

PROPAGANDA AND INFLUENCE OPERATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY STUDIES
CRIJ 5340, CRN #25353
TUESDAYS 6 :00-8 :50
EDUCATION BUILDING, ROOM 112
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
SPRING, 2024

I. Misty Duke, PhD
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II. TEXTBOOK

Jowett, G. S., & O'Donnell, V. (2019). Propaganda and persuasion. Sage. ISBN: 978-1-5063-7134-4 (J&O)

Clack, T., & Johnson, R. (2021). The world information war: Western resilience, campaigning, and cognitive effects. Routledge. ISBN: 978-0-367-49651-7 (C&J)

Additional readings must be downloaded by students from the University library or may be available on Blackboard.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the social, political, and psychological factors through which propaganda influences attitudes and behavior.
2. Identify influence operation tradecraft and contrast influence operations conducted by democratic and authoritarian states.
3. Evaluate Western responses to influence operations and attempts to influence others.
4. Discuss the enabling capabilities of the internet, new media, and cyber tools for influence operations.
5. Analyze cases of propaganda and influence operations, inductively illustrating key concepts related to these activities within each case.
6. Develop and report, in writing and oral briefing, independent case analyses of propaganda and influence operations.

IV. COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This graduate course will take a broad look at the global information environment. You will be exposed to past and present attempts to shape the information environment and

influence mass and targeted public audiences. Key concepts such as strategic communication, public diplomacy, and intelligence support for information operations will be addressed. The course will closely examine the adversarial influence operations of non-state actors and state-run propaganda organizations.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Discussion question/activity participation (20%)

Each week you will be assigned to read material related to that week's topic. During the lecture portion of the class, the instructor will introduce discussion questions and activities designed to further engage students with the topic. You will be graded on your participation in these questions/activities as follows:

- 5:** Full engagement in the discussion *and* demonstration of good understanding of reading material
- 4:** Limited engagement in the discussion *or* some limitations to understanding of reading materials
- 3:** Limited engagement in the discussion *and* some limitations to understanding of reading materials
- 2:** Minimal or no engagement in the discussion *or* minimal understanding of reading materials
- 1:** Minimal or no engagement in the discussion *and* minimal understanding of reading materials

See the Class Participation Guidelines for more information about this assignment.

B. Briefing questions (10%)

Each week the class will analyze a case relevant to that week's topic. You will be assigned to read material related to the case; materials, or links to materials, will be available on Blackboard. During class the instructor will choose one or two students to brief the class on the case details. All students must be prepared to provide the briefing and to answer relevant questions related to the case materials. You will be graded on your briefing as follows:

- 5:** The important points of the case are summarized, *and* the description is accurate
- 4:** Some important points of the case are omitted *or* there are some inaccuracies in the description
- 3:** Some important points of the case are omitted *and* there are some inaccuracies in the description
- 2:** Most important points of the case are omitted, *or* the description is mostly inaccurate
- 1:** Most important points of the case are omitted, *and* the description is mostly inaccurate

See the Class Participation Guidelines for more information about this assignment.

C. Case analysis participation (20%)

All students must be prepared to apply the **key concepts** related to that week's topic to the case and to address **key questions** that will be used to analyze the case. Those concepts and questions will be provided in Blackboard for each week. Your participation in these discussions will be graded as follows:

- 5:** Full engagement in the discussion *and* insightful commentary
- 4:** Limited engagement in the discussion *or* comments show limited insight
- 3:** Limited engagement in the discussion *and* comments show limited insight
- 2:** Minimal or no engagement in the discussion *or* comments are irrelevant to the case
- 1:** Minimal or no engagement in the discussion *and* comments are irrelevant to the case

See the Class Participation Guidelines for more information about this assignment.

D. Practice in-depth case analysis (10%)

Your group will work with the instructor to develop an in-depth analysis of a case pertaining to "The What" section of the course. The instructor will provide the case topic. Your group will write a report on each section of the case analysis, and you will brief the instructor on your analysis. Your group will grade each section of the case analysis using a rubric provided by the instructor to identify areas for improvement. Your group will submit the section of the written report and the evaluation to the instructor on Blackboard by the due date. This work will be done to prepare you for the first In-depth Case Analysis, which will be due two weeks later. The oral briefing will be given in class on **February 27th** and the slides will be due on Blackboard that day. The sections of the Practice In-depth Case Analysis written report are due as follows:

Present a case briefing:	2/6
Introduce the guiding questions:	2/13
Answer the questions:	2/16
Summarize the conclusions:	2/20
Reference the sources:	2/23

All revisions are due two days after feedback has been provided by the instructor. See the In-depth Case Analysis Guidelines for more information about this assignment.

