



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY  
School of Continuing Studies  
Journalism

## **MPJO-856-01: COVERING NATIONAL SECURITY**

### **GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY: MPS-JOURNALISM**

Thursdays, 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. | Fall 2014

Instructor: Matt Apuzzo

Instructor: Adam Goldman

Downtown campus, room C229

- Office hours are by appointment.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

Governments keep secrets in the name of security. Journalists expose secrets in the name of democracy. This conflict has been at the heart of some of journalism's most difficult decisions: the Pentagon Papers, warrantless wiretapping, black sites, Edward Snowden's NSA files. In this class, we'll learn about covering national security, a world that is often cloaked in secrecy and in which the stakes are high. We'll cover many of the legal principles that govern intelligence gathering and the ethical principles that guide our coverage. When is it appropriate to withhold information from the public? When is it appropriate to publish classified information?

With guest speakers from the intelligence and journalism worlds, students will learn the fundamentals of the national security infrastructure, from local police to the CIA, and how to make sources on a beat known for intense secrecy.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the semester, students will:

- Know the nation's primary security agencies and understand their roles.
- Be able to identify the thematic elements that make good security stories.
- Be aware of the pitfalls (propaganda) associated with covering this beat.
- Understand how to develop sources and be cognizant of the risks that entails.

### **REQUIRED READING**

Title: *Enemies Within: Inside the NYPD's Secret Spying Unit and bin Laden's Final Plot Against America*

Authors: Matt Apuzzo and Adam Goldman

ISBN: 1476727937

Publisher: Touchstone

Year: 2013

Price (Amazon): \$17.26



The instructors will also assign specific articles to read as part of the homework. Students must be prepared to discuss any of those assigned readings in class.

### ATTENDANCE

As outlined by the university, missing more than two classes will result in a final grade reduction of one level (for example, an A will be converted to an A-). **Absences for classes, beyond the initial two, will result in further reduction of the final grade.** If you are absent for more than four classes, you will be in danger of failing this course.

Punctual attendance is critical. If you have to miss a class – family emergency, medical emergency or other act of God – you must let the instructors know in advance and work out a proposal for making up whatever work you will miss. Exceptions will be made only in extraordinary circumstances.

### CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE, CLASS PARTICIPATION AND OTHER GUIDELINES

A successful class depends on the active engagement of all students. Students should turn off all cell phones, pagers or other communication devices while in class. Class discussions should be respectful and considerate of others' views and opinions. What happens in class stays in class unless you receive permission from the instructors to share something.

Like working journalists, students should be prepared for class to begin promptly on time.

In the event of a weather emergency (or any other widespread emergency) that would close the Georgetown Downtown building, we will plan to meet virtually through online videoconferencing tools. More information will be provided on how this will work later in the semester.

### ASSIGNMENTS

There will be five assignments: three stories, one short paper and a test. Because two of the stories will be based off actual news events, the deadlines are not yet set. Instructors will keep students abreast of upcoming events that students can choose to cover.

After each story is graded, students will have the option to revise and resubmit. That is not required. For any student who opts to resubmit a story, the revised grade will replace the original grade.

The short paper and test cannot be resubmitted.

All assignments (with the exception of the test) should be emailed to both instructors by the due date.

### Assignment Details:



1) Obama National Security Strategy Story: Students will write a 400-word hard news story off of Obama's 2010 version of the National Security Strategy. The emphasis will be on identifying the story, developing a strong lead and including a sharp, focused nut graf.

**Deadline:** 10 p.m. on September 9

**Optional revision deadline:** 8 p.m. on September 18

2) Paper: Comparison of 9/11 Front Pages: Pick two September 12 front pages from [www.newseum.org](http://www.newseum.org) (or screengrabs from news websites from September 11) and compare them in at least 300 words. What choices were made? What was the message?

**Deadline:** 10 p.m. on September 16

3) Understanding National Security Test: Open-notebook test on the makeup and duties of the national security infrastructure. Online via Blackboard.

**Deadline:** Noon on October 22.

4) Court Hearing Story: Students will write a 600-plus word story about a national security court hearing (arraignment, sentencing, etc.) in Alexandria or Washington federal court. Instructors will keep students abreast on scheduling, but because we are at the mercy of the court calendar, dates and deadlines will be in flux.

**Deadline:** This will vary, depending on the hearing the student attends.

**Optional revision deadline:** Generally, this will be within two weeks of initial deadline, but may vary depending on hearing schedule.

