

# **Pols 489: Intelligence Policy and Analysis**

Spring 2023

2PM-3:50PM Tuesday and Thursday, GTM 133

Dr. William O'Brochta (obrochta@latech.edu, GTM 112)

Student Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 8AM-11AM,  
Tuesday and Thursday 11:50AM-1:50PM  
(in person or see Zoom link on Moodle)

Syllabus Updated: March 9, 2023

Google Drive Link: <https://pols.tiny.us/489spring2023>

**Course Description:** How do governments analyze and assess intelligence? This course is an introduction to intelligence analysis with an emphasis on foreign policy decision-making. By simulating the intelligence analysis environment, we will learn brief writing and briefing skills as well as applications to public policy analysis. Our analysis will cover salient foreign and domestic policy crises of great interest to scholars of comparative politics and international relations including terrorism, diplomacy, migration, peacekeeping, and trade.

Prerequisites: Pols 201 and junior standing. Completion of Pols 345 is preferred.

Text: None. See readings on Moodle.

## **Course Objectives:**

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the field of intelligence analysis and what intelligence analysts do.
2. Develop skills analyzing open-source material both individually and as a team.
3. Prepare for, demonstrate, and assess skills in brief writing, briefing, and presentation.
4. Apply intelligence analysis skills to write for different audiences including the public and different stakeholders.
5. Work collaboratively to develop individual and group expertise in an area of intelligence analysis.

## **Course Philosophy:**

This course is being taught as part of the School of History and Social Science Research Lab. Lab courses are small seminars wherein students work together to complete major research-related projects. In addition, all lab courses are focused on developing teamwork, project management, and career-focused skills. There are some scholarly readings as well as readings from practitioners to learn about both analysis skills and intelligence problems. Typical class sessions will start with preparing and delivering an intelligence briefing, followed by class discussion on the topic for the day. This of this course as preparation to work as an intelligence analyst.

**Assignments:** This course is contract graded with four contract evaluation points throughout the quarter (March 23, April 6, April 25, May 16).

	“A” Contract	“B” Contract	“F”
Social Annotations	Complete at least 13 substantive annotations of the 16 possible	Complete at least 8 substantive annotations of the 16 possible	Complete fewer than 8 substantive annotations of the 16 possible
Reading	Spend at least one hour per annotations assignment	Spend at least 40 minutes per annotations assignment	Spend less than 40 minutes per annotations assignment
Attendance	Miss no more than 3 classes	Miss no more than 5 classes	Miss more than 5 classes
Class Engagement	Consistently ask questions and participate in class. Uses electronic devices appropriately	Consistently ask questions and participate in class. Uses electronic devices appropriately	Does not participate in class. Fails to use electronic devices appropriately
Daily Briefs	All daily briefs completed successfully for classes attended	Two or fewer daily briefs not completed successfully for classes attended	More than two daily briefs not completed successfully for classes attended
Policy Memo	Policy memo submitted fully meets guidelines	Policy memo submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Policy memo not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines
Simulation Analysis	Simulation analysis submitted fully meets guidelines	Simulation analysis submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Simulation analysis not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines
Writing for the Public	Written article submitted fully meets guidelines	Written article submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Written article not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines

### **Class Format:**

Students will be responsible for working the desk as part of a team in one of the following roles:

- Political Affairs: African Affairs, East Asian and Pacific Affairs, European and Eurasian Affairs, Near Eastern Affairs, South and Central Asian Affairs, Western Hemisphere Affairs, and International Organizations
- Conflict and Stabilization Operations
- International Narcotics and Law Enforcement
- Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

- Cyberspace and Digital Policy

There are two types of class sessions: discussions and briefs. On discussion days, we will not conduct the traditional briefing simulation. On brief days:

