

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 below.

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 in the [Student Orientation Course](#).

BOR 6389: Capstone Seminar in Border Security

Course Description/Overview

Click this link for a [printable version of the syllabus](#).

This course is a research seminar in which students will develop skills in locating, extracting, evaluating and synthesizing information acquired from their prior courses. Students write a publishable, article-length paper based on independent research. Students may also be expected to supplement their research with other readings under the direction of the professor.

Course Bibliography and Required Readings:

Vulliamy, E. (2010). *Amexica: War Along the Borderline*. NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. ISBN: 978-0-374-10441-2

Sagarin, R. & Taylor, T. Eds. (2008). *Natural Security: A Darwinian Approach to a Dangerous World*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN: 978-0-520-25347-6

Lewis, T. (2011). *Bak's Sand Pile: Strategies for a Catastrophic World*. Williams, CA: Agile Press. ISBN: 978-0-9830745-0-2

Faddis, C. S. (2010). *Willful Neglect: The Dangerous Illusion of Homeland Security*. Guilford, CT: Lyons Press. ISBN: 978-1-59921-906-6

And other readings as assigned in the weekly lessons.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

This capstone course allows students to consolidate the knowledge garnered from their previous courses in the Master of Science in Border Security program. It concurrently exposes them to a variety of perspectives on Border and Homeland Security through reading assignments and discussions on topics not previously addressed in other classes.

Therefore, the goals and learning outcomes of this course are:

Objective One: Students develop an awareness of alternative strategies for national and societal defense through analysis of security systems ubiquitous in natural world.

Objective Two: Students begin to develop an understanding of the concepts of environmental and situational awareness as these concepts pertain to Homeland Security.

Objective Three: Students begin to develop an understanding of the concepts of environmental and situational awareness as these concepts pertain to Homeland Security.

Course Organization:

Lesson 1:In this lesson we begin the process of tying together all the various pieces of the border and homeland security puzzle and develop a topic that will drive your final research project.

Research Proposal is Due.

Lesson 2:In this lesson we will approach the concept of what constitutes a border and what constitutes a boundary.

Lesson 3:There is a relationship between the narco-maquiladoras-migration triad in Mexico that drives the continuing violence and an obscene version of capitalism at its most grotesque. This lesson explores the concept and impact of this relationship on Mexican culture, and by default, the culture of Hispanic communities in the U.S.

Lesson 4:Nature offers significant guidance on the process by which societies defend themselves, respond to crisis and catastrophe, and recover following disaster. In this lesson we begin a study of the lessons nature has to offer in developing our own societal defense system.

Lesson 5:While change is inherent in the fundamental nature of things, the static nature of governments and the international relations ideologies presented by political scientists belie reality. This is particularly noticeable in the government approach to religious terrorism.

Lesson 6:This lesson brings together a synthesis of the concepts found in nature that inform Border and Homeland Security policy development.

Short Critical Paper is Due.

Lesson 7:The course turns towards the topic of Self Organized Criticality and the concept of Normal Accident Theory.

Lesson 8:This lesson begins the application of SOC and NAT to a variety of disastrous events.

Lesson 9:This lesson continues the application of SOC to a variety of disastrous events.

Lesson 10:Cities, social organizations, and the critical nature of extreme inter-connectivity are reviewed and the theory of self-organized criticality is applied.

Lesson 11:Being aware of the hazards that are all around us is imperative to securing our communities and our nation from external and internal threats.

Draft of Paper is Due.

Lesson 12:Local hazards and potential threats are discussed and evaluated.

Lesson 13:We continue the discussion of local hazards and potential threats.

Lesson 14:We continue the discussion of local hazards and potential threats.

Lesson 15: Simple yet effective methods of strengthening critical infrastructure are discussed.
Major Paper Due.

Lesson 16: This week is the final week of your degree program. We ask you for feedback on the overall program as well as this capstone course.

Grading Policies

This course utilizes subjective grading to measure a student's comprehension of the materials.

