfolio is the culmination of a year's long planning and execution process to improve an existing capstone course NSST 475. This course has two goals: to teach students about subject matter and to expose them to structured analytic techniques (SATs) before they graduate. This course is a minor capstone which means that the students come from a diverse set of disciplinary backgrounds. I targeted two course objectives to examine for this project with the intention of employing backward course design to think through what students should be learning and how I can improve that process. This portfolio examines the development of my target objectives and a discussion of the teaching methods and activity design that I employed to maximize the impact on the students. The results show that students were enthusiastic about the subject matter and SATs. Finally this portfolio discusses the future of the class and the lessons learned.

**Key words:** teaching, national security studies, structured analytic techniques, backward design

## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Objectives of Peer Review Course Portfolio .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Description of the Course.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Objectives Analyzed for Portfolio .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Enrollment and Demographics .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Teaching Methods, Course Materials, and Outside Activities .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Rationale for Teaching Methods.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Illustration of Changes from Previous Years/Sections .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>The Course and the Broader Curriculum .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Analysis of Student Learning.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Methods for Analysis .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Analyzing Objective 1 .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Analysis of SAT Group Work.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Reflections and Possible Changes .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Summary and Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix A: Course Syllabus and Course Calendar .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix B: Survey Results.....</b>	<b>24</b>

## Objectives of Peer Review Course Portfolio

This portfolio provides an analysis and commentary on my target course (NSST 475) design and student learning for Spring 2017. I chose this course because it is the capstone course for the National Security Studies minor and because the course design has shifted several times already and I am seeking a more permanent format. The NSST minor is a little unique in that it takes an interdisciplinary approach to help students explore and then prepare for a career in national security. The curriculum is not exclusively theory driven nor is it all practical skills based either. The capstone is an attempt to balance both of those ambitions in giving students exposure to a broad set of topics, theories, and regional issues, while also giving them a set of analytical tools that are portable and even preferred in the job environment that they aspire toward. Therein lies the challenge: how to balance the education and training aspects of the curriculum in one capstone course. How sophisticated should the course be given that there are students from multiple disciplines in the class? My aim is to generate discussion and teach them something new and useful before they leave the University of Nebraska – Lincoln regardless of their disciplinary background. This peer review portfolio is my attempt to

### Description of the Course

The National Security Studies capstone course (see [Appendix A](#) for syllabus) serves as an opportunity to integrate the theories, subject matter knowledge, and skills training from your previous classes while also going deeper inside a select number of topics in national security. Security studies are shifting from a state and military only focus to include broader topics including globalization, ethnic conflict, economics, terrorism, and even the environment. Understanding this shift requires an examination of the traditional security concerns that shaped the twentieth century and a focus on the events that have subsequently transformed security concerns in the twenty-first century.

This course draws on a range of academic disciplines including international relations, foreign policy analysis, history, economics, and environmental and leadership studies. This course is specifically designed to build upon your existing knowledge and skill base while helping you to deepen your understandings of theoretical and empirical security issues. This course is also designed to allow you to showcase your writing, briefing, and analysis skills that you have acquired throughout your previous coursework.

### Objectives Analyzed for Portfolio

**Objective 1:** To challenge students thinking on major security topics including terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, conventional armed conflict, civil war and human security.

As a capstone course it is assumed that students have spent a fair amount of time learning about and deliberating on some of the key subjects in national security studies. But because the minor allows so many different options it is not guaranteed that they have been exposed to all of the key national security topics. While this course cannot cover all of the bases it can generate critical discussion on a few of them in a seminar style environment that emphasizes critical and deliberative thinking and student participation.

Students will accomplish this goal through readings and responding in the form of weekly response papers and in-class discussion.

**Objective 2:** To give students the opportunity to demonstrate and practice the skills (writing, briefing, critical thinking/analysis) that they have acquired while completing the major.

One of the unique features of this minor program is the attention its facilitators pay to the hiring needs of potential employers. The capstone course allows students to bring all of their learned skills to bear on a problem set that will allow them to employ their learned skills and techniques, make mistakes, receive feedback, and collaborate with others in an environment meant to simulate the real world. A unique feature of this minor program and this course specifically is the attention paid to helping students acquire skills, practice them and be able to then demonstrate competence to potential employers in the national security field. Upon completion of this course students will be able to credibly demonstrate knowledge and skill in a résumé that will increase their chances of being hired in a competitive environment. Students will accomplish this goal through doing in-class analysis and briefing their results.

### **Enrollment and Demographics**

This class had thirty students enrolled in the spring and all were NSST minors. Eight students were juniors and twenty-two were seniors. The NSST minor has grown significantly in the past five years from about twelve minors to over 120. The students that take this course are interested in careers in national security

### **Teaching Methods, Course Materials, and Outside Activities**

In an effort to strike the correct balance between the education and training aspects of the curriculum in one capstone course, I divide the class time into two segments – (1) a case study from Sarah Miller Beebe’s book ‘Case Studies in Intelligence’ where the students will learn and apply a suite of structured analytic techniques and, (2) a semi-structured discussion of the week’s assigned readings. The coursework in the first half of class is small groups and then the second half is much more focused on a class-wide discussion.

The first section of class is intended to be an applied techniques workshop. It is much more focused on skill acquisition and demonstration. At the beginning of the semester I had students break up into small groups of about four to five individuals for each exercise. Students are responsible for the case study readings from the Miller-Beebe book. Each case study lays out a fact pattern based on a real life case. The cases are intentionally vague in areas where the analytical work is to be done. At the conclusion of each case study is a section with three or four different SATs that are useful for dealing with the problem set. These techniques might include various forms of hypothesis generation or key assumptions checks. The goal of the exercise is to overcome the uncertainty in the information in order to answer a set of analytical questions.

Originally I have the students some modest help with understanding the SATs that they would be asked to employ and then let them work through each question on their own. The results were very uneven. Some students had no problem applying the SATs to the fact patterns but most struggled, so I recalibrated the exercise. I allowed them to discuss the case study in their groups without talking about the SATs that would be applied. Then I pulled them back together as a class and I introduced each SAT one at a time and as a class we worked through each one together. The result was that we filled every single wipe board in the room with our analysis but the students all began to engage in the process. I asked the class for input as to which method of delivery they preferred and they nearly unanimously preferred to work each problem as a class.