E. In-depth case analyses (40%)

Your group will complete two In-depth Case Analyses. The first will be due on **March 19th** (covering "The What") and the second will be due **April 30th** (covering "The How"). Your group will select a case relevant to the respective section and complete all sections of the analysis on

your own, following the guidelines and rubric discussed during the Practice in-depth Case Analysis. Your group will submit a written report and provide an oral briefing on the due date. All written submissions will be uploaded to Blackboard. If your group provides a late submission, 2% will be deducted from the total score for every day that the work is late. Your group must complete milestones related to the analysis during a two-week period, as follows:

Project Milestones:

Milestone	“The What” Due Dates	“The How” Due Dates
Brief introduction to the case	3/1	4/16
List of guiding questions	3/5	4/23
Outline of the analysis	3/8	4/26

Additionally, you must inform me about your group membership by **January 23rd** and submit a completed Team Contract by **January 30th**. Furthermore, your group must also complete progress reports by **March 7th** and **April 9th**. Individual students must evaluate their group members' performance and participation for each of the three group projects. This assessment will make up part of the Practice In-depth Case Analysis and In-depth Case Analysis grades. Failure to complete these tasks will result in a 1% deduction from your In-depth Case Analysis grades for each day that each task is late.

VI. GRADING SCALE AT THE END

A = 90 – 100%

B = 80 – 89%

C = 70 – 79%

D = 60 – 69%

F = below 60%

NOTE: Final grades are a weighted average of assignment and exam grades. Final grades are not curved.

VII. INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

VIII. TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access

all parts of the course.

If you do not have word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about Microsoft Office 365 and follow the instructions.

The entire course is run through UTEP's Blackboard system, so students must activate and use their BB accounts regularly. Always log in using your UTEP name and password, and never as a "guest" (the guest option will kick you out after 15-20 minutes, which is problematic when taking a test because you will not be able to finish your test). All students are responsible for regularly logging in and checking for posted announcements, submitting assignments, participating in discussion boards, and taking tests through BB. Contact UTEP tech support for any questions or concerns regarding navigating in BB or learning how to do something in BB.

Please regularly refer to Blackboard for links, documents, announcements, and calendar changes. You are responsible for being up-to-date on all class information that is posted on Blackboard.

Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP Help Desk as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

IX. COURSE COMMUNICATION

Here are the ways we will stay in contact with each other:

Office Hours: I will have office hours for your questions and comments about the course. My office hours are in-person, however, you can request a virtual meeting and I will send you a Zoom link. Please see the days and times at the top of this syllabus.

Email: UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student e-mail account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.

Announcements: Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

X. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

If you are suspected of cheating on the exams or collaborating with other students on the homework or critique, the instructor will follow the University's policy regarding student dishonesty, which may result in a grade of zero and referral of the student to the Office of Student Conduct. If you are suspected of plagiarism, the instructor will follow the University's policy regarding student dishonesty, which may result in a grade of zero and referral of the student to the Office of Student Conduct.

Academic dishonesty or cheating is simply unethical and not acceptable under any circumstances. Plagiarism is a form of cheating that involves "stealing" the words and thoughts of others. It is a very serious academic violation and cannot be tolerated. The most common form of plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper or other assignment without giving credit to the source of that information or wording. **Plagiarism also includes the direct copying of a source verbatim (word for word) and incorporating that copied material into the student's paper or assignment without first paraphrasing with proper referencing or placing the copied text into a direct quotation, again with appropriate footnotes or citations.** Students must use their own words when not using direct quotes. Direct quotes should be used sparingly and only when appropriate to provide examples, evidence, or illustrate specific points. **You cannot simply "cut and paste" wording or text from source material to artificially "construct" their papers, essays, and other assignments. This practice is also considered plagiarism, even if references are done properly.**

Likewise, you must not submit work under their name that you did not do yourselves. You also may not submit work for this course that you produced for another course. If you are found to be cheating in any capacity including plagiarism and collusion, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Cases of academic dishonesty will be sent to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution for adjudication and possible sanctions. Possible penalties for academic dishonesty include a zero for the assignment, a failing grade for the course, suspension, and even expulsion from the university. You are responsible for understanding your specific obligations to maintain academic integrity at all times. Please refer to the following link for further information on UTEP's policies on plagiarism and academic dishonesty: <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>.

Some of your course work and assessments may be submitted to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detecting software. SafeAssign is used to review assignment submissions for originality and will help you learn how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase.