- Students who sign-up to do so will present a pre-prepared policy memo on the “brief topic” for the day.
- Following policy memo presentations, I will announce a briefing audience for the day (i.e., a senior military official, the President, a cat).
  - If you presented your policy memo, you will assume the role of the briefing audience. Research the briefing audience and write a series of questions you expect to be answered by the briefs and briefings coming from the position of that briefing audience (i.e., personify the senior military official and write about what they would want to know about the brief topic).
  - If you did not present your policy memo, you will work with the other members of your desk to write a brief on the brief topic for the day directed at the briefing audience. Teams will conduct research in class and complete the brief before proceeding. Then, teams will prepare a briefing for the briefing audience.
- Everyone will meet. Teams will begin briefing the briefing audience and the briefing audience will ask questions to the teams.
- After the break, we will discuss the reading topic for the day.

**Topics and Readings:** Below is the schedule of reading and assignments for each class. I may change the course outline, but I will give you plenty of prior notice.<sup>1</sup>

### Beginning Analysis

March 9: Introduction to the Course

- Goal: Introduction to the course. Select roles.
- Format: Discussion
- Assignments Assigned: Beginning of quarter survey.

March 14: Who are Analysts?

- Reading Due (annotations due): Both documents are in the same Perusall link.
  - BLUF Writing Format Handout
  - Shulsky, Abram, and Gary Schmitt. 2002. *Silent Warfare*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books. Chapters 1 and 3.
- Format: Discussion
- Assignments Due: Beginning of quarter survey. You must complete the beginning of quarter survey in order to access the reading on Perusall.

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<sup>1</sup> I have made a conscious effort to represent gender and ethnic/regional diversity of scholarship in these readings.

March 16: Skill: Brief Writing

- Reading Due (annotations due):
  - Major, James. 2014. *Communicating with Intelligence*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Chapters 1 and 2.
  - Central Intelligence Agency. “The President’s Intelligence Checklist.” 22 November 1963 and 23 November 1963.
  - Central Intelligence Agency. “The President’s Daily Brief.” 7 September 1972 and 30 April 1975.
  - “Bin Ladin Determined to Strike in US.” 6 August 2001.
- Format: Discussion

### **Major Security Threats**

March 21: War and Peacekeeping

- Reading Due (annotations due): Both documents are in the same Perusall link.
  - Hoover Green, Amelia. 2013. “How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps” (Read this first if you have not read it before or need a refresher!).
  - Di Salvatore, Jessica. 2019. “Peacekeepers Against Criminal Violence --- Unintended Effects of Peacekeeping Operations?” *American Journal of Political Science* 63(4): 840-858.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: War and peacekeeping

March 23: Skill: Briefing

- Reading Due (annotations due):
  - United States Marine Corps. “Military Briefing W3S0005 Student Handout.”
  - Major, James. 2014. *Communicating with Intelligence*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Chapters 11, 12, and 13.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: War and peacekeeping
- Assignments Due: Contract evaluation

March 28: Terrorist Groups

- Reading Due (annotations due): Brown, Joseph. 2020. “Force of Words: The Role of Threats in Terrorism.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32(7): 1527-1549.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Terrorist groups

March 30: Skill: Types of Intelligence

- Reading Due (annotations due): Shulsky, Abram, and Gary Schmitt. 2002. *Silent Warfare*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books. Chapters 2 and 6.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Terrorist groups

April 4: Radicalization and Propaganda

- Reading Due (annotations due):
  - O’Brochta, William, Margit Tavits, and Deniz Aksoy. 2022. “Western Political Rhetoric and Radicalization.” *British Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 437-444.
  - Mitts, Tamar, Gregoire Phillips, and Barbara Walter. 2022. “Studying the Impact of ISIS Propaganda Campaigns.” *The Journal of Politics* 84(2): 1220-1225.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Radicalization and propaganda

April 6: Skill: Advanced Briefs

- Reading Due (annotations due): Major, James. 2014. *Communicating with Intelligence*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield. Chapters 5 and 6.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Radicalization and propaganda
- Assignments Due: Contract evaluation. Optional mid-quarter survey