5) Congressional Hearing Story: Students will write a 600-plus word story about a national security congressional hearing. Instructors will keep students abreast on scheduling, but because we are at the mercy of the congressional calendar, dates and deadlines will be in flux.

**Deadline:** This will vary, depending on the hearing the student attends.

**Optional revision deadline:** Generally, this will be within two weeks of initial deadline, but may vary depending on hearing schedule.

## GRADING

Your course grade will be based on the following:



Story: The Obama National Security Strategy	15 points
Short Paper: Comparison of 9/11 Front Pages	10 points
Test: Understanding National Security	15 points
Story: Court Hearing	25 points
Story: Congressional Hearing	25 points
Class Participation	10 points

**Total** **100 points**

Graduate course grades include A, A-, B+, B, B-, C and F. **There are no grades of C+, C- or D.**

A	100-93	B-	82.99-80
A-	92.99-90	C	79.99-70
B+	89.99-88	F	69.99-0
B	87.99-83		

The instructors will provide a warning by mid-semester to any student who appears to be on track for a poor final grade.

### UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Georgetown offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed on main campus or at the downtown location:

- MPS Writing Resource Program  
202-687-4246  
<http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu/>
- Academic Resource Center  
202-687-8354 | [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu)  
<http://ldss.georgetown.edu/>
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services  
202-687-6985  
<http://caps.georgetown.edu/>

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

Students with documented disabilities have the right to specific accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the course. Students with disabilities should contact the Academic Resource Center (202-687-8354; [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu); <http://ldss.georgetown.edu/index.cfm>) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given a letter from ARC to share with your



professors. You are personally responsible for completing this process officially and in a timely manner. Neither accommodations nor exceptions to policies can be permitted to students who have not completed this process in advance.

### GEORGETOWN HONOR SYSTEM

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code. The Honor Code pledge follows:

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

### PLAGIARISM

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in journalism, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the Gervase Programs at <http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>. If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing and the need to credit, check out <http://www.plagiarism.org>.

### SYLLABUS MODIFICATION

The syllabus may change to accommodate discussion of emerging topics. Also, the schedules of guest speakers may require some shifting of the agenda. The instructors will make every effort to provide as much advance notice as possible for any alterations.



## CLASS SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1 (THURSDAY, AUG. 28)

After an introduction to the class, we will discuss the major types of national security stories and the role journalists play in national security. As reporters, whose side are we on?

#### Reading for Sept. 4:

- Students read copies of recent National Security Strategies (will be provided)
- An excerpt from “Power and Constraint” by Jack Goldsmith (will be provided)

### WEEK 2 (THURSDAY, SEPT. 4)

Organization of the national security state. We will cover how the FBI, CIA, NSA, DOD, etc., fit into the overall structure of national security. Who sets our national security policy? How? We will learn about the National Security Strategy document and how to interpret it. Students will also pick a news organization to monitor on 9/11.

**Assignment:** Obama National Security Strategy Story

**Deadline:** 10 p.m. on September 9

**Optional revision deadline:** 8 p.m. on September 18

#### Reading for Sept. 11:

- The Source of the Trouble <http://nymag.com/nymetro/news/media/features/9226/>
- U.S. Suspects Al Qaeda Got Nerve Agent From Iraqis  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/12/AR2006061200701.html>
- THE PUBLIC EDITOR; Weapons of Mass Destruction? Or Mass Distraction?  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2004/05/30/weekinreview/the-public-editor-weapons-of-mass-destruction-or-mass-distraction.html>
- Bush: Iraq is one victory in war on terror  
<http://www.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/05/01/sprj.irq.bush.speech/>

### WEEK 3 (THURSDAY, SEPT. 11)

Spin, packaging and propaganda. Class discussion will focus on how government and special-interest groups use the media as a way to frame national security debates. We will discuss the readings in depth and use them to analyze the day's 9/11 coverage.

**Assignment:** 9/11 Front Page Paper

**Deadline:** 10 p.m. on September 16



### Reading for Sept. 18:

- TBD

### WEEK 4 (THURSDAY, SEPT. 18)

We will cover some of the hard questions of the past decade: What is terrorism? What is al-Qaeda? Who are we at war with? How can we win? What is war and what are the rules?

### Reading for Sept. 25:

- TBD

### WEEK 5 (THURSDAY, SEPT. 25)

The FBI and Justice: Understanding the structure and role of the FBI, then and now, with specific focus on the pre-9/11 counterterrorism strategy and the post-9/11 counterterrorism strategy. What changed? And what makes a good story? How to read indictments, complaints and other court documents.

