THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
Senior Capstone - INSS 4390 001
Spring 2023

Course #: INSS 4390 001 (23617)
Credit Hrs: 3.0
Course Meetings & Location: 100% Online
Prerequisite Courses: INSS 3302 (with D or better) and INSS 4301
Course Begin Date: March 13, 2023
Course End Date: April 30, 2023 (11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time)
Instructor: Tim Clark, PhD.
Office Location: I do not have a physical office on campus.

Email: twclark@utep.edu
Emailing my UTEP account is the best way to guarantee I get the message. Typically, I will respond within 24 hours and usually in the evening hours.

Phone: If there is an emergency, you may contact me on my cell phone 256-284-3063. You may leave a message or text and I will get back to as soon as I get to my phone. Please use my cell phone only if your question is urgent and cannot wait for me to respond to e-mail. Due to the way that Blackboard and the Internet work, there has been a few disruptions. If that happens to you, do not panic. There is no need to text or call me (I have no magic button). Just send me an email.

Description:
This capstone course synthesizes student learning across the entire Security Studies curriculum. Students must demonstrate a broad understanding of the theories, facts, and methods in this discipline through the production of a formal research paper with distinct applicability for U.S. national security. This course is a vehicle for students to focus their research on a critical security issue as a final preparation for future graduate studies or employment.

For this semester, we will use an exercise-based (active student learning) technique to simulate real-life intelligence analysis that are similar to those found in training programs by many governmental (U.S. and foreign) intelligence and national security agencies. Specifically, you will take on the role of an intelligence analyst in a seven-week simulation named OPERATION MINER CAPSTONE ’23. You will play the role of an intelligence analyst for the Federal Bureau of Investigation whereby the goal is understanding a criminal or terrorist organization and then determine how to stop them. You should find this challenging (and also even fun).

OPERATION MINER CAPSTONE ‘23 is intended to synthesize the work you have done across your INSS courses at UTEP and to supplement this work with some additional techniques to hone your skills for your pending career. The work that you will be doing in this capstone course should be applicable for a career in intelligence analyst, as a member of a prosecutor’s office focusing on national security issues, or as a state or federal agent.
Learning Objectives:

This course will stress hands-on learning

1. In the role as intelligence analyst, you demonstrate your academic research skills by rapidly researching an assigned violent criminal or terrorist group using academic research skills that you have acquired from your university experience and supplemented by additional research skills taught in this course.

2. After your initial research is complete, then you will receive fictional intelligence on a fictional subgroup of that organization. You will analyze to determine who is in the network, why they are acting in the manner that they are, what they may likely do in the future, and even how to best counter or take down this subgroup.

3. As part of this process, you will practice:
   a. rapidly conducting background research on criminal or terrorist organizations
   b. synthesizing case-specific intelligence in a rapid fashion
   c. creating link charts of criminal or terrorist organizations
   d. creating a request for information (RFI) report
   e. creating a “baseball card” on key individuals within a criminal group
   f. creating intelligence updates on a criminal or terrorist subgroup
   g. identifying strategies to disrupt or degrade criminal or terrorist networks

Required Books:

To reduce costs to the student, there is no textbook that is required to be purchased for this course. All the reading material in the course will be provided within the modules (either by links or embedded pdfs). Whenever possible, video has been substituted for readings on a topic to add variety of medians for diverse learners. The course will include various readings at no-cost to the student that are found through either UTEP’s library, for free on the internet, or as pdf. All this material will be provided to you through the course Blackboard site.

Technical Requirements:

The University of Texas at El Paso provides free 24/7 Helpdesk support to academic students and faculty members teaching on-line. The Helpdesk can provide answers to questions about using technology and services, as well as technical support. Please visit the technical support page for more information. In order to be successful in this course you will be expected to have daily access to a laptop or desktop computer with reliable internet access and Microsoft Office and Adobe Flash.

Microsoft Office. If you do not have Microsoft Office, check with your University of Texas branch store for the special Microsoft Office package which includes Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Contact the UTEP Bookstore (915)747-5594 for more info.

Adobe Flash: This application is for advanced multimedia presentations/interactions over the internet. You may download this player from the Adobe Download site.
Components of your Grade:

Sinaloa Cartel White Paper.  
Discussion: Analyst Collaboration-- Intelligence Analysis Methods.  
Assignment—The Spreadsheet.  
Assignment: Another Analytic Technique.  
Discussion: Intelligence Gaps.  
Assignment Request for Information.  
Assignment: Your Intelligence Research Questions.  
Assignment: Your Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH).  
Assignment Upload your Latest Intel File.  
Assignment Most Likely Targets and Why.  
Assignment: Final Briefing Slides.