The second part of the class is a more traditional open discussion that one might expect in a capstone course. I have run this portion in several different ways in the past including having the students read from books and then having a discussion over a couple of weeks for each book. But this semester I decided to try something different. Instead of picking a few big subjects that the class would cover using a book over a few weeks I chose a topic a week and found three to four journal articles per topic that we could use as a basis for discussion. Before the class began meeting I set up a series of folders on Blackboard with all of the relevant journal articles that we would use for discussion.

Upon further reflection the format was the best that I have used in any iteration of the class. However I also think that I can do a better job of choosing articles that more clearly speak to one another. It was my original intention to give the students a series of articles that they could use to flavor their discussion of areas that included national security theory, key topics, and regional studies. Because this is an interdisciplinary class I find it difficult to accurately build a syllabus that will play to everyone's strengths. This being the case however I do feel like my next syllabus will be tighter when it comes to choosing and how the articles for each week relate to one another instead of waiting for the class to chase rabbits and start our discussions.

Most of the evaluation in the course came from written work. All NSST minors are required to take writing courses and are heavily encouraged to take NSST 375 (Writing and Briefing for National Security). Because this is a capstone course I feel like I can expect a higher level of writing from students. However there are several different courses, styles, and techniques that the students may have taken in order to satisfy that requirement. This being the case I have broken up the writing assignments into structured reaction papers and a major independent research project.

The reaction papers stem from prompts found in the folder with each week's readings. The prompt gives them a little bit of latitude but it also requires them to take a position and use evidence to make their case. This exercise is meant to reinforce the style of writing that they should have learned before taking this course (more on that below) and to think critically about what they are reading.

## Rationale for Teaching Methods

This course requires a couple of different teaching approaches to meet the learning objectives. In the class I use traditional lecture, group facilitation, and discussion moderation. For the SAT training I used a more traditional lecture to go over each technique but then transitioned to a facilitator role to help the students work through the problem. During those sessions I am very careful not to advocate for a specific analytic outcome only to remind the students about how a technique works. This forces the students to draw their own conclusions and not rely on my judgment of the facts presented. The goal is to get the students comfortable with taking intellectual risks but also grounding those risks within the bounds of the techniques.

During the second half of the class I switch my role to a discussion moderator. I view my role as setting the stage for a discussion of that week's readings by providing a brief historical and contextual background and then keeping the discussion moving. I also try to make sure that as many voices are heard in the class as possible. When necessary I push back on students to make them explain the rationale behind their comments and analysis and invite them to challenge me as well. The goal in this exercise is to help students to focus on key aspects of the literature, deepen their knowledge, but also be critical of the ideas that are being presented. In my experience students will often accept what they read unless they are trained to be skeptical and to demand more proof. This exercise helps them to develop those skills and the confidence to use them.

## Illustration of Changes from Previous Years/Sections

While this capstone course has always been taught in a once a week block it has undergone several iterations and formats. The original intent of the course was to do deep dives into topics in national security. This class looked much more like a traditional graduate seminar with students coming to class prepared to discuss weekly readings. It was my judgment that while we were able to move through a lot of reading material the class was not able to synthesize that material into any kind of hands on experience. I attempted to augment the books with SAT exercises and this crowded our class time but it did provide for a more active learning environment. Keeping with the book format did limit the number of topics we could cover. The current configuration seeks to cover more topics and limit expose the students to more takes on those topics through journal and news articles than they might get by reading a single book.

## The Course and the Broader Curriculum

This course was the first security course created after the Global Security Studies (GSST) minor was created. The early iterations of the course were really a best guess in terms of trying to accommodate students from different disciplinary backgrounds and levels of academic training without having an actual national security core curriculum. As we developed that curriculum, to include an introduction course, writing and briefing and analysis courses, it made it easier to plan for the capstone. As we transitioned from GSST to NSST I was able to raise the expectations in the capstone course to include more writing and briefing and a better grasp of the subject matter areas. I strongly suspect that



my course still comes off as ‘polisci-centric’ but I am trying to reach into other disciplines with each new offering. I anticipate continuing to be sensitive to this relationship between curriculum development and subject matter in the capstone. In essence this course will continue to mirror the development of the broader curriculum more than any other course in the minor.

## **Analysis of Student Learning**

### **Methods for Analysis**

While my course has five course objectives I sought to analyze the two highlighted above. The first objective (to challenge students thinking on major security topics including terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, conventional armed conflict, civil war and human security) can be assessed by looking at the written work (reaction papers) that students did for each week’s assignment. I provided written feedback to the individual students and periodically I would provide feedback to the class by using examples of good student work to highlight key concepts. I also asked students to respond to a survey with questions aimed at assessing the development of their knowledge base.

The second objective (to give students the opportunity to demonstrate and practice the skills that they have acquired while completing the major) is less straightforward in terms of assessment. I am using the SAT exercises as the basis for examining this learning objective but since these exercises are all in-class and hands on with not product turned in, I am relying on student survey data and teaching notes to do my analysis. I varied the way that I taught the SATs and the way that the group work was structured as the semester progressed.