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as ChatGPT or DALL-E, is not allowed for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

XI. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodations, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. To make a request, please register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact CASS at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

XII. COURSE DROP POLICY

If unforeseen circumstances happen where a drop is necessary, you are responsible for initiating any course drop. It is your responsibility to determine how dropping courses may affect financial aid. **Some students are limited in the number of courses they may drop over their entire academic career of all courses taken at any public college or University in Texas.**

If a course is dropped before the “official census date,” the course will not appear on the transcript, and doesn’t count toward the drop limit.

Dropping a course after the official census date, but before the “course drop date” will generate a “W” in the course—although the drop shows on your transcript, a “W” does not lower your GPA. However, a “W” counts against your drop limit.

If the course is dropped after the “course drop date” or if you just stop participating, taking tests, etc., UTEP requires the instructor to issue an “F” in the course that permanently remains on the transcript.

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the Registrar’s Office to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an “F” for the course.

XIII. STUDENT CONDUCT

You must be respectful of other students and of all opinions. All communication should be free of vulgar, offensive, and/or discriminatory language. While it is appropriate to share your opinion on particular issues, your opinion should be presented as such (not as a fact) and should be supported by valid, factual arguments. You may also provide constructive criticism of other opinions. Constructive criticism is provided respectfully and professionally, criticizing the merit of the arguments or the veracity of the facts not the person.

Cell phones should not be used in class without the permission of the instructor. You should attend to the instructor during class lectures. If you are disruptive to the class, you will be asked to leave. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to record lectures. Laptops are allowed during class for taking notes or to aid in classroom exercises. If you use a laptop for other

purposes, you will be asked to put it away.

According to University policy, “The Texas Department of Public Safety defines a concealed handgun as a handgun, the presence of which is not openly discernible to the ordinary observation of a reasonable person. This same definition is utilized at UTEP. At all times, the handgun must be on or about the license holder’s body or secured and concealed safely.” This means that handguns may not be openly displayed on campus.

You should ensure that all emailed communication is written using appropriate etiquette. Please use a salutation (for example, “Dear Dr. Duke”, or “Hello Dr. Duke”), a clear and thorough communication of your question or concern, and a closing (for example, “Thanks, Bill Martinez” or “Sincerely, Angel Gomez”). Make sure to proofread your emails for grammar, spelling, and clear meaning. Also, please be sure to indicate the course title or number in your email.

XIV. ABSENCE POLICY

Please do not come to class if you are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive for COVID-19, or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. In the absence of these events, you are expected to attend all class periods.

Any absences beyond two will affect your class participation grade, even if you are sick or experience some other kind of emergency; you will not be allowed to make up the coursework. You are allowed to participate in class via Zoom if you are sick; this will not count as an absence. If you must be absent, you must inform me as soon as possible; you will be allowed to make up the coursework if you have fewer than two absences. You must review the slides for that class, try to obtain notes from a classmate to learn more about the mini lecture, review the key concepts, and read the case analysis discussion questions.

The makeup work will consist of two emailed discussion questions. You will be required to email me a document in which you answer the discussion questions, provide a two-paragraph briefing of the case, and answer all of the case analysis questions. The work will be due the Sunday following the missed class.

Class materials will be available on Blackboard and a student will be assigned to take notes of major points or conclusions that derived through class discussion. These notes will also be available online. If you must miss class, you are responsible for reviewing this information and for obtaining any further information about the missed class from your classmates.

XV. GROUPWORK POLICY

You will engage in much groupwork in this class; in fact, 50% of your grade will be derived from group assignments (see the In-depth Case Analysis Guidelines to find out why you have to do groupwork in this class). Effective groupwork requires cohesion and group norms about work ethics. In other words, the members of your group should work well as a unit and equally share

in the effort related to group tasks. Unfortunately, sometimes there is a tendency for at least one group member to be a *social loafer*, to allow others to do the work and then take an equal part of the credit. This interferes with group cohesion and violates group norms. Therefore, all members of the group will sign a group contract early in the semester that defines roles, agreed channels for communication, respectful behavior, etc. The contract will also provide a procedure for action if one or more group members violates the terms of the contract. After each group assignment, group members will assess and provide feedback regarding each other's performance during the assignment. This assessment will form part of the In-depth Case Analysis grade.

