

Chesapeake Project Revisions to BSST 332: The Practice of Terrorism Studies (Capstone, Global Terrorism Minor)

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As part of the University of Maryland's Chesapeake Project, I have revised the Global Terrorism Minor's capstone course, BSST 332: The Practice of Terrorism Studies. The course is designed to emphasize the intersections of scholarly research and public policy on topics pertaining to terrorism and to prepare students to think critically about both the research and policy-making processes. The course emphasizes the development of student writing, presentation, and critical thinking skills and includes a substantive experiential learning component through an independent research project or internship.

I have incorporated sustainability concepts into the course by adding an emphasis on community resilience. In the past, this course has focused heavily on counterterrorism policy; in this version, I aim to bring equal attention to policy decisions and processes aimed at building communities able to withstand, and recover from a terrorist attack or other rapid-onset mass casualty incident. In this revised version of the course, I have incorporated several class sessions that will focus on community resilience, with an emphasis on an in-class simulation I have designed, in which students will role-play federal department and agency leaders and advocate for additional funding to support research into a particular aspect of community resilience. For the student roles, I have chosen a series of agencies intended to have differing perspectives on the most important components of building sustainable communities. And for read-ahead materials, I have selected a set of articles intended to emphasize such sustainability research concepts as social and cultural capital and interconnectedness.

The next two pages outline the in-class simulation.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE DECISION-MAKING SIMULATION

On **NOVEMBER 8**, you will participate in a simulation of an interagency meeting within the U.S. government about the direction and priorities of U.S. funding for research on community resilience. You will represent a specific agency or department in this meeting, and—as detailed below—you will be asked to present and defend your agency's position during this meeting.

In advance of the simulation, each student must submit a memo, addressed to the National Security Advisor, who will chair this meeting. You are to write the memo from the perspective of the role to which you have been assigned for the simulation.

The memo, which should be **two pages** in length, single-spaced, should be written in response to the following question:

On top of the funds already allocated to the broad goal of homeland security in FY 2012, the President has decided to request an additional \$2 billion in funding for basic social science research on topics related to homeland security with the specific goal of studying ways to build sustainable and resilient communities in the face of terrorist threats and rapid on-set disasters of all kinds.

What would be the best use of these newly available research funds? Given the priorities of your department or agency, what topics would you recommend using these funds to explore?

You should draw from the following readings when shaping your response:

- Fran H. Norris, Susan P. Stevens, Betty Pfefferbaum, Karen F. Wyche, and Rose L. Pfefferbaum, "Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities, and Strategy for Disaster Readiness," *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Volume 41, Numbers 1-2 (2007): 127-150.
- Susan L. Cutter, Lindsey Barnes, Melisa Berry, Christopher Burton, Elijah Evans, Eric Tate, and Jennifer Webb, "A Place-Based Model for Understanding Community Resilience to Natural Disasters," *Global Environmental Change*, Volume 18, Issue 4 (October 2008): 598-605.
- Edith G. Callahan and John Colton, "Building Sustainable and Resilient Communities: A Balancing of Community Capital," *Environment, Development, and Sustainability*, Volume 10, Number 6 (931-942).

Your memo should propose a specific area of research and justify its importance to resilient, sustainable communities, as well as its specific relevance to U.S. interests.

- *Please note that the three students assigned to the National Security Council staff jobs will have slightly different requirements, as discussed at the end of the assignment.*

Keep in mind that you will need to represent the interests of your organization in this memo and in the simulation. This can and should influence the recommendations that you make.

Each memo should have 4 sections (Problem, Context, Alternatives, Recommendation), and your position should be supported by appropriate evidence. Everyone must write an individual memo. You may consult with individuals playing roles in the same organization as you, but you are not required to do so. **All memos are due in class on the day of the simulation.**

Simulation Roles

Each student will be assigned to a specific role and is tasked with representing the interests of that role, as it relates to the question posed above, in both the memo assignment and in the simulation.

Department of Homeland Security

- Deputy U.S. Fire Administrator: *[student name]*
- Director, Citizen Corps: *[student name]*
- Ombudsman, Citizenship and Immigration Services: *[student name]*
- Under Secretary, Office of Intelligence and Analysis: *[student name]*

Environmental Protection Agency

- Director, National Homeland Security Research Center: *[student name]*

Department of Health and Human Services

- Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families: *[student name]*
- Assistant Secretary, Preparedness and Response: *[student name]*
- Director, Center for Disease Control: *[student name]*
- Director, Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships: *[student name]*

Federal Bureau of Investigation

- Director, Community Oriented Policing Services: *[student name]*
- Director, Office of Civil Rights: *[student name]*

Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Assistant Secretary, Community Planning and Development: *[student name]*
- Director, Public and Indian Housing Program: *[student name]*

American Red Cross

- Director, Disaster Operations Center: *[student name]*
- Director, Hurricane Recovery Program: *[student name]*
- Director, Mental Health Services Team: *[student name]*

National Security Council Staff Members: *[student name]; [student name]; [student name]*

NSC staff members will lead the interagency meeting and will be required to jointly write up their recommendation of how to allocate the available funds based upon the opinions presented during the meeting, to submit to the National Security Adviser. This document should be a two-page memorandum outlining a research agenda of approximately 6 to 8 subtopics recommended by the department and agency representatives and explaining the rationale for the choices and will be due in class the following week. The NSC staff members should determine prior to class how they will run the meeting. They will begin the meeting by laying out the ground rules for participation.