### **Analyzing Objective 1**

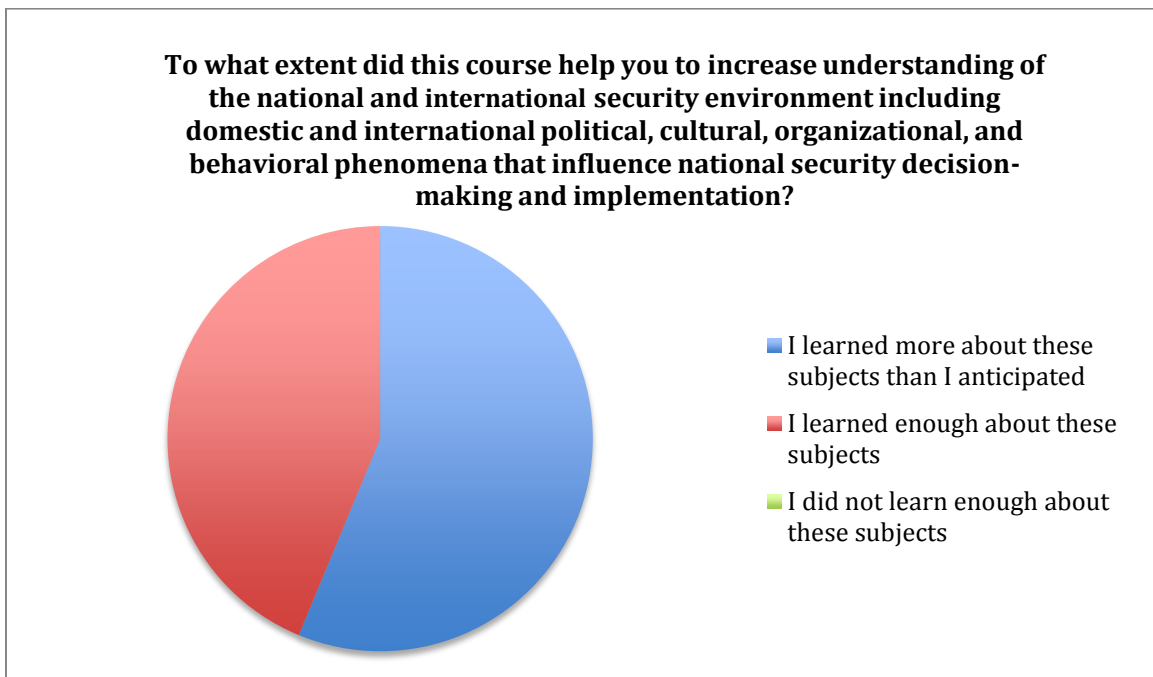
Each week’s assigned readings were delivered to students in the form of PDF articles (usually three or four per week) and accompanied by a prompt for a two-page maximum reaction paper. Students were asked to answer the question directly by engaging the literature and citing the readings in their responses. I discussed the assignment in detail during the first class and then spent about thirty minutes of the first class after the first assignments were due going over the structure and content of the papers I had graded making general comments about the first round of papers.

I provided large in-class group feedback three additional times as the course progressed. Each time I emphasized what was going well and areas where students were students could still show improvement. The comments generally focused on using citations from the assigned readings to back assertions, remembering to directly answer the questions, as well as a few grammatical corrections. I was always careful to not single out any students for poor performances but instead used student examples to show what an ideal paper looked like. I took a sample of the grades after each feedback session and compared it to the previous week’s grades. I took samples after the first, fourth, and seventh papers. Here is a comparison from week to week during those samplings.

	Number of Responses	Maximum Score (10 pts)	Average Score	Median Score
Paper 1	24	9.6	8.58	9
Paper 2	28	10	8.01	8.85
Paper 4	27	9.75	8.07	8.5
Paper 5	27	10	8.69	9
Paper 7	28	10	7.74	9
Paper 8	24	10	7.45	9

The class as a whole did not move a lot but I noticed some individual movements. Median scores hovered right around 9 each week but the average scores dropped in the aggregate. Closer examination of individual students revealed that a few students had noticeable drop offs in performance with a few dropping the class. There were of course encouraging trends in the opposite direction with some students increasing their weekly scores. A quick glance at the scores in the class over time reveals that written and oral feedback on the writing assignment had little impact on the trajectory of students' scores.

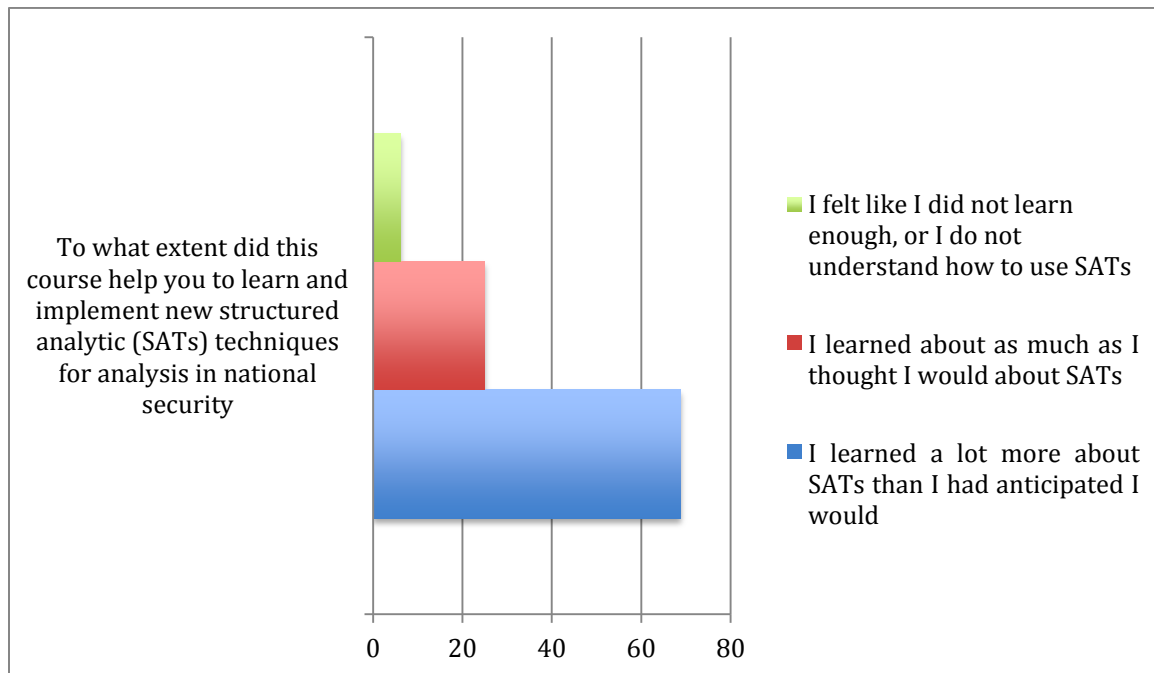
I also asked students to evaluate the development of their knowledge base and compare it with their expectations. The following graph shows that a slight majority of students learned more about the subject matter areas than they anticipated. This, in conjunction with relatively good scores on the reaction papers indicates that the course did have a positive impact on knowledge acquisition.