For a Total of 270 points

Grading Scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Distribution</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>243-270 points</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>216-242 points</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>189-215 points</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>162-188 points</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>less than 161 points</td>
<td>F</td>
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Communication in the Class:

Discussion Participation: (At time prompted, you will be required to post one coursework relevant comment weekly that should be at least 150 words. Additionally, you will be required to provide at least three replies per module for one of your fellow students and or in response to other’s replies to your initial posting. These comments should be at least 50 words. Each module’s discussion allows you to earn up to 5 points each (two points for the initial post, and a maximum of three points by posting a reply to other’s posts or by replying to others replies to your own post (for a maximum of three points for replies).

Private Conversation with the Instructor:  
Sometimes you may want to communicate with me outside the public blog forums. If you so desire, just send me an email, and if we cannot solve the issue via email, I am always glad to arrange a time for us to talk on the telephone.
**Student’s Responsibilities:**
Students will be expected to read the course readings and watch videos, actively engage in conversation with your fellow students in the discussion. You will also be expected to make a substantial comment to each module’s question listed on the Discussion Board set up for this course.

**Course Pacing:**
As part of the intelligence and security enterprise, we are often expected to meet hard deadlines. What this means is this course is that you need to meet both weekly deadlines and must complete all modules in order. This means that you have a weekly deadline of each Sunday at Midnight, and you have a deadline of **April 30, 2023 (11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time)** to complete all the course material, posting on the discussion and assignments. Any course material not completed by that time will receive as score of zero, **No excuses will be accepted.**

**Military Students:**
As a military Veteran, I am supportive of current students serving as active duty and reserve components of the U.S. military. If you are a military student with the potential of being called to military service, overseas deployment, or training during the semester, you are encouraged to contact me no later than end of the first week of class. However, it is expected that you as a professional will not enroll in the course if you knowingly expect (i.e., have orders prior to the start of the semester) to be deployed in an environment without computer access.

**COVID-19**
We all hope this is over with. If it comes back, as this class is fully-online there is not requirements that you be on campus. Just in case you have to visit campus for another reason, you would consult the UTEP COVID website for latest information. [https://www.utep.edu/resuming-campus-operations/dashboard/](https://www.utep.edu/resuming-campus-operations/dashboard/)

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**
As per Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation, then the Office of Disabled Student Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. You may call 915-747-5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and The Disabled Student Services Office at The University of Texas at El Paso.

**Copyright Notice**
Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

**Scholastic and Professional Integrity:**
Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student’s own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.
**Scholastic and Professional Integrity:**
In an on-line course scholastic integrity takes on a new importance as you are given more freedom from supervision. In the on-line course environment, it is academically dishonest to gain assistance during graded portions of the course. In this course this would be on quizzes, all exams, as well as having someone else write your entries and comments on blogs.

I view academic dishonesty among criminal justice majors as blasphemy as you all are striving to work as servants of the law. Negative action for academic dishonesty can result in being barred from employment and will most likely arise on any background and polygraph examinations you will take for the cool jobs. At UTEP Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. I will take violations seriously and will refer the case to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work.

In this specific course, there are some opportunities for collaboration (essentially three discussion boards). These would be for development of ideas. This discussion and communication is highly encouraged as it simulate the real-world aspects of working in the intelligence and national security field. However, your final products must be your own.

**The University Writing Center:**
The University Writing Center offers free synchronous online one-on-one writing assistance for UTEP Connect students. Graduate and undergraduate consultants work with writers on projects for a wide variety of classes and aid during all parts of the writing process, including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Online assistance is available by appointment through the UWC's website (uwc.utep.edu). Most UWC consultants are bilingual Spanish and English speakers. Consultants will not edit your paper for you, and you are the one ultimately responsible for the work you submit and the grade you earn. Instead, Writing Center consultants will guide you through the writing process and teach you valuable writing skills. Visit the UWC's website to learn more about the services they provide or make an appointment for an online consultation. Online consultations take place during regular business hours (see website) and must be made at least one day in advance.
**Effective Electronic Communication:**

Keep your messages concise and clearly written. Most ideas can be stated in a couple of paragraphs, although sometimes a longer message may be needed to develop your thoughts adequately. Keep in mind that people are more apt to read and digest shorter messages than long ones.

1. Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions, and beliefs. It's fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.
2. Avoid posting simple two- or three-word statements such as "I agree" or "Good point". If you think someone has made an especially strong point and you want to say so, then explain why by adding a few sentences describing your response or adding to the original point. Typically, a good post is about 150 words, and a good response is about 50 words. (I will not count these, so if they are close no problem).
3. I will not be checking for spelling or grammar, but the more attention to these your give, the clearer your message will be. I understand most Spanish (though not extremely skilled in slang) as well as many of your fellow students, so if you need to you can occasionally post in a mixture of English and Spanish to get your point across, then go ahead and do so.
4. A message that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
   
a. **Reflection about meaning**: Describe thoughtfully what something means or new insights it provides or raise a question as a seed for clarification or further discussion.

b. **Analysis**: Discusses relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas or identifies hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.

c. **Elaboration**: Builds on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information.

d. **Application**: Provides examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual classroom situations or discuss the implications of theory for practice.

e. **Synthesis**: Integrate multiple views to provide a summary, a new perspective, or a creative refashioning of ideas.
Course Schedule 4390 on-line

Course Schedule & Recommended Dates of Completion:
Course Begin Date: March 13, 2023
Course End Date: April 30, 2023 (11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time)

Week 1: Monday, March 13 – Sunday, March 19. All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.
   1. Review and Understand Items on Homepage
   2. Complete Module 1
   3. Read the 6 ASAC directed articles on the Sinaloa Cartel
   4. Conduct Research for and write the Sinaloa Cartel White Paper (~5-10 pages)
   5. Submit Assignment: The Sinaloa Cartel White Paper [worth up to 50 points]

Week 2: Monday, March 20 – Sunday, March 26. All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.
   1. Complete Module 2
   2. Download and review the 10 provided intelligence reports
   3. Review Intelligence Techniques (2 resources)
   4. Complete Discussion: Analyst Collaboration-- Intelligence Analysis Methods, initial posting by Thursday at 11:59PM, last posting by Sunday at 1159PM [worth up to 15 points]

Week 3: Monday, March 27 - Sunday, April 2. All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.
   1. Complete Module 3
   2. Voluntary Participation in DISCUSSION: Helping other analysts/agents to do initial analysis [no points] (in green)
   3. Create Spreadsheet
   4. Review 6 tool templates (in orange)
   5. Submit (Week 3 part A) Assignment—The Spreadsheet [worth up to 25 points]
   6. Submit (Week 3 part B) Assignment: Another Analytic Technique [worth up to 25 points]

Week 4: Monday, April 3—Sunday, April 9. All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, April 9, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.
   1. Complete Module 4
   2. Download and review the 21 provided intelligence reports
   3. Update your Intelligence Database and analyses
   4. Complete Discussion: Discussion Week 4: Intelligence Gaps, initial posting by Thursday at 11:59PM, last posting by Sunday at 1159PM [worth up to 10 points]
   5. Review [if needed] Types of Intelligence Collection
   6. Submit Assignment Week 4, #2 Request for Information [worth up to 20 points]

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Week 5: Monday, April 10--Sunday, April 16

All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, April 16, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.

I. Complete Module 5
II. Voluntary Participation in DISCUSSION: Helping other analysts/agents to do advanced analyses [no points] (in green)
III. If needed review two Chapters (8 & 10) on Intelligence Research Questions and Alternative Hypotheses—ACH
IV. Review Baseball Card template
V. Submit Assignment: Your Intelligence Research Questions [worth up to 10 points]
VI. Submit Assignment: Your Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH) [worth up to 25 points]

Week 6: Monday, April 17—Sunday, April 23

Intelligence Dump (dates April, thru April 17)
All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, April 23, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.

I. Complete Module 6
II. Voluntary Participation in DISCUSSION: Latest Intel Drop (Phase 3) [no points] (in green)
III. Download and review the 13 provided intelligence reports
IV. Update your Intelligence Database and analyses
V. Submit Assignment (#1 Week 6) Upload your Latest Intel File [worth up to 20 points]
VI. Submit Assignment (#2 Week 6) Most Likely Targets and Why [worth up to 20 points]

Week 7: Monday, April 24--Sunday, April 30

All assignments and discussion postings (for points) are due by Sunday, April 3, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time.

I. Complete Module 7
II. Read and review Policy Guidance from two websites
III. If necessary, read and review 3 PowerPoints to assist in selecting C-TOC methods
IV. In necessary review and use [DoD] Classification Marking Guide on your briefing
V. Complete Course Evaluation (found in your UTEP email)
VI. Build Intelligence Briefing of your intelligence findings on your Area of Operations using template
VII. Submit Final Briefing Slides. [worth up to 50 points]
List of Graded Discussions and Assignments

**Sinaloa Cartel White Paper**  Week 1, due by Sunday, March 19, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 50 points].

**Discussion: Analyst Collaboration-- Intelligence Analysis Methods**, Week 2. initial posting by Thursday at 11:59PM, last posting by Sunday at 1159PM [worth up to 15 points]

**Assignment—The Spreadsheet** (Week 3 part A) due by Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 25 points].

**Assignment: Another Analytic Technique** (Week 3 part B) due by Sunday, April 2, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 25 points].