Participation in the weekly discussion topics is required. Student participation will be evaluated based upon the attached grading rubric. Posts to the discussion board are expected to demonstrate considerable understanding of the required readings, are to be at least 250 words in length, and should employ proper syntax, grammar, English, and punctuation. You will also be graded on your responses to other student postings, which must happen each week. Discussion board participation accounts for 25% of your overall grade.

This course employs four writing assignments. Students prepare and submit a research topic proposal in the first week. The proposal accounts for 10% of your overall grade. A second paper is assigned in week 6. This critical analysis paper is to be 6 pages in length, double-spaced, using Times New Roman 12 pt font and standard 1-inch margins. This short paper accounts for 25% of your overall grade and is due by Monday of week 7. A draft version of your major paper is due on Saturday of week 11. This draft accounts for 10% of your overall grade. Your major paper is due on Thursday of week 15. This final version of your paper accounts for 30% of your overall grade.

Assignment	Percent of Grade	Due
Critical Paper	25%	Week 6
Major Paper:		
Topic	10%	Week 1
Draft	10%	Week 11
Final	30%	Week 15
Discussion Board	25%	Weekly

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.

Writing Guidelines

Each writing assignment deals with the topic under discussion. These writing assignments cumulatively account for 75% of the student's grade. Writing assignments are expected to be about 1500 - 2000 words.

The purpose of the major paper is for you to demonstrate the ability to take the knowledge you have gained through all your other classes and apply it in resolving some problem associated with securing the nation. This is not intended to be a thesis, but to be one of three types of papers: a research project that produces a publishable paper for submission to a peer reviewed journal, or a policy paper for submission to one of the many DHS/FEMA journals, or if you are a Homeland Security professional, a policy recommendation that addresses an agency problem. This paper should be an 8 to 12 page length, exclusive of the cover page, abstract, and references. It will be prepared either as an academic paper or a memorandum along the guidelines provided in the APA or Chicago writing style manuals. To access the APA writing guidelines go to this link: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>. Should you wish to use CHICAGO style that will be acceptable. The Chicago Style guide can be found at <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>. Feel free to ask your professor for assistance, clarification, or guidance at any time.

Papers should have 1-inch margins all around. You are expected to use a standardized font - preferably Times New Roman, 12 point. Cite your references in EVERY instance and include a properly formatted reference list and cover page with every assignment.

Every writing assignment should be submitted as a WORD or PDF document. If you do not have Microsoft Office or Adobe Acrobat, then copy the text you have written directly into the assignment section of Blackboard during the appropriate week. **Do NOT** submit writing assignments in Word Perfect, Microsoft Works, or some e-mail format. They will not be accepted.

Rubrics

Discussion forums and writing assignments will be graded using a standardized rubric. It is recommended that you be familiar with these grading criteria and keep them in mind as you complete the writing assignments. There are two rubrics. Click the link to download the PDF document:

[Discussion Rubric](#)

[Writing Assignment Rubric](#)

Final Exam

This is an online course. There is no final exam. In the 16th week students are asked to complete end of course surveys and provide an end of program analysis.

Communication

Participation

In this class *everyone*, brings something to the table. Your ideas and thoughts do count, not only to me, but the entire class. Feel free to ask questions either via e-mail or the discussion board.

Check the discussion board regularly. Many student questions are applicable to the class as a whole, as are the responses. You may be surprised how many of your classmates have the same questions and concerns as you. I may simply post your particular question on the discussion board and allow your classmates to provide the answer through their own posts.

To some, this may be their first online class and naturally, it could seem somewhat intimidating. As a class, we are together to help each other with this learning process and share our collective knowledge on how best to communicate; how to resolve technical issues that may arise (if we have the expertise), and to assist each other to find answers to our questions.

We will learn and work as a team.

Courtesy and Respect

Courtesy and Respect are essential ingredients to this course. We respect each other's opinions and respect their point of view at all times while in our class sessions. The use of profanity & harassment of any form is strictly prohibited (Zero Tolerance), as are those remarks concerning one's ethnicity, life style, race (ethnicity), religion, etc., violations of these rules will result in immediate dismissal from the course.

Office Hours/Contacting the Instructor

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](#).

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 studentservices@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.