April 11: Full Day Simulation

- Reading Due: None
- Format: Discussion

### **Country-Level Threats**

April 13: Refugees and Violence

- Reading Due (annotations due): Fisk, Kerstin. 2019. "Camp Settlement and Communal Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Journal of Peace Research* 56(1): 58-72.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Refugees and violence

April 18: Populism and Protest

- Reading Due (annotations due): Sato, Yuko, and Moises Arce. 2022. "Resistance to Populism." *Democratization* 29(6): 1137-1156.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Populism and protest

April 20: Simulation Analysis Presentations

- Reading Due (annotations due): None
- Format: Discussion
- Assignments Due: Simulation analysis

April 25: Skill: Analysis for the Public

- Reading Due (annotations due): Baum, Matthew, and Philip Potter. 2019. "Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy in the Age of Social Media." *The Journal of Politics* 81(2): 747-756.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Populism and protest
- Assignments Due: Contract evaluation

April 27: Human Rights

- Reading Due (annotations due): Bakke, Kristin, Neil Mitchell, and Hannah Smidt. 2020. "When States Crack Down on Human Rights Defenders." *International Studies Quarterly* 64(1): 85-96.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Human rights
- Note: Writing for the public time in class

May 2: Election Observation and Violence

- Reading Due (annotations due): von Borzyskowski, Inken. 2019. "The Risks of Election Observation: International Condemnation and Post-Election Violence." *International Studies Quarterly* 63(3): 654-667.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Election observation and violence

May 4: Drug Trafficking

- Reading Due (annotations due): Blume, Laura. 2022. "Collusion, Co-Optation, or Evasion: The Politics of Drug Trafficking Violence in Central America." *Comparative Political Studies* 55(8).
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Drug trafficking
- Note: Writing for the public time in class. Article due at the end of class

May 9: Trade and Oceans

- Reading Due (annotations due): Ryou-Ellison, Hayoun Jessie, and Aaron Gold. 2020. "Moral Hazard at Sea: How Alliances Actually Increase Low-Level Maritime Provocations Between Allies." *International Interactions* 46(1): 111-132.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Trade and oceans

May 11: Diplomatic Visits

- Reading Due (annotations due): Goldsmith, Benjamin, Yusaku Horiuchi, and Kelly Matush. 2021. "Does Public Diplomacy Sway Foreign Public Opinion? Identifying the Effect of High-Level Visits." *American Political Science Review* 115(4): 1342-1357.
- Format: Briefs. Brief Topic: Diplomatic visits

**Graduating Seniors: All assignments are due on May 15 by 5PM so that I can grade them in time to submit your grades on May 16. This includes the contract evaluation and end-of-quarter survey.**

May 16: Wrap-Up

- Reading Due: None
- Assignments Due: Contract evaluation. (We will complete the end-of-quarter survey during class)

**May 18: No Class**

## Description of Assignments:

### Social Annotation

Completing and engaging with course material and other students is essential to your success in this course. We will be using Perusall (linked on Moodle) for social annotation. The idea behind social annotation is that you can engage with other students in the course while reading the required content. This will help you to read in a more active and engaged way, to come to class more prepared for our discussions, and to generate ideas that you would like to raise in class. My motivation in asking you to do social annotations is to help you read efficiently. This is a skill that you *can* develop.

For each assigned reading where annotations are due, complete the following:

- Go to Moodle and click on the link for an assigned reading. You must access Perusall through Moodle for your annotations to be saved.
- Read the text. I recommend skimming through the entire text once, marking any points of confusion, and asking clarification or definition questions. These are not substantive annotations that count toward your grade, but they will help you read more effectively.
- Return to the text later and read it again. While doing so, **make at least five substantive annotations**. Examples of substantive and not substantive annotations follow.
- Reading and completing the annotations for a particular class period should take you no less than 1 hour and no more than 2 hours. If you find yourself spending more time on an assignment, refer back to the Hoover Green piece on reading effectively. Feel free to come talk to me if you are having any difficulty. This assignment is not meant to take up too much time.

