Seminar in Homeland Security (INSS 3340)-CRN: 35213
Summer 2018; July 2 – August 19, 2018
University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)
National Security Studies Institute (NSSI) Program
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Course Overview and Objectives

Homeland Security is a complex concept and policy area for lawmakers, public bureaucracy, and the private sector. The variety of threats facing the U.S. homeland is diverse and requires policy and management responses that extend across levels in areas of government, and in many cases relies on collaboration and coordination with the private sector. Such things as international and domestic terrorism, cyber and critical infrastructure attacks, severe weather events, and pandemics all represent grave, ongoing, and sometimes overlapping threats to the well-being and safety of people, communities, and infrastructure in the United States. Many different agencies and entities have responsibility for contributing to homeland security efforts and policy at different phases (i.e. detection, prevention, and response) and in different areas (i.e. intelligence, border security, and urban security).

By the end of this course, students will have a strong understanding of:

- The concept of homeland security,
- The dynamics that underpin the various threats to the homeland,
- The scope and severity of these various threats,
- The entities and the policies in place or available to mitigate and respond to homeland security threats, and
- The challenges that accompanies security policy, risk management, and interagency coordination

Required Course Readings


(Available in the UTEP bookstore).

(All other articles and monographs (listed below) can be found in the UTEP E-Journal collection or are publicly available online.)

This is a fully on-line course.
Course Assignments and Grading

- Introductions: 5%
- Weekly Summaries and Responses: 30%
- Response Paper: 30%
- Final Exam: 35%

Course of Study

This is a seven week online course consisting of seven modules. Each module requires the student to complete the assigned chapter and article readings for each week. Students are then required to complete Weekly Summaries (see below) for each of the modules; as well as Responses to Fellow Students’ Postings (see below). There will also be a Response Paper/Midterm in Week 3, and a Final Exam in Week 7 (see below for details).

It is imperative for the Student to read the material and be able to summarize the content in their own words. Furthermore, make every effort to apply critical thinking to your summary of the content, and to your response of your fellow student’s posts. The same protocol applies to your Midterm Response Paper and Final Exam.

Late Assignments

When you submit assignments late, at least a half letter grade (I consider this three-five points) will be subtracted from your grade. This reduction will first occur the day following due dates, and an additional half letter grade will be taken off every three days thereafter. Please be advised that each module will only be available in Blackboard for one week (7 days).

Introductions

By the end of the first week, which is July 7, please post a brief introduction of yourself on the course website. Tell us what level of undergraduate you are, what you are studying, what you hope to get out of this course, what your future career plans might look like, and something interesting and personal about yourself!

Weekly Summaries

Each week students will write a 400-word summary of each assigned reading, that is, each chapter and/or article included in the weekly readings. Most weeks this will mean two summaries, but in a few cases, three summaries are required as there are three readings. So for example, when there are two readings for a given week each student will provide two 400-word summaries for a total of approximately 800 words. Summaries should include an overview and explanation in your own words of key concepts, issues and takeaways (80% of each summary) and a brief discussion of the limits or problems you observed in the reading (20% of each summary). These will be posted by midnight on Sundays, the night before the next module begins.

Due dates for your Weekly Summary posts are by midnight on Sundays- July 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th, August 5th, 12th, & 19th. (Total of 7)
Responses to Fellow Students’ Posts

Once you have posted your weekly summaries, you will be able to review those of your fellow students. Each week (except for the last week), read and respond to the summary of at least one other student. You should focus your response on the observations, limits and problems they have identified; for example, do you agree with their assessment, and why or why not. By midnight of the following Thursday, please have your response(s) to another student’s post(s) completed.

Due dates for your Responses to Fellow Students’ Posts are by midnight on Thursdays- July 12th, 19th, & 26th, August 2nd, 9th, & 16th. (Total of 6)

Response Paper (Midterm Exam)

On Monday, July 23, I will distribute a set of questions that requires you to write narrative responses to three questions. Each question will require a 600 to 800-word response, and each response will be given equal weighting in your overall assignment grade. Your Midterm Exam response question answers will be due by midnight on Sunday, July 29, the end of Week 4.

Final Exam Response Paper

On Monday, August 13, I will distribute a set of questions as a take-home final exam. Students will answer four questions, using between 600 and 800 words for each question. The questions in the Midterm Exam/Response Paper will be a good indication of what the final exam questions will look like. Your Final Exam responses will be due by midnight on Friday August 17.

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with the University policy in this area and feel free to come to me for further discussion. For example, I would be happy to talk about citation standards – if you are not sure, cite, cite, cite! The University’s standards are available at http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion are all violations of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for disciplinary action. Note: I utilize the Safe Assign-Originality/Plagiarism/Total Word-Count application to check all written assignments submitted by students.

Student Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made for those students with documented disabilities or other issues that seriously complicate academic work such as illness or religious observance. In these and other cases, contact me as soon as possible and accommodation options can be discussed. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at telephone number 915–747–5148, or by email at cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in the UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS staff are the only individuals who can validate, and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Grading System

A: 90 to 100
B: 80 to 89
C: 70 to 79
D: 60 to 69
F: 59 and below
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Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1: Student Introductions; Security Concepts and Terrorism (July 2 to July 8)

   Bullock et al, Chapters 1 and 2

   Peter W. Singer, The Cyber Terror Bogeyman, The Brookings Institution, November 2012 (available online)

Week 2: Homeland Security Hazards and Structures (July 9 to July 15)

   Bullock et al, Chapters 3 and 4

Week 3: Intelligence for Homeland Security (July 16 to July 22)

   Bullock et al, Chapter 5


Week 4: Border and Transportation Security (July 23 to July 29)

   Bullock et al, Chapters 6 and 7

   Response Paper-Midterm Exam

Week 5: Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure Protection (July 30 to August 5)

   Bullock et al, Chapter 8


Week 6: Mitigation, Prevention, Response, and Recovery (August 6 to August 12)

   Bullock et al, Chapters 9 and 10

Week 7: U.S. Homeland Security Going Forward (August 13 to August 18)

   Bullock et al, Chapter 13

   Final Exam Response Paper

Due dates for your Weekly Summary posts are by midnight on Sundays- July 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th, August 5th, 12th, & 19th. (Total of 7)

Due dates for your Responses to Fellow Students’ Posts are by midnight on Thursdays- July 12th, 19th, & 26th, August 2nd, 9th, & 16th. (Total of 6)

Response Paper-Midterm Exam due by Sunday at midnight July 29 (end of Week 4).

Final Exam Response Paper due by Friday midnight August 17 (end of Week 7).