XVI. UTEP EDGE STATEMENT

The UTEP Edge is our philosophy that acknowledges the many assets our students bring to the University. We provide a variety of high-impact experiences both in and out of the classroom through work of our faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners that build on these assets and talents. Many of the assignments and discussions in this class will further develop the talents you bring to this class such as developing your communication skills, teamwork, critical thinking, and problem solving. These skills will be honed during each class, as we discuss class materials and analyze cases related to the key concepts.

Mastery of these skills will be demonstrated through in-depth case analyses conducted by your group. Some of these assignments, such as case analysis, are related to more general intelligence analysis skills that you have, or will, gain in INSS 5305 Introduction to Intelligence Analysis. Some of the concepts that we discuss related to the use of social media in influence operations are related to concrete cyber tools that students learn to implement in INSS 5307 Open Source Intelligence and INSS 5308 Social Media Intelligence.

XVII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources.



XVIII. CLASS CALENDAR*

Week 1: 1/16

Introduction to Propaganda and Influence Operations

J&O: Chapter 1

C&J: Chapter 2

Case: Coronavirus vaccine disinformation

THE WHAT?

What is the content of influence operations and what is the effect of this content on individuals and society?

Week 2: 1/23

History of Propaganda

J&O: Chapters 2 and 5

C&J: Chapter 1

Case: Soviet racial engineering during the Cold War

Due 1/23: Post identifying group membership

Week 3: 1/30

Propaganda Theory and Analysis

J&O: Chapters 1, 6, and 8

Case: COINTELPRO and the Black Panthers

Due 1/30: Team Contract

Week 4: 2/6

Cognitive Effects of Propaganda

J&O: Chapter 4

Case: The rise of Iranian influence operations

Due 2/6: Report and evaluation of "Present a case briefing" for Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Week 5: 2/13

Conspiracy Theories as Propaganda

Readings on Blackboard

Case: QAnon and Pizzagate

Due 2/13: Report and evaluation of “Introduce the guiding questions” for Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Due 2/16: Report and evaluation of “Answer the questions” for Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Week 6: 2/20

Effects of Propaganda on Society

J&O: Chapter 3

C&J: Chapters 3 & 10

Case: The Big Lie

Due 2/20: Report and evaluation of “Summarize the conclusions” for Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Due 2/23: Report and evaluation of “Reference the sources” for Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Week 7: 2/27

Practice In-depth Case Analysis Presentations

Case: Changes in North Korean propaganda strategy

Due 2/27: Slides for Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Due 2/27: Evaluation of group members related to the Practice In-depth Case Analysis

Due 3/1: Brief introduction to the case for In-depth Case Analysis

THE HOW?

How do influence operations conducted by state or non-state actors work to transmit propaganda to mass audiences or target populations?

Week 8: 3/5

Influence operations

C&J: Chapters 1, 8, and 11

Additional reading on Blackboard

Case: Chinese influence operations against the U.S.

Due 3/5: List of guiding questions for In-depth Case Analysis

Due 3/7: Group progress report

Due 3/8: Outline of the analysis for In-depth Case Analysis

Week 9: 3/12

No class-Spring Break

Week 10: 3/19

In-depth Case Analysis Presentations (The What?)

Due 3/19: In-depth Case Analysis written report (by midnight) and slides (by noon)

Due 3/19: Evaluation of group members related to the In-depth Case Analysis

Week 11: 3/26

Cyber-enabled influence operations

J&O: Appendix

C&J: Chapter 2

Additional reading on Blackboard

Case: Russia, Ukraine, and the Downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17

Course drop deadline is March 28th

Week 12: 4/2 (course tasks will be completed online)

Computational propaganda

C&J: Chapters 7 and 12

Additional reading on Blackboard

Case: Russia and the 2016 U. S. Presidential Election

Week 13: 4/9

Response to Counter Foreign Influence Operations

C&J: Chapter 9

Additional reading on Blackboard

Case: Regulation of Social Media Posts and Removal of Donald Trump's Account from Facebook and Twitter

Due 4/9: Group progress report

Week 14: 4/16

U.S. Government Influence Operations

Readings on Blackboard

Case: "Changing Hearts and Minds" during the Iraqi War

Due 4/16: Brief introduction to the case for In-depth Case Analysis

Week 15: 4/23

No class

Groupwork: In-depth Case Analysis (The How?)

Due 4/23: List of guiding questions for In-depth Case Analysis

Due 4/26: Outline of the analysis for In-depth Case Analysis

Week 16: 4/30

In-depth Case Analysis Presentations (The How?)

Due 4/30: In-depth Case Analysis written report (by midnight) and slides (by noon)

Due 4/30: Evaluation of group members related to the In-depth Case Analysis

* This calendar is subject to change.