Course Syllabus and Policy Requirement Statement

In order to access your course materials, you must agree to the following, by clicking the "Mark Reviewed" button at the bottom of this document.

By checking the "Mark Reviewed" link below, you are indicating the following:

- You have read, understood, and will comply with the policies and procedures listed in the class syllabus, and that you have acquired the required textbook(s).
- You have read, understood, and will comply with class policies and procedures as specified in the online Student Handbook.
- You have read, understood, and will comply with computer and software requirements as specified with Browser Test.
- You have familiarize yourself with how to access course content in Blackboard using the Student Quick Reference Guide or CSS Student Orientation Course.

ISSA 6314 – Strategic Thought and Leadership

Course Description/Overview

This course offers students an opportunity to explore how strategic leaders at the executive level of organizations think and influence actions. Students study leadership, ethics, decision-making, and strategy. The course emphasizes the relationship between intelligence and strategic decisions. Historical case studies highlight commonalities and habits of mind that form the nexus between strategic thought and leadership. Students will appreciate that a major aspect of thinking strategically and influencing others toward effective outcomes is well-analyzed intelligence appropriately tailored for the needs of policy makers.

Strategic thought and leadership literature was once the purview of government policy makers and the military. As such, much material exists on grand strategy, operational strategy, and battlefield strategy or tactics. The same paradigm exists for decision-making, intelligence, and leading men and women. However, strategic thought and leadership concepts have proliferated into areas such as politics, economics, intelligence, law enforcement, and homeland defense. Moreover, strategic thought and leadership, with a keen focus on competitive advantage, is now robust in business literature. It is indeed an interdisciplinary subject.

Unfortunately, this interdisciplinary subject tends to “stovepipe” within professions and activities. For example, military leaders may study Carl Von Clausewitz while business leaders embrace Michael E. Porter. In so doing, we will explore similar strategic concepts in both camps but the dialog may remain isolated to camp constituents.

This course, while focused on international security intelligence, incorporates material from other disciplines to include the business community. Students in any Master’s program with a leadership-related component are welcome, with their Department Chair’s permission, to take this course.
Finally, this course is designed to be highly interactive, based on your experiences and your well-thought-out positions and opinions, and give you an opportunity to showcase your informed opinions. Different perspectives from professionals pursuing graduate-level programs should generate debate and mutual learning.

*Click this link for a printable version of the syllabus.*

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**Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**

**Objectives:** As a result of completing this course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand key elements amid the concept of strategy
2. Understand the role of ethics, analysis amid intelligence, and decision-making within the concept of strategic thought.
3. Understand key elements amid the concept of leadership.
4. Analyze the nexus between strategic thought and leadership.
5. Apply key elements of leadership, ethics, analysis amid intelligence, decision-making, and strategy to selected case studies.
6. Appreciate the impact of analysis amid intelligence on policy decisions.

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**Required Texts and Materials:**

There is no textbook for this course. Readings and videos are provided online. Occasionally, but rarely, a non-ASU entity owning an assigned reading will require a subscription to their journal. Sometimes access to the document will require a nominal purchase. Please contact the professor immediately if you discover an article that requires any payment. Some materials/readings are available on Amazon. If a reading is inaccessible after searching on the ASU library web site and on Google, please inform the instructor. We are at the mercy of organizations that own external materials.

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**Grading Policies**

Grades will be based on an ability to organize the material, integrate relevant concepts and theories, and present them in appropriate forms.