### How to write a substantive annotation:

1. Find a part of the reading that is interesting, surprising, or about which you would like to make an annotation.
2. Highlight the relevant text and leave an annotation or, if someone else has already highlighted the text, leave a comment responding to their annotation.
3. In your annotation, go beyond agreeing with or re-stating what the reading is saying. Discuss how you have thought about and processed the information you read. Make connections to concepts from your notes or that you learned in class. Discuss how the reading relates to you personally or to current events. Provide depth by writing at least two sentences per annotation.
4. Complete at least five substantive annotations, spread throughout the reading.

Non-exhaustive examples of substantive and not substantive annotations:

Notice that the substantive comments go far beyond a single sentence and focus on explaining and making connections.

	Not substantive	Substantive
Definition	This term means [description of term].	This term means [description of term]. By introducing this concept, the authors [describe why the concept is important]. In addition, we discussed this concept in class [describe how].
Upvote	[Student uses the green checkmark to upvote another student's comment]	[Upvote comment] This makes a lot of sense to me because [describe why]. But, I can also see how [introduce a different point of view].
Question	What are the impacts of [describe something]?	What are the impacts of [describe something]? I think that the impact is [describe impact] because [describe reason]. This is important because [describe why].
Agreement	I agree.	I agree because [describe why]. [Tell story about experience you have had related to the concept being discussed].
Example	This is true today.	This is true today because [describe specific instance]. I know people impacted by [describe topic and how people are impacted].
Clarification	What does this mean?	What does [describe phrase] mean? My interpretation is that it probably means [describe possible meaning], but I also found a source online [list source] that says [describe what the source says]. Clarifying this definition is important because [describe why].
Interesting	This is interesting. I had not thought about this before.	This resonated with me because I have had [describe some experience]. I also see [describe the topic] mentioned frequently in the news like in a recent story [describe story].

Submission and Evaluation: You should submit annotations for the indicated readings. **Your three lowest annotation grades can be skipped, and you can still complete the “A” contract (this includes any annotations you do not turn in, so feel free to skip when you are busy).**

Be sure to check your annotation grades frequently, as simply completing five annotations will not get you credit if those annotations are not substantive.

If you experience some problem completing annotations in Perusall, you can e-mail me your annotations by the time they are due.

I evaluate annotations in the following way:

- I will engage with you in Perusall by responding to questions and annotations.
- Annotations will not be automatically graded on Perusall because this course is contract graded. At each contract point, you will be responsible for ensuring that your annotations are substantive. Start by counting the number of annotations you submitted on time to

ensure that you submitted at least five annotations. Then check to ensure that your annotations are substantive against the above chart. Evaluate annotations in the following way:

- Complete: Excellent annotations: at least five substantive annotations; material is engaged well. Substantive annotations are typically at least three sentences each.
- Incomplete: Unsatisfactory annotations: poor quality annotations (only short responses or not substantive responses) or fewer than five substantive annotations. Or no submission/submitted late.
- Count up the number of complete annotations and mark it in your contract.

## **Class Engagement**

Your engagement in class is critical for the success of the course. Class engagement goes beyond simply showing up for class. This includes participation in the simulation including in the brief writing process and in briefing.

Evaluation: Sufficient class engagement includes listening respectfully, asking respectful questions, and actively participating (completing all tasks assigned to you). You play a critical part in maintaining an inclusive classroom climate. You must participate both during class and during the work we do outside of class (annotations, projects, et. cetera); if you feel uncomfortable participating, please reach out to me so we can figure out a way for you to be engaged.

## **Daily Briefs**

Each brief day in class, you will be tasked with researching and writing a brief with your desk team in the allotted time. Your brief should conform to the principles of good brief writing that we learn in class. Submit briefs to the appropriate folder on Google Drive.