## Analysis of SAT Group Work

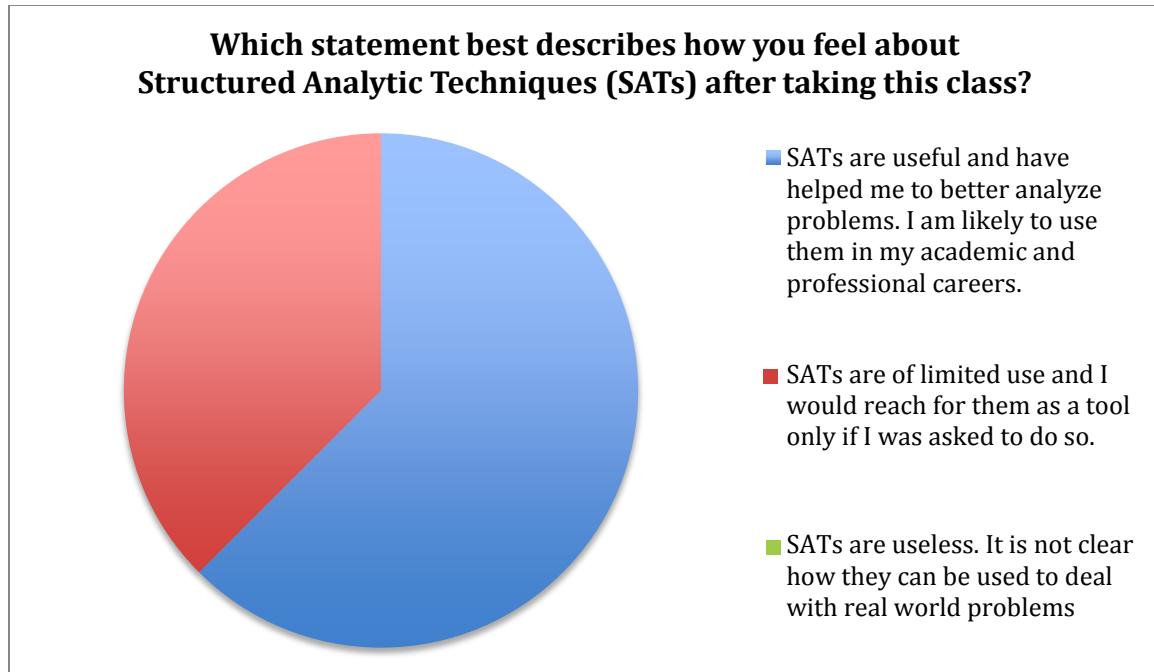
As the class began I asked students to read the case study in the text book in advance and then come to class prepared to learn the SATs as a class and then break into groups to do the analysis and be prepared to brief their analysis as a group. After two class sessions of this I decided that while some groups were doing well in this arrangement most were not. It seemed that I could simply not give each group enough help working through the techniques for the first time in order to make sure that everyone was experiencing the same learning outcomes.

I decided to break up the exercise and go through the case fact pattern together but quickly, just to make sure that the class was on the same page. Each case study features about three or four SATs and some of them repeat from week to week. The next phase was to familiarize the groups with an SAT and have them attempt them one at a time and reconvene as a group after they had completed the analysis before moving to the next technique. This approach worked better but it was still slow and entire groups were getting lost or just disengaging. Finally I decided that the students should visit in small groups and review the fact pattern. We then reconvened as a class and I worked through each method one at a time with class participation. The goal was to get the class to engage and do the work that each method required but also allow them ask questions and have someone to guide them through the process.



I noticed a significant improvement in skills acquisition in this final configuration. In short, class participation picked up significantly and a lot of heads were going up and down as opposed to side to side. After each change in format I asked the students if it helped them acquire and understand how to use the techniques. The class responded most favorable to changing the format to full class participation. This format also allowed the

class to discuss other applications for the techniques that were being used. When asked about the viability of using SATs most (62.5%) students reported that they were likely to use them in their academic and professional careers.

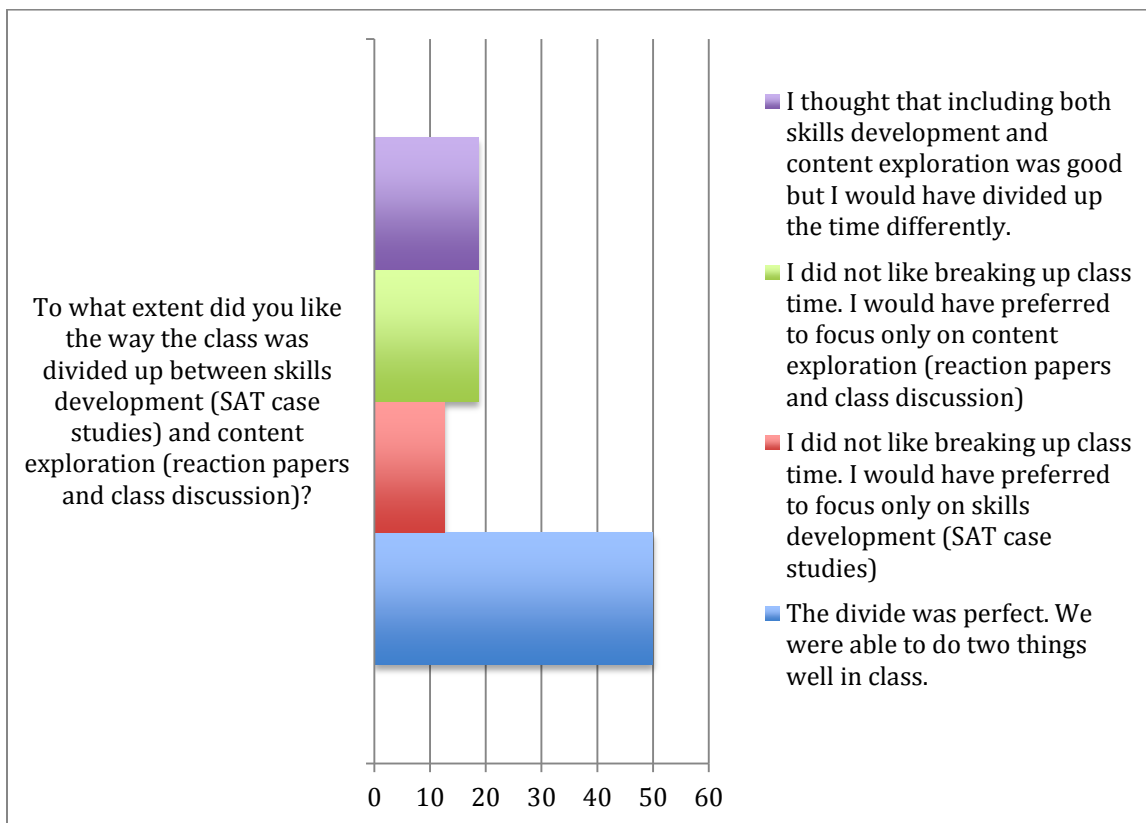


## Reflections and Possible Changes

After doing the analysis of grades and after reading the student instructor evaluations I have found a couple of areas to improve. Students almost overwhelmingly liked the teaching methodology according to instructor evaluations. The mixture of lecture and group work seemed to be a good one with some students actually wanting more lecture time. I have done lecture and discussion focused undergraduate seminars in the once a week three-hour format and in general I find that students seem to check out after about an hour and a half. My response was to add the SATs to the class to break up that block.