*A Note on Grades:* ISSA 6314 is a colloquium (meaning a group discussion, from the Latin Colloqui – to talk together, to have a conversation). As such, weekly participation in the discussion threads is expected and forms part of the grade.
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<tr>
<th>Engaged participation (Discussion)</th>
<th>30%</th>
<th>Weekly with three exceptions (see notes)</th>
<th>Primary robust postings are due no later than 11:59 pm Central Time on Thursday. Responses are due no later than 11:59 p.m. Central Time on Sunday. There are no discussion questions for weeks with the mid-term (week five), scholarly critique (week seven), and final essay-exam (week eight).</th>
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<td>• For the Discussion Threads each week, please provide your initial response of at least 300 words to the selected question. You will post a word count at the end of your initial posts and responses to your classmates’ posts to ensure compliance. Posts will be deducted for failing to post or make the word count.</td>
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<td>• You will comment on at least two other students’ postings – this is a minimum-with each word count on these being at least 150 words. This is mandatory for consideration for credit and must show critical thinking in the responses.</td>
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<td>• Points, depending on the context of submissions, are awarded for initial post (50%), one post (75%) and two posts (100%). The caveat is that the word counts must be included and met. Word counts will not include the references used in support of your forum post.</td>
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<td>• Your participation in the discussion will be graded using the Discussion Rubric provided in the syllabus. Late submissions for the week will not be allowed unless previously cleared by the instructor.</td>
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<td>Midterm Individual presentations</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Sunday at the end of week five.</td>
<td>The mid-term assignment consists of a PowerPoint presentation (10 - 15 slides). It must be submitted no later than 11:59 pm Central Time on Sunday of week five. Early submissions are appreciated.</td>
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<td>Final Essay-Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Wednesday at the end of week eight</td>
<td>The topic for the final essay-exam will be posted on Sunday of week six. The final essay-exam must be submitted no later than 11:59 pm Central Time on Wednesday of week eight. Early submissions are appreciated.</td>
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Angelo State University employs a letter grade system. Grades in this course are determined on a percentage scale:

- A = 90 – 100 %
- B = 80 – 89 %
- C = 70 – 79 %
- F = 69 % and below.
Course Organization:

This course is organized in three parts.

- Part I: Strategy through Thought and Leadership
- Part II: Case Studies:
- Part III: Comparative Look and Analysis

Part I: Strategy through Thought and Leadership

Lesson 1: Strategy

The idea of “strategy” dates back to ancient Greece. It has evolved into areas such as politics, economics, intelligence, law enforcement, and homeland defense. Moreover, strategy, with a keen focus on competitive advantage, is now robust in business literature. This lesson binds the loose and sometimes misapplied term into a workable concept that reflects a senior or executive level of activity. Examples include strategic planning, strategic movement, and strategic ramifications. This lesson prepares students for a dialog on strategic thought.

Required Readings:

2. Introduction to Clausewitz. Colonel (ret) Jim Helis, Ph.D., U.S. Army War College, 8 September 2010, Video Lecture (30:32)
6. Video by Michael Bergdahl: Lessons Learned (5:08) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCu3zngVIjU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCu3zngVIjU)

Lesson 2: Strategic Thought

The concept of “thought” and the associated verb “thinking” date back to the most primitive of times. In this lesson, the words “thought” and “thinking” are matched to the premodifier “strategic.” “Strategic thought” and “strategic thinking” are thus derived terms that reflect thinking events conducted at an upper or executive level. This lesson purports that conscientious strategic thinkers observe and orient before they decide on a course of action. Accountability follows and is affected by ethical and moral choices.

Required Readings:

Leadership and management are sometimes put forward as overlapping skills and as consisting of the same, or very similar, elements. In actuality, the two are very different, and the academic and professional discipline of leadership has its own body of literature. The theories and models are codified, quantitatively measurable, and capable of predicting, explaining, and understanding. As such, this lesson explores the application of recognized and measurable leadership styles as expressed by leaders who think strategically. This lesson also introduces the LEADS (Leadership, Ethics, Analysis, Decision-Making, and Strategy) model that will be used throughout the remainder of the course. Analysis in the midst of intelligence, as represented by the "A" in the LEADS model, especially underpins every one of the other elements to a significant degree. This variable, as will be confirmed in the case studies, often determines both individual and collective levels of effectiveness. This lesson highlights that shoddily analyzed intelligence has no place in the practice of strategic thought and leadership.

**Required Readings:**


**Part II: Case Studies:**
Lesson 4: Gettysburg Campaign -- American Civil War
This is the first of three case studies regarding the practice of strategic thought and leadership. This case study provides examples of strategic leadership that resulted in multiple tactical events, which in turn drove unexpected strategic ramifications. It will be important in this lesson to consider how leadership, ethics, decision-making, and strategy contributed to success and failure. The impact of intelligence, both positive and negative, contributed greatly to the outcome of the Gettysburg Campaign.