Evaluation: Briefs should be completed for each brief day. In general, briefs will follow a consistent format using the BLUF format with an appropriate header, a key judgements section, short introduction and background sections, and a substantiation section. If needed, an outlook section can be inserted. The length of the brief will depend on the complexity of the topic, the amount of time available to write, and the availability of research, but should at least one page unless we make other arrangements during class. Briefs should be single spaced and should include references in footnotes. Briefs should be clearly directed to the briefing audience for the day and should reflect your desk assignment.

## **Policy Memo**

You will write and present a policy memo at one point during the quarter. Students will sign-up for the day to write and present the memo at the beginning of the quarter, and you are responsible for being ready to go on the appointed day.

Your policy memo must be related to your desk and be about the brief topic for that particular day (see the list of brief topics on the topics and readings). Take your desk assignment and the

brief topic and think about a policy solution that you would suggest to a policymaker of your choice regarding this brief topic given your desk. For example, if the brief topic is terrorism and your desk is International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, you will want to think of a policy to combat terrorism that would involve either narcotics trade/regulations/enforcement or law enforcement. You can select any policymaker to address the memo to, but the person you select should have some ability to implement the policy you are proposing. Your policy proposal must be at least vaguely reasonable and have some potential to be implemented.

Evaluation: Policy memos should be between 1,000 and 1,500 words, not counting any references which can be contained in footnotes or in a references list. Submit your policy memo to the discussion forum.

There are many resources about writing policy memos online, and you should read those resources to be prepared to write an effective memo. In general, memos will have:

1. Header: Include to, from, subject, and date lines. Be sure the subject line succinctly conveys the policy recommendation you are making.
2. Executive Summary: Provide a very brief summary that highlights the extent of the problem your policy addresses and how your policy solves this problem. Bullet points are preferred.
3. Body: Define the problem your policy is trying to address and the scope of the problem. Be sure you justify that the problem exists. Discuss evidence supporting your policy proposal and why your proposal is the best possible solution. Consider at least one other policy that could also address your findings. Develop several criteria that demonstrate why your proposed policy best addresses the problem you have identified based on your research findings (you can make a chart comparing the policies based on your criteria if you want to make it fun!). Make a strong recommendation for the policy solution you have chosen based on your findings and additional scholarly evidence. Use narrative style.
4. Writing style: Be direct and convincing. Use short sentences, make concrete claims, and highlight important points. Policymakers do not have time to read complicated arguments. Distill your research findings into as concise a narrative as possible and be extremely clear how your proposed policy solves the problem identified in your findings.

In addition to writing your policy memo, you must prepare to brief your policy memo to the briefing audience during class. To do so, prepare a 3 minute briefing for the policymaker you addressed your policy memo to on the policy memo. You must use effective briefing techniques, meaning that you cannot read off of a script. Slides are not necessary, but you can provide a handout or write on the board if you so choose. Practice your briefing in advance to make sure that it is effective.

## **Simulation Analysis**

On one day during class we will work through a class-long simulation where you will practice intelligence analysis to attempt to address a national security crisis. After the simulation, we will have a class period to debrief the simulation. To prepare for the debrief class, you will prepare both a written analysis and a slide briefing describing how you conducted yourself in the

simulation, whether the team analyzed intelligence effectively during the simulation, and lessons learned for future simulations. For the simulation, you may represent your desk or you might just be a generic intelligence analysis professional. Think about the simulation analysis as an after-action report that you would give to prepare everyone to better respond to the next national security crisis.

Evaluation: You will prepare two written products: a slide deck and a written analysis that accompanies the slide deck. You are responsible for investigating effective ways to conduct a briefing using slides and to incorporate what you learned into those slides (probably don't make the world's worst slide presentation: <https://www.carolyneholmes.com/the-worlds-worst-powerpoint>). Your audience for the slide deck and the written analysis is fellow intelligence analysts.