**Assignment:** Court Hearing Story

**Deadline:** This will vary, depending on the hearing the student attends.

**Optional revision deadline:** Generally, this will be within two weeks of initial deadline, but may vary depending on hearing schedule.

### Reading for Oct. 2:

- TBD, excerpt from The Shadow Factory, Snowden stories

### WEEK 6 (THURSDAY, OCT. 2)

Discussion will cover the role of the CIA and NSA, with guest speakers who have covered the Snowden disclosures in depth. How do you get stories from these incredibly secretive institutions?

### Reading for Oct. 9:

- Huge CIA Operation Reported in U.S. Against Antiwar Forces, Other Dissidents in Nixon Years <http://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/238963/huge-c-i-a-operation-reported-in-u-s-against.pdf>
- Bush Lets U.S. Spy on Callers Without Courts <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/16/politics/16program.html?pagewanted=all>
- Letter from Rush Holt to NSA [http://www.house.gov/sites/members/nj12\\_holt/pdf/RHletter2DIRNSA122205.pdf](http://www.house.gov/sites/members/nj12_holt/pdf/RHletter2DIRNSA122205.pdf)



### **WEEK 7 (THURSDAY, OCT. 9)**

The role of independent oversight of national security operations, from the Church Committee to the modern Congress. The roles of inspectors general. How much does anyone know about how America conducts its security duties, and how do journalists cover it?

**Assignment:** Congressional Hearing Story

**Deadline:** This will vary, depending on the hearing the student attends.

**Optional revision deadline:** Generally, this will be within two weeks of initial deadline, but may vary depending on hearing schedule.

#### **Reading for Oct. 16:**

- TBD

### **WEEK 8 (THURSDAY, OCT. 16)**

We will discuss the unique challenges of covering the military, both as a reporter in the United States and as a combat reporter overseas. We will hear from reporters who have broken out of the spin machine and who have held the government accountable. We will discuss the role of FOIA in national security.

**Assignment:** National Security Infrastructure Test (online via Blackboard)

**Deadline:** Noon on Oct. 22

### **WEEK 9 (THURSDAY, OCT. 23)**

All security is local: How local police fit into the national security picture. Fusion centers, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the mayor and the governor. How it all comes together at the local level, and what to worry about when your mayor is talking about national security.

### **WEEK 10 (THURSDAY, OCT. 30)**

Press officers are your first lines of communication to the government. They're also your first roadblocks. We'll talk to veteran national security flacks about how they keep reporters at bay, and how they decide when to open the doors.

#### **Reading for Nov. 6:**

- Missing American in Iran was on Unapproved Mission  
<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/missing-american-iran-was-working-cia>
- News Outlets Withheld Saudi Drone-Base Location Despite US, UK Media Coverage  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/07/saudi-drone-base-media\\_n\\_2639447.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/07/saudi-drone-base-media_n_2639447.html)





- New York Times Editor: Government Requests To Hold Info Are 'Almost Blanket Policy'  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/11/new-york-times-drone-us-citizen\\_n\\_4766957.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/11/new-york-times-drone-us-citizen_n_4766957.html)

### **WEEK 11 (THURSDAY, NOV. 6)**

In the tug of war between civil liberties and national security, between the right to know and the need for security, how do journalists decide between running and holding? What are the ethical considerations?

### **WEEK 12 (THURSDAY, NOV. 13)**

How do you make sources on this beat? And how do you protect them? What are the stakes? We'll cover the Obama administration's crackdown on reporters and discuss the ramifications for journalists who publish government secrets.

### **WEEK 13 (THURSDAY, NOV. 20)**

What is cyber security? When Russian hackers steal credit card information from Target, is that a national security issue? What about when they steal corporate secrets? There is a war going on and because it's all being done online, it's harder to cover than anything else.

### **Reading for Dec. 4:**

- "Enemies Within"

### **NO CLASS NOV. 27 FOR THANKSGIVING**

### **WEEK 14 (THURSDAY, DEC. 4)**

**Enemies Within: Part 1:** We will discuss the way a terrorism case – or really any big breaking news story – unfolds. How do journalists respond? How does the national security infrastructure respond? How much do we get wrong in real time?

### **WEEK 15 (THURSDAY, DEC. 11)**

**Enemies Within: Part 2:** We put it all together. What are the tradeoffs for security? Are they necessary? What role do journalists play in raising questions about those tradeoffs?