Required Readings
1. Review previous readings from lessons one, two, and three as required
2. 360 degree Video Presentation, U.S. Army War College
   http://www.csl.army.mil/Gettysburg360/Gettysburg%20360%20Version%201.0.html

Optional Readings and Assignment
3. Read Novel by Newt Gingrich and William R. Forstchen, Gettysburg, 2003. This is a fictional novel in which the outcome of the campaign is vastly different than what really occurred. Gingrich and Forstchen seize upon many of the variables discussed in this lesson, reflect an alternative and reasonable outcome to these events, and then carry those outcomes to a logical conclusion. This alternative history demonstrates how the campaign could have easily gone the other way.

Lesson 5: Algiers
This is the second of three case studies regarding the practice of strategic thought and leadership. This case study reflects a great deal of strategic volatility, uncertainty, confusion, ambiguity, and ethical dilemmas. It also provides examples of strategic direction that resulted in multiple tactical blunders and events. It will be important in this lesson to consider how unexpected tactical events drove second and third order effects in the areas of strategy and leadership.

Required Readings
1. Roger Trinquier’s Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency
2. The Battle of Algiers You Tube video

Lesson 6: Piracy in Somalia: Business creativity or criminality
This is the third of three case studies regarding the practice of strategic thought and leadership. This case study is arguably the most thorny and complex. Relatively honest fishermen, concerned with protecting assets, transformed into pirates. The study provides an example of villains who plan, organize, and execute a rascally-based strategy. One may not like the criminal aspect of piracy. However, it is indeed a thought-out strategy in which ranking people direct accomplices in pursuit of financial gain. It will be important in this lesson to consider the clash between ethical leadership and financial desperation amid a unique culture and volatile political environment. Is this piracy a justified business practice, relative to the environment, or crimes orchestrated by non-state actors practicing as thugs? If the latter, consider the ethical implications of intelligence being leveraged for criminal activity.
**Required Readings**

1. Review previous LEAD-centric readings from lessons one-three as required.

**Part III: Comparative Look and Analysis**

**Lesson 7: Universalities, Commonalities, and Habits of Thought and Mind**

This lesson champions the idea that habits of mind, from a major American Civil War campaign, through defending the Republic of Texas in 1842, to Somalia’s modern piracy network, are surprisingly similar. Thinking strategically and influencing others toward honorable pursuits requires ethical, well-informed, and decisive leadership. An absence of some or all of these three variables introduces volatility, uncertainty, confusion, and ambiguity. The action can then diminish into simple chance, coercion, and even villainy. Students will consider all ideas discussed, in the context of the Texas case study, as they critique Mid-Term PowerPoint presentations.

**Required Readings**


**Lesson 8: Final Essay-Exam**

Topic will be posted in lesson six.

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**Communication**

**Office Hours and/or hours of outside-of class contact**

By appointment. See the Instructor Information section for contact information.
University Policies

Academic Integrity
Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the university Academic Honor Code and the ASU Student Handbook. According to the Student Handbook, plagiarism is explained as:

1. The representation of words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, other expression or media of another as one’s own and/or failing to properly cite direct, paraphrased or summarized materials.

2. Self-plagiarism which involves the submission of the same academic work more than once without the prior permission of the instructor and/or failure to correctly cite previous work written by the same student. [http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php](http://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/code-of-student-conduct/misconduct.php)

So there is no misunderstanding, the Turnitin limit is 20% and you will need to paraphrase prior to posting to reach below that threshold. I will not accept work submitted in another class or previously developed in this class and used in the essays. Also, any indication of plagiarism may result in a F for the assignment.

Accommodations for Disability
ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation. Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by emailing student.services@angelo.edu, or by contacting:

Office of Student Affairs  
University Center, Suite 112  
325-942-2047 Office  
325-942-2211 FAX

Student absence for religious holidays
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.