For the slide deck, prepare a set of slides that could be presented in 5 minutes. The slides should be professional, give answers to the points above, and use effective charts, graphics, or bullets.

Accompanying the slide deck, you will prepare a written analysis. The written analysis should closely follow the outline of the slide deck, and it should provide justification for the points made in the slide deck. In other words, if you have a bullet in the slide deck that says, "bring cats to pet," then you need to justify in the written analysis why bringing cats to the next simulation is critically important and how it will improve the response to the next crisis. You should use sources or specific references to the simulation in your written analysis as needed to justify your points. I would imagine that your written analysis will be 750 to 1,000 words in length, but it can be longer if needed.

To be clear, the written analysis is not a script for your 5 minute presentation. You should practice your 5 minute presentation so you will be ready to present if needed during the simulation analysis debrief day in class.

## **Writing for the Public**

You will work with a group of students (most likely your desk) to write an analysis of a current event of interest to intelligence analysts in a newspaper article format suitable for submission to the *Lincoln Parish Journal*. There may be an opportunity to, at some point, submit one or more of the articles that the class writes.

Evaluation: In your group, select a topic of interest to intelligence analysts that would also be interesting to a broad audience. Consider that the topic should be related to a current event and should not require a great amount of background information to understand. Research best-practices for writing a newspaper article. Your article should be about 750 words and can include footnote citations if needed. It should present the main idea up front and contain analysis like the kind you learned in the course, but pitched to a general audience. Your group will submit one newspaper article at the end of the second newspaper article writing day.

## **Contract Grading**

This course uses a contract grading system that is self-assessed, meaning that you will evaluate how well you fulfilled your contract at several points throughout the quarter. At the beginning of the quarter, you will review the contract options and commit to a contract you are interested in fulfilling. You will then complete assignments and measure your progress toward the contract before providing a final contract narrative evaluation at the end of the quarter. There are two contract grade options in this course: “A” and “B.” “F” is an absence of satisfactory work to warrant passing the course.

You will complete the contract self-assessment at four points throughout the course: March 23, April 6, April 25, and May 16. To complete the self-assessment:

1. Review your contract and the standards associated with each item in the contract.
2. Review the schedule you outlined for yourself. Ensure that all assignments are submitted on time.
3. Access the contract self-assessment form on Moodle.
  - a. Complete the table based on the contract you outlined for yourself.
  - b. Complete the individual contract item assessment.
  - c. Write an overall assessment of your progress thus far in the course. The March 23, April 6, and April 25 overall assessment section should be at least 250 words long. The May 16 overall assessment should be at least 750 words long and should include a full discussion of your performance throughout the entire course including whether you fulfilled the entire contract. The assessment should answer the following questions:
    - i. Have you completed the items in the contract you specified you would complete by this particular date?
    - ii. Do you feel that you are making adequate progress toward completing the contract? What are areas you are excelling in? What are areas that you could improve?
    - iii. List actionable steps you are going to take to improve your work during the course. Evaluate your progress in fulfilling those steps at the next contract self-assessment.
4. Submit the assessment to Moodle by class time on the day it is due.

**Pols 489 Initial Contract**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am working to complete a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ contract in this course by fulfilling all of the items listed in the contract. I commit to the following:

	“A” Contract	“B” Contract	“F”
Social Annotations	Complete at least 13 substantive annotations of the 16 possible	Complete at least 8 substantive annotations of the 16 possible	Complete fewer than 8 substantive annotations of the 16 possible
Reading	Spend at least one hour per annotations assignment	Spend at least 40 minutes per annotations assignment	Spend less than 40 minutes per annotations assignment
Attendance	Miss no more than 3 classes	Miss no more than 5 classes	Miss more than 5 classes
Class Engagement	Consistently ask questions and participate in class. Uses electronic devices appropriately	Consistently ask questions and participate in class. Uses electronic devices appropriately	Does not participate in class. Fails to use electronic devices appropriately
Daily Briefs	All daily briefs completed successfully for classes attended	Two or fewer daily briefs not completed successfully for classes attended	More than two daily briefs not completed successfully for classes attended
Policy Memo	Policy memo submitted fully meets guidelines	Policy memo submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Policy memo not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines
Simulation Analysis	Simulation analysis submitted fully meets guidelines	Simulation analysis submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Simulation analysis not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines
Writing for the Public	Written article submitted fully meets guidelines	Written article submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Written article not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines

To help keep me on track throughout the quarter and to ensure that other students have an opportunity to benefit from learning from my work, I commit to completing the following by these contract evaluations:

	March 23	April 6	April 25	May 16 “A” Contract	May 16 “B” Contract
Annotations				13	8

**Pols 489 Contract Self-Assessment**

I am working to complete a(n) \_\_\_\_ contract in this course by fulfilling all of the items listed in the contract. I committed to:

	“A” Contract	“B” Contract	“F”
Social Annotations	Complete at least 13 substantive annotations of the 16 possible	Complete at least 8 substantive annotations of the 16 possible	Complete fewer than 8 substantive annotations of the 16 possible
Reading	Spend at least one hour per annotations assignment	Spend at least 40 minutes per annotations assignment	Spend less than 40 minutes per annotations assignment
Attendance	Miss no more than 3 classes	Miss no more than 5 classes	Miss more than 5 classes
Class Engagement	Consistently ask questions and participate in class. Uses electronic devices appropriately	Consistently ask questions and participate in class. Uses electronic devices appropriately	Does not participate in class. Fails to use electronic devices appropriately
Daily Briefs	All daily briefs completed successfully for classes attended	Two or fewer daily briefs not completed successfully for classes attended	More than two daily briefs not completed successfully for classes attended
Policy Memo	Policy memo submitted fully meets guidelines	Policy memo submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Policy memo not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines
Simulation Analysis	Simulation analysis submitted fully meets guidelines	Simulation analysis submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Simulation analysis not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines
Writing for the Public	Written article submitted fully meets guidelines	Written article submitted meets all but one or two guidelines	Written article not submitted or not meeting more than two guidelines

I set this schedule for myself in my initial contract:

	March 23	April 6	April 25	May 16 “A” Contract	May 16 “B” Contract
Annotations				13	8

Individual contract item assessment:

1. Annotations:
  - a. I have completed \_\_\_\_\_ substantive annotations.
  - b. My annotations meet the criteria for being substantive because (several sentences):
  
2. Reading:
  - a. When I complete the reading and annotations, I spend at least \_\_\_\_\_ on average.
  - b. My approach to reading these articles effectively is (several sentences):
  
3. Attendance:
  - a. I have missed \_\_\_\_\_ classes thus far during the quarter.
4. Class Engagement:
  - a. I consistently ask questions and participate in class by (several sentences):
  
5. Daily Briefs:
  - a. I have not successfully submitted \_\_\_\_\_ daily briefs for classes I have attended.
  - b. My daily briefs meet the criteria described in the syllabus because (several sentences):
  
  - c. My daily briefs were effective because (several sentences):
  
6. Policy Memo (complete after due date):
  - a. My policy memo meets the criteria described in the syllabus because (several sentences):
  
  - b. My policy memo was effective because (several sentences):
  
  - c. My briefing was effective because (several sentences):
  
7. Simulation Analysis (complete after due date):
  - a. My simulation analysis slide deck and written analysis meet all the criteria described in the syllabus because (several sentences):
  
  - b. My slide deck was effective because (several sentences):

- c. My written analysis was effective because (several sentences):
8. Writing for the Public (complete after due date):
- a. My newspaper article meets all of the criteria in the syllabus because (several sentences):
  
  - b. My group worked well together on this assignment because (several sentences):
  
  - c. I believe that my newspaper article is appropriate to be published in the *Lincoln Parish Journal* because (several sentences):
9. If I were to evaluate my grade in the course based on my performance and the contract standards, I would earn a(n): \_\_\_\_\_.