One theme that emerged in the student instructor evaluations was that students liked both the SATs and the class discussion but felt that we did not have enough time to do both in one class despite the large time block. I had a similar sense that the format might need additional tweaking because making the SAT group work substantive often meant eating into our discussion time. There are a couple of potential solutions to this problem. The first is to remove the SATs entirely and spin those exercises and lessons off into their own class. This would mean expanding the curriculum and teaching an additional course. There are a number of clear benefits that include an in-depth focus on these techniques and a chance to help the students master them as opposed to simply being exposed to them. Spinning the SATs off into their own class might allow us to retain a smaller set of SAT focused activities in class since the students will already be familiar with them but

that will change the original learning outcomes. The other option would be to have the students do a familiarization exercise outside of class to better prepare them for the group work and thus make the in-class portion of the exercise take less time. Adopting this change might force me to reduce or eliminate the reaction paper assignments, all of which are done outside of class.



The purpose of including the SATs in this class is my general belief that they are useful and make students better at critical thinking. They also provide students with a concrete set of tools that they can use to noodle through anything from deterring a nuclear-armed adversary to choosing the best ingredients for a pizza. Structured Analytic Techniques are just that useful. But the more that I think about it I am not sure that squeezing them into a class like this capstone really drives that point home.

When asked about the balance in the class the results were mixed but the majority thought that we were able to strike an appropriate balance. The clear majority of students self-reported learning more about SATs than they anticipated, but it also doesn't mean that students would not benefit from a class that exclusively examines SAT methodologies and applications. Feedback from this course certainly makes that possibility more likely even if students thought that we were able to do both SATs and subject matter discussion well.

## **Summary and Overall Assessment of Portfolio Process**

This portfolio was the product of a semester's worth of planning and another semester's worth of execution. I employed a backwards design to improve my course objectives. This process helped me to be deliberate in crafting each objective. It made me much more aware of why I was assigning material and how I would assess student work. This process has made me much more deliberate in my course planning and I recommend it for anyone teaching at the college level.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Course Syllabus and Course Calendar

#### NSST 475: Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Spring 2017

Course Time: Wednesday 14:30-17:00 Burnett 231

Instructor: Dr. Tyler R. White

514 Oldfather Hall

Email: [twhite4@unl.edu](mailto:twhite4@unl.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesday 12:30-14:00

#### **Introduction**

The National Security Studies capstone course serves as an opportunity to integrate the theories, subject matter knowledge, and skills training from your previous classes while also going deeper inside a select number of topics in national security. Security studies are shifting from a state and military only focus to include broader topics including globalization, ethnic conflict, economics, terrorism, and even the environment. Understanding this shift requires an examination of the traditional security concerns that shaped the twentieth century and a focus on the events that have subsequently transformed security concerns in the twenty-first century.

This course draws on a range of academic disciplines including international relations, foreign policy analysis, history, economics, and environmental and leadership studies. This course is specifically designed to build upon your existing knowledge and skill base while helping you to deepen your understandings of theoretical and empirical security issues. This course is also designed to allow you to showcase your writing, briefing, and analysis skills that you have acquired throughout your previous coursework.

#### **Course Objectives**

1. To increase understanding of the national and international security environment including domestic and international political, cultural, organizational, and behavioral phenomena that influence national security decision-making and implementation.
2. To develop critical thinking and argumentation skills focusing on complex national security focused theories and policies.
3. To demonstrate writing, briefing, and analysis skills in a time sensitive setting.
4. To learn and implement new structured analytic techniques for analysis in national security.
5. To generate an original research project and to effectively present the results.

#### **Course Activities**

Class time will be broken into two parts. Each week you will begin in small groups and work through a selected case study using a set of structured analytic techniques. Your group will consider the evidence and collaborate of a final analytical bottom line. You and your fellow group members will be responsible for generating and orally briefing the group's results. The second part of class will be a graduate style seminar that will focus on the week's

journal article readings. You are encouraged to bring a copy of your weekly reading brief (due the night before) to help generate discussion.

1. Small Group Case Studies – You will be assigned an analysis group for the semester. You and your group are responsible for reading the case study from the Miller Beebe book prior to each class. I will review the structured analytic techniques to be used at the beginning of class but I strongly encourage you to also bring the Heuer and Pherson book to class to help you work through each problem set. You will apply the structured analytic techniques to each case study and generate an analytic outcome. Each group will be responsible for a short and concise analytic oral brief.
2. Weekly Reading Assignment – You will be given a weekly prompt via Blackboard that covers each week’s readings. All of the readings for these assignments will be available on Blackboard or through UNL Libraries. You will be required to submit each week’s assignment at midnight the day before class. All readings and assignments are organized in folders under ‘course documents’ in Blackboard.
3. Class Discussion – The second part of each class will be devoted to a seminar style discussion over that week’s readings. Your participation is required. Be prepared to ask and answer questions over each week’s reading. Your class participation grade will be based on your contribution to class discussion. Seminars are discussion driven classes, it is important to follow and add to the discourse. I will be keeping attendance as well as keeping tabs on your participation throughout the semester.
4. Seminar Paper – The final product for this class will be an independent research project. You will submit a final paper and be responsible for summarizing your research in the form of an academic poster, which you will present to your peers during the last class session. You will also be responsible for grading your fellow classmate’s posters. The research project is broken down into several progressive components.
  - Proposal with Literature Review and Bibliography (10%)
    - o You will provide a 1-2 page summary of the research question and design.
    - o You will provide a 4-5 page literature review that explores the current academic thinking on your subject area and topic.
  - Draft (20%)
    - o You will execute your research design, testing your hypothesis and considering the evidence for and against your proposed hypothesis. (5-7 pages)
  - Final Paper (40%)
    - o This paper will combine multiple sections and reflect revisions to your literature review and first draft. The final paper should include and introduction, literature review, analysis section and conclusion. (12-17 pages, not counting citations)
  - Final Poster Presentation (25%)
  - Your Final Poster Evaluations of Other Students (5%)

### **Course Assessments**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Weekly Writing Assignments (10 total)                   | 100 Points |
| 2. Final Research Project                                  | 100 Points |
| 3. Participation in Group Briefings and Seminar Discussion | 25 Points  |

\*Rubrics for each assignment will be posted on Blackboard.



