This course will explore the organization and functions of the U.S. Intelligence Community, its interaction with national security policymakers, key issues about its workings, and the challenges it faces in defining its future role. The events of 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq have focused new attention on national intelligence, including the most significant reorganization of the community since the National Security Act of 1947. The course will highlight some of the major debates about the role, practices, and problems of national intelligence. Lectures are important and will include a discussion period in each session. Additional readings may be assigned as the semester progresses. One research paper will be required at the end of the semester. Suggested topics will be distributed separately.

**Required Texts**

The following required texts are available at the MIT Coop in paperback. All other assigned readings are posted on Stellar.

Lowenthal, Mark M. *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy, Second Edition* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2003). This book by a senior intelligence official provides a fundamental overview of the subject. It should be read prior to the first session and reviewed periodically for basic background on each session.


**Online Intel Resources**

*The Literature of Intelligence: A Bibliography of Materials, with Essays, Reviews, and Comments*, compiled by J. Ransom Clark of Muskingum College, is an exhaustive online compendium of intelligence literature divided by author and topic. This bibliography can be found at [http://intellit.muskingum.edu/index.html](http://intellit.muskingum.edu/index.html).
The CIA’s Center for the Study of Intelligence publishes unclassified articles and conference proceedings at [www.cia.gov/csi](http://www.cia.gov/csi).

The Federation of American Scientists ([www.fas.org/irp](http://www.fas.org/irp)) and the National Security Archive ([www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv](http://www.gwu.edu/nsarchiv)) also maintain useful websites on intelligence topics.

**Week 1 (February 3): Introduction**

This session provides a brief overview of the course. After introducing some key concepts and debates, it asks how political science can contribute to the study of intelligence.

Richelson, Chapter 1


**Week 2 (February 10): Origins, Structure, and Functions of the Intelligence Community**

This session will examine the current organization and functions of the various members of the intelligence community and the role of the DCI. It will also introduce elements of the intelligence reform debate such as centralization vs. decentralization.

Treverton, Chapter 1

Richelson, Chapters 2, 3, 6 (skim)


Week 3 (February 17): Collection

This session will discuss the various collection functions and the relative merits of human and technical collection, including various proposals for change. It will also look at the use of open source material and discuss classification issues. Finally, it will address the debate about if there is too much collection and not enough analysis and the need for greater interaction between collectors and analysts on relative priorities.

Treverton, Chapter 5
Richelson, Chapters 7-12 (skim)

Week 4 (February 24): Analysis

This session will examine how the community interacts in theory and practice, the different types of intelligence, especially current and estimative, and the difference between puzzles and mysteries. It will also look at the role of the National Intelligence Council in producing joint products and the issue of dissent, with the Iraq WMD estimate as a case study.

Treverton, Chapter 4
Richelson, Chapter 14 (skim)
Week 5 (March 3): Intelligence and National Policy

This session considers the relationship between policymakers and their intelligence advisers. Recent events have rekindled fears that intelligence has become “politicized.” What does this mean? What other problems are common to intelligence-policy relations? Are these problems manageable? The war in Iraq will serve as a case study.

Treverton, Chapter 6

Week 6 (March 10): Surprise Attack and Strategic Warning

This session will examine the role of strategic warning. It will discuss different approaches to warning and the problem of credibility. It will examine the current warning process, how warning priorities are determined, the difference between capabilities and intentions, and the role of denial and deception. Can surprise be avoided or is it a permanent feature of the practice of intelligence? Various case studies will be discussed, including the Indian nuclear test and 9/11, along with the debate about policy successes and warning failures.

Ellis, Jason D. and Geoffrey D. Kiefer. Combating Proliferation: Strategic Intelligence and Security Policy (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), Chapter 4, pp. 87-108.
Week 7 (March 17): Military Intelligence

This session focuses on the use of intelligence for military purposes. It asks whether wartime intelligence is unique, and to what extent intelligence contributes to military success. It also examines the increasing use of national intelligence assets for military operations. Finally, it looks at the use of intelligence in net assessment, operational planning, and targeting.

Treverton Chapter 3
Richelson Chapters 4, 5 (skim)


Keegan, John. Intelligence and War: Knowledge of the Enemy from Napoleon to al Qaeda (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2003), Introduction, Chapter 1, and Conclusion, pp. 3-25 and 321-352.


Week 8 (March 31): ASW Case Study


Week 9 (April 7): Counterinsurgency

This session will discuss the continued importance role of asymmetric warfare and the role of intelligence in counterinsurgency and low intensity conflict. Vietnam and the lessons learned will be applied to more recent counterinsurgency efforts.


**Week 10 (April 14): Covert Action**

This session will focus on the CIA’s role in executing foreign policy through the conduct of covert action. Special emphasis will be placed on the activities during the Reagan administration and post-9/11 efforts.

Richelson Chapter 16
Andrew pp. 199-212, 250-276


Godson, Roy. *Dirty Tricks and Trump Cards: U.S. Covert Action and Counterintelligence* (London: Brassey’s, 2000), Chapter 4, pp. 120-183.


**Week 11 (April 21): Counterterrorism**

The focus in this session will be on the role of intelligence in counterterrorism and the requirements for both tactical and strategic analysis. It will also examine the role of centers in the intelligence community, especially the Counterterrorism Center. Finally it will look at the historical separation between domestic and foreign intelligence, the different roles of intelligence and law enforcement, and what this means for the future.


*17.951 Syllabus* 6

Berkowitz, Bruce, “Intelligence and the War on Terrorism,” *Orbis*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (Spring 2002), pp. 289-300.


**Week 12 (April 28): WMD and Nonproliferation**

This session will examine the role of intelligence in support of counter-proliferation and the special problems of denial and deception. It will focus on countries of key proliferation concern, including North Korea, Iran, Iraq, and Libya, and the growing threat of acquisition of WMD by terrorist groups.


Summary of Duelfer Report

**Week 13 (May 5): Intelligence and Democracy**

This session will address various issues related to intelligence oversight and accountability, the problems of secrecy in an open society, and ethical and moral questions about fundamental values.

Richelson Chapter 14

Andrew pp. 370-374, 389-390, 397-424


*17.951 Syllabus*

**Week 16 (May 12): Future Threats and Intelligence Reform**

This final session will look at potential future challenges to U.S. national security, and examine whether the various intelligence reforms efforts will enable the intelligence community to meet the challenge.

Treverton, Chapter 2