**Discussion: Intelligence Gaps**, (Week 4) Intelligence Gaps, initial posting by Thursday at 11:59PM, last posting by Sunday at 1159PM  [worth up to 10 points]

**Assignment Request for Information.** (Week 4, #2) due by Sunday, April 9, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 20 points]

**Assignment: Your Intelligence Research Questions** (Week 5, #1) due by Sunday, April 16, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 10 points]

**Assignment: Your Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH)** (week 5, #2) due by Sunday, April 16, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 25 points]

**Assignment Upload your Latest Intel File.** (Week 6. #1) due by Sunday, April 23, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 20 points]

**Assignment Most Likely Targets and Why.** (Week 6, #2) due by Sunday, April 23, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 20 points]

**Assignment: Final Briefing Slides.** (Week 7) due by Sunday, April 3, 2023 at 11:59 PM, Mountain Standard Time. [worth up to 50 points]
A white paper is a core product of intelligence and criminal analysis. It provides the analyst the ability to organize their information on a network and serves as a product to inform executives, action officers, and other analysts. It is like research papers that you may have done in advanced undergraduate or graduate coursework. Thus, this paper you will systematically analyze of the Sinaloa Cartel to better understand the successes and failures by detailing five areas—structural factors, cultural factors, geo-political factors, resources, and actions of its threats. Using these foci, this analysis will identify critical strengths and vulnerabilities. You will use this paper as the basis for continued intelligence research in our courses hypothetical exercise OP CAPSTONE MINER.

The paper will include elven sections and be 5-10 pages in length (double-spaced 12 point font excluding references and cover pages):

I. Introduction: This section will provide a statement of what the paper seeks to do, and provide an overview of the paper structure, and what they key findings are.

II. Geographic Current and Historical Areas: This section will detail where the organization has operated and where it currently operates.

III. History of the Organization: This section of the paper will provide a history of the organization including who the founders were, why it was founded, and significant events in its history and development.

IV. Success or Failure: You will describe whether each of this organization is a success or a failure based on either their current situation or how they were at the end a historical point of time that is at the end of your period of analysis.

V. Structural Factors—The TCO’s structural factors are measured on the internal organization of the TCO. Measures include: their size; the nature of network connections; degree that structure is hierarchical or dispersed; the diversity of the portfolio of illicit and licit endeavors; their connections to legitimate businesses; and the level of visibility of the TCO. Your goal is to identify critical strengths and vulnerabilities of the organized based on its structure.

VI. Cultural Factors—The TCO’s cultural factors are measured on the internal beliefs, norms, values, and techniques, tactics, and practices (TTPs) for the purposes of understanding these as a TCO’s strength or vulnerability (or both). These measures include ideological, religious, or political purposes; the degree that the rank-and-file members and leaders adhere to this purpose; the age of the organization; the collective history of the organization; the adherence to codes of conduct; the collective experiences of its members; the level of violence they invoke; the ability to adapt; and the tech savviness of the TCO. Your goal is to identify critical strengths and vulnerabilities of the organized based its culture.

VII. Geo-Political Factors—The model hypothesizes that TCOs may be affected by geo-political factors that affect their likelihood of success or failure. These measures include: the geography of the TCO’s area of operations; the level of corruption in the society; the level of support from external actors (such as states, businesses, tribal groups, other TCOs, etc.); the legitimacy of governments in the TCOs operating area; and cultures of the population(s) in areas where the TCO operates. Your goal is to identify critical strengths and vulnerabilities of the organized based geo-political factors.
VIII. Resources—The model also posits that the TCO’s resources may influence their level of success and failure. Measures of resource include: the amount of wealth of the TCO has (both net and liquid wealth); the number of personnel in the organization; the TCO’s access to weapons and technology; and access to financial institution to launder money and to provide credit. Your goal is to identify critical strengths and vulnerabilities of the organized based its resources.

IX. Actions of Threats—The model also threats to the TCO. These threats include the ability of government security forces to mobilize resources to counter the TCO; the amount and relative power of rival or competitive organizations to the TCO; and international legal and security force efforts against the TCO. Your goal is to identify critical strengths and vulnerabilities of the organized based on actions of its threats.

X. Conclusion: This section describes the findings in the paper, specifically why were they a success or failure based on your analysis of critical strengths and vulnerabilities drawn from your discussion of their structural factors, cultural factors, geo-political factors, resources, and actions of its threats.

XI. Appendix—Current Leadership: In this section provide information on who are the current leadership of the organization and known key members. Provide names, suspected names or alias (e.g., Flaco Azul), their suspected role in the organization, images of the individuals if possible.