## **Required Texts**

1. Miller Beebe, Sarah and Randolph H. Pherson. *Cases in Intelligence Analysis: Structured Analytic Techniques in Action, Second Edition*. CQ Press. 2015
2. Heuer, Richards J. and Randolph H. Pherson. *Structured Analytic Techniques of Intelligence Analysis, Second Edition*. CQ Press. 2015

## **Grading**

Grading follows the standard University of Nebraska – Lincoln plus/minus grade scale. Letter grades will be determined accordingly: A+ (97-100), A (94-96), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83), C+ (77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73), D+ (67-69), D (64-66), D- (60-63), F (59 and below) Students taking the course on a Pass/Fail basis must receive a grade of C or higher in order to pass.

Papers received after the end of class will be docked 10% for each day late and receive an automatic zero after three days

A grade of “I” or incomplete will only be given in extreme circumstances and awarding such status is at the discretion of the instructor

## **Course Policies**

### **Academic Dishonesty**

*Definition (taken directly from the Student Code of Conduct)*

According to the Student Code of Conduct, Section 4.2, academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Cheating. Copying or attempting to copy from an academic test or examination of another student; using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices for an academic test, examination or exercise; engaging or attempting to engage the assistance of another individual in misrepresenting the academic performance of a student; or communicating information in an unauthorized manner to another person for an academic test, examination or exercise.

Fabrication or Falsification. Falsifying or fabricating any information or citation in any academic exercise, work, speech, test or examination. Falsification is the alteration of information, while fabrication is the invention or counterfeiting of information.

Plagiarism. Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations, theses, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes or other academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.

Abuse of Academic Materials. Destroying, defacing, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource material.

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty. Helping or attempting to help another student to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Falsifying Grade Reports. Changing or destroying grades, scores or markings on an examination or in an instructor's records.

Misrepresentation to Avoid Academic Work. Misrepresentation by fabricating an otherwise justifiable excuse such as illness, injury, accident, etc., in order to avoid or delay timely submission of academic work or to avoid or delay the taking of a test or examination.

Other. Academic units and members of the faculty may prescribe and give students prior notice of additional standards of conduct for academic honesty in a particular course, and violation of any such standard of conduct shall constitute misconduct under this Code of Conduct and the University Disciplinary Procedures.

Academic dishonesty is incredibly easy to avoid. Do your own work and cite work taken from other sources. Any student caught engaging in academic dishonesty is subject to an automatic failing grade.

### **Attendance**

Seminars require regular attendance. It is mandatory to come to class. I will grant one excused absence and any absence for official University events or business as long as an official letter accompanies it from the event sponsor. Missing more than two classes without an official excuse will result in an automatic F in the course.

### **Conduct**

Freedom of expression is crucial in our attempt to further our learning. However while all ideas and concepts are “open game” for discussion, none of us should be considered “open game” for verbal assault or insult. Violating these rules are grounds for removal. Please come prepared with new and even controversial ideas, but also respect those around you by treating them and their ideas with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor to discuss any necessary accommodations. All conversations are strictly private. To receive additional accommodation services please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY

### **Class Schedule**

#### ***Week 1: January 11***

Introduction and Welcome

#### ***Week 2: January 18***

##### **Case Study**

‘Who Poisoned Karinna Moskalenko?’ in Miller Beebe ps. 7-20

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Premortem Analysis p. 240
2. Structured Self Critique p. 245

3. Starbursting p. 113

Seminar Subject

International Relations Theory

Objectives

1. Understand the key international relations theories and how they view the world
2. Begin to use the theories to understand historical and contemporary global events and processes

Readings

1. Hopf, Ted. *The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory*
2. Jones, David Martin, and M.L.R. Smith. *Return to Reason: Reviving Political Realism in Western Foreign Policy*
3. Snyder, Jack. *One World, Rival Theories*
4. Walt, Stephen. *One World, Many Theories*

Assignment (Due January 17)

After considering the key international relations theories, which ones best explain US behavior in the international system? Is one theory stronger than all of the others or does each provide a unique insight? You are encouraged to use the articles to build your case and are free to use examples outside of the reading as well. (2-3 pages)

***Week 3: January 25***

Case Study

'The Anthrax Killer' in Miller Beebe ps. 21-42  
SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Premortem Analysis p. 240
2. Structured Self Critique p. 245
3. Chronologies and Timelines p. 56

Seminar Subject

National Interests, Power, and Grand Strategy

Objectives

1. Understand the key international relations theories and how they view the world
2. Begin to use the theories to understand historical and contemporary global events and processes

Readings

1. Cox, Dan. *The Age of Liberal Imperialism: Twenty-Five Years of Flawed U.S. Foreign Policy*
2. Hooker, R.D. Jr. *Understanding U.S. Grand Strategy*
3. Nye, Joseph S. *Will the Liberal Order Survive? The History of an Idea*
4. Reveron, Derek S. and Nikolas K. Gvosdev. (Re) *Discovering the National Interest: The Future of U.S. Foreign Policy and Defense Strategy*
5. Walt, Stephen M. *Would You Die for That Country?*

Assignment (Due January 24)

What is American 'grand strategy?' How does America use hard and soft power to pursue its grand strategy? What are some of the benefits and consequences to the US and the world in how the US has attempted to pursue its grand strategy? (2-3 pages)

#### ***Week 4: February 1***

##### Case Study

'Is Wen Ho Lee a Spy?' in Miller Beebe ps. 61-82

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Premortem Analysis p. 240
2. Structured Self Critique p. 245
3. Force Field Analysis p. 304
4. Deception Detection p. 198

##### Seminar Subject

Deterrence Theory and Nuclear Weapons

##### Objectives

1. Identify and understand the role deterrence plays in protecting US interests and the interests of its allies.
2. Evaluate the role and future of the US nuclear arsenal.

##### Readings

1. Fuhrmann, Matthew, and Todd S. Sechser. *Signaling Alliance Commitments: Hand-Tying and Sunk Costs in Extended Nuclear Deterrence*
2. Payne, Keith. *US Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence: Realist versus Utopian Thinking*
3. Klein, John. *Towards a Better US Nuclear Strategy*
4. Lebow, Richard Ned. *Thomas Schelling and Strategic Bargaining*

##### Assignment

What is the purpose of possessing a formidable nuclear arsenal? Does Thomas Schelling's theory of deterrence still make sense today? What changes if any should the US make to its existing nuclear weapons strategy and doctrine? (2-3 pages)

#### ***Week 5: February 8***

##### Case Study

'Jousting with Cuba Over Radio Marti' in Miller Beebe ps. 83-104

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Chronologies and Timelines p. 56
2. Deception Detection p. 198
3. Quadrant Hypothesis Generation p. 175
4. Analysis of Competing Hypothesis p. 181

##### Seminar Subject

Emerging Causes of Conflict

##### Objectives

1. Understand how global forces are shaping the contemporary security environment and assess the future of conflict.
2. Assess the implications of nontraditional contributors to conflict and war and discuss potential strategies for managing them.

### Readings

1. Baten, Joerg, and Christina Mumme. *Does Inequality Lead to Civil Wars? A long-term study using anthropometric indicators (1816-1999)*
2. Gat, Azar. *Is War Declining – And Why?*
3. Johnson, Dominic and Monica Duffy Toft. *Grounds for Hope: The Evolutionary Science behind Territorial Conflict*
4. Walt, Stephen. *The (Con)Fusion of Civilizations*

### Assignment

What is the future of war? Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of conflict? Why? What will the most salient drivers of conflict be over the next half century and what can be done to address them? (2-3 pages)

### **Week 6: February 15**

#### Case Study

'The Road to Tarin Kowt' in Miller Beebe ps. 105-122

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Key Assumptions Check p. 209
2. Devil's Advocacy p. 260
3. Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats p. 308

### Seminar Subject

Security and Human Rights

### Objectives

1. To understand the relationship between human rights and security, specifically the nexus of human suffering and instability and war
2. To think critically about the role that human rights ought to play in security policy

### Readings

1. Donnelly, Jack. *Human Rights, Humanitarian Intervention, and American Foreign Policy*
2. Power, Samantha. *Recent History Lessons: War and Human Rights in Recent Past and the Near Future*
3. Feinberf, Myriam. *International Counterterrorism – National Security and Human Rights: Conflicts of Norms or Checks and Balances?*

### Assignment

What role if any should human rights play in national security decision-making? Is there a link between human suffering and conflict? What would a security policy that pays attention to human rights look like and would it be more or less effective in providing peace and security than one that does not? (2-3 pages)

### **Week 7: February 22**

No Class

#### Assignment

Proposal with Literature Review and Bibliography (10 points)

- You will provide a 1-2 page summary of the research question and design.

- You will provide a 4-5 page literature review that explores the current academic thinking on your subject area and topic.

Due: Tuesday February 21

### ***Week 8: March 1***

#### Case Study

'Who Murdered Jonathan Luna?' in Miller Beebe ps. 123-140

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Chronologies and Timelines p. 56
2. Simple Hypotheses p. 171
3. Multiple Hypothesis Generator p. 173
4. Analysis of Competing Hypothesis p. 181

#### Seminar Subject

Terrorism

#### Objectives

1. To understand the causes and types of terrorist behaviors and their impacts
2. To assess the responses to terrorism and to identify the most effective counterterrorism strategies and tactics

#### Readings

1. Fromkin, David. *The Strategy of Terrorism*
2. Giry, Stephanie. *France and Its Muslims*
3. Krieger, Tim, and Daniel Meierrieks. *What Causes Terrorism?*

#### Assignment

What are the root causes of terrorism and what can be done to mitigate them? What role, if any does the target population play in the perpetuation of terrorism? (2-3 pages)

### ***Week 9: March 8***

#### Case Study

'Death in the Southwest' in Miller Beebe ps. 163-180

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Structured Brainstorming p. 102
2. Starbursting p. 113
3. Key Assumptions Check p. 209
4. Multiple Hypothesis Generator p. 173
5. Analysis of Competing Hypotheses p. 181

#### Seminar Subject

International Political Economy

#### Objectives

1. Analyze and understand what drives economic behavior and assess the impact that economics has on international relations.
2. Understand the linkages between economic relationships and conflict.

#### Readings

1. Atkinson, Anthony. *How to Spread the Wealth: Practical Policies for Reducing Inequality*
2. Blackwill, Robert D. and Jennifer M. Harris. *The Lost Art of Economic Statecraft: Restoring an American Tradition*
3. Dickins, Amanda. *The Evolution of International Political Economy*
4. Furceri, Davide and Prakash Loungani. *Opening up to Inequality*
5. *How Brexit Will Change the World* – Politico Magazine

### Assignment

The Western consensus has been that a liberalized global economy is a good thing because it increases competition and lowers transaction barriers. But the recent wave of populist victories in America and the UK has been a rebuke of the system that has made both countries wealthy. Is the conventional wisdom about a liberal international economic order no longer valid? What are the benefits and weaknesses of the current system? Is change needed? If so, what issues should those changes address? (2-3 pages)

### **Week 10: March 15**

#### Case Study

'The Assassination of Benazir Bhutto' in Miller Beebe ps. 141-161  
SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Chronologies and Timelines p. 56
2. Mind Maps p. 86
3. Analysis of Competing Hypothesis p. 181

#### Seminar Subject

South Asia

#### Objectives

1. Identify key regional security issues and potential clashed with US national interests.
2. Understand the region's unique geographical and cultural complexities.

#### Readings

1. Bajpai, Shankar K. *Untangling India and Pakistan*
2. Umar, Baba, *Kashmir: A Water War in the Making?*
3. Katzman, Kenneth. *Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy*
4. Nichol, Jim. *Central Asia: Regional Developments and Implications for US Interests*

### Assignment

What are the key challenges in Central and South Asia and how do they impact US national interests? What advice would you give the incoming administration and what would you tell them to prioritize in their policy toward the region over the next four years? (2-3 pages)

### **Week 11: March 22**

Spring Break – No Class

### **Week 12: March 29**

#### Case Study

'Iranian Meddling in Bahrain' in Miller Beebe ps. 285-309  
SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Starbursting p. 113
2. Morphological Analysis p. 119
3. Structured Brainstorming p. 102
4. Indicators p. 149

### Seminar Subject

The Greater Middle East

### Objectives

1. Identify key regional security issues and potential clashed with US national interests.
2. Understand the region's unique geographical and cultural complexities.

### Readings

1. Axworthy, Michael and Patrick Milton. *A Westphalian Peace for the Middle East*
2. Sazak, Selim Can. *No Westphalia for the Middle East*
3. Dalay, Galip. *Turkey's Post-Arab Spring Foreign Policy*
4. Yaalon, Moshe. *How to Build Middle East Peace: Why Bottom-Up is Better than Top-Down*

### Assignments

The history of conflict in the Greater Middle East is long, complicated, and often tragic. What prospects if any exist for a more peaceful region in the years ahead? What are the key issues and obstacles impeding peace in the region? Are you hopeful or discouraged about the future of the region? (2-3 pages)

Due March 29: Draft (20 points)

- You will execute your research design, testing your hypothesis and considering the evidence for and against your proposed hypothesis. (5-7 pages)

### ***Week 13: April 5***

#### Case Study

'Shades of Orange in Ukraine' in Miller Beebe ps. 311-330

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Structured Brainstorming p. 102
2. Outside-In Thinking p. 228
3. Simple Scenarios p. 139

### Seminar Subject

Russia and Europe

### Objectives

1. Identify key regional security issues and potential clashed with US national interests.
2. Understand the region's unique geographical and cultural complexities.

### Readings

1. Blank, Stephen. *Russia's New Presence in the Middle East*



2. Krastev, Ivan and Mark Leonard. *Europe's Shattered Dream of Order: How Putin is Disrupting the Atlantic Alliance*
3. Monaghan, Andrew. *Putin's Russia: Shaping a 'Grand Strategy?'*
4. Mankoff, Jeffrey. *Rapprochement on Russia's Terms: Why it Won't Work for the United States*
5. Shuster, Simon. *Putin's Secret Army*

### Assignment

What is Russia, and ultimately Vladimir Putin's 'grand strategy'? What tactics is Putin employing to weaken potential adversaries and strengthen his own hand? How successful has he been in employing these strategies? What does the future hold for the Atlantic Alliance? (2-3 pages)

### **Week 14: April 12**

#### Case Study

'The DC Sniper' in Miller Beebe ps. 199-216

SATs applied from Heuer and Pherson

1. Key Assumptions Check p. 209
2. Multiple Hypothesis Generator p. 173
3. Classic Quadrant Crunching p. 122

#### Seminar Subject

China and the Pacific

#### Objectives

1. Identify key regional security issues and potential clashed with US national interests.
2. Understand the region's unique geographical and cultural complexities.

#### Readings

1. Blackwill, Robert D. and Ashley J. Tillis. *Revisiting U.S. Grand Strategy Toward China*
2. Ji, You. *China's National Security Commission: Theory, Evolution and Operations*
3. Rapp-Hooper, Mira. *Parting the South China Sea: How to Uphold the Rule of Law*
4. Broder, Jonathan. *The 'Inevitable War' Between the US and China*

### Assignment

Some have argued that a conflict between China and the US is inevitable. Is it? What factors might contribute to an outbreak of hostilities and what factors might constrain aggressive behavior? What can the US and China both do to avoid an armed conflict? (2-3 pages)

### **Week 15: April 19**

Work Week: Office Hours during normal class time for consultation and help with your final paper and poster.

### **Week 16: April 26**

Final Poster Presentations

- Turn in digital copy of poster via blackboard
- Each student must turn in evaluations of other students posters

Final Papers Due

## Appendix B: Survey Results

	Responses –
<b>To what extent did this course help you to increase understanding of the national and international security environment including domestic and international political, cultural, organizational, and behavioral phenomena that influence national security decision-making and implementation?</b>	
– I learned a lot about these subjects. More than I expected to.	56.25% 9
– I learned enough about these subjects. It met my expectations.	43.75% 7
– I did not learn enough about these subjects. This class failed to meet my expectations.	0.00% 0
Total	16

	Responses –
<b>To what extent did this course help you to learn and implement new structured analytic (SATs) techniques for analysis in national security</b>	
– I learned a lot more about SATs than I had anticipated I would	68.75% 11
– I learned about as much as I thought I would about SATs	25.00% 4
– I felt like I did not learn enough, or I do not understand how to use SATs	6.25% 1
Total	16

	Responses –
<b>Which statement best describes how you feel about Structured Analytic Techniques (SATs) after taking this class?</b>	
– SATs are useful and have helped me to better analyze problems. I am likely to use them in my academic and professional careers.	62.50% 10
– SATs are of limited use and I would reach for them as a tool only if I was asked to do so.	37.50% 6
– SATs are useless. It is not clear how they can be used to deal with real world problems	0.00% 0

<b>Which statement best describes how you feel about Structured Analytic Techniques (SATs) after taking this class?</b>	Responses
Total	16

<b>To what extent did you like the way the class was divided up between skills development (SAT case studies) and content exploration (reaction papers and class discussion)?</b>	Responses
<p>—</p> <p>The divide was perfect. We were able to do two things well in class.</p>	<p><b>50.00%</b> 8</p>
<p>—</p> <p>I did not like breaking up class time. I would have preferred to focus only on skills development (SAT case studies)</p>	<p><b>12.50%</b> 2</p>
<p>—</p> <p>I did not like breaking up class time. I would have preferred to focus only on content exploration (reaction papers and class discussion)</p>	<p><b>18.75%</b> 3</p>
<p>—</p> <p>I thought that including both skills development and content exploration was good but I would have divided up the time differently.</p>	<p><b>18.75%</b> 3</p>
Total	16