Write your overall assessment of your performance here. Are you fulfilling your contract? What have you improved since the last contract and/or what are you planning to improve in the future? (at least 250 words; May 16 at least 750 words):

## Course Policies:

- General:
  - All assignments are to be turned in on Moodle and are due at class time on the date indicated unless otherwise noted.
  - You are responsible for ensuring that your assignments submit to Moodle successfully and that the file you submitted can be displayed. All file submissions except the project poster must be in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or PDF format. Files in other formats --- including Google Docs --- cannot be read by Moodle.
  - Citations should be in American Political Science Association (APSA) style. Use of this style is important, as it governs the writing of professional political science. The APSA style manual is posted on Moodle.
    - Book format: Thompson, V. Elaine. 2014. *Clinton, Louisiana*. Lafayette, LA: University of Louisiana at Lafayette Press.
    - Journal article format: Chi, Guangqing and Jamie Boydston. 2017. "Are Gasoline Prices a Factor in Residential Relocation Decisions?" *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 37(3): 334-346.
    - In-text citation format: Professors at Tech are doing interesting research (Chi and Boydston 2017; Thompson 2014).
  - Plagiarism, including inappropriate attribution, is an Honor Code Violation and is grounds for sanctions, a referral to the Director of Student Conduct, and failure of the course.
    - If you are unsure if you are plagiarizing, always cite your sources. If you are unsure if you are paraphrasing, rewrite to use either a direct quotation or paraphrase differently. Feel free to talk to me if you are unsure whether or how to cite a source.
    - You have the ability to submit assignments early on Moodle to obtain a Turnitin report. You can also use the Turnitin plugin on Google Docs to check your work.
    - Wikipedia is not an appropriate academic source.
- Student Office Hours:
  - Student office hours are a time for you to come by to speak with me without an appointment. Please come by to see me early in the quarter. I am happy to discuss your progress in the course, political science topics, and potential career paths. These student office hours are for you; please do not feel like you are imposing by stopping by. If you want to come by but don't know what to ask, ask me about my favorite sorbet flavor!
- Technology:
  - We will be using technology for a number of in class activities. As a result, you are expected to bring a laptop, tablet, or smartphone to each of our class sessions (laptop or tablet preferred). If you will not have regular access to one of these devices, you can borrow a laptop from the library, use a classmate's laptop, or speak with me and we will work out an alternative approach.
  - You are expected to use your devices for class purposes only. Using your device in other ways is distracting to other students, and I reserve the right to deduct up to 10% of your final grade or to drop you from the class in serious cases.

- Taking photos or recording audio/video of class is not permitted without the instructor's permission.
- Attendance:
  - Louisiana Tech University expects students to attend all of their classes, and faculty are required to keep attendance records in all of their classes for administrative and institutional purposes. I will check attendance during class.
  - I understand that there are reasons that you may need to be absent from class. I expect that you will be responsible in attending class as much as possible. Accordingly, **you do not need to let me know when you will be absent.** If you are absent, it is your responsibility to learn what we did from someone else in class, to review all material on Moodle, and to come speak with me during student office hours if you have questions.
  - Attending class is the biggest key to success in this course. **It is best to limit absences to 3 or fewer during the quarter. 6 or more absences result in automatic failure from the course.**
- Grading:
  - This course is contract graded. You will agree to a grade contract at the beginning of the course and self-assess your progress toward completing that contract at three points during the course.
  - I will assign a final grade for the course based on the contract that you complete. Grades are only changed if I make an arithmetic error or mistake. If you feel that this happened to you, please send me an e-mail no later than three days after receiving the grade detailing the error. Because this course is contract graded, there are no late assignments and no late work.
  - I do not give incomplete grades unless there is a documented medical crisis or documented emergency late in the quarter and you have communicated about this to me when the incident occurs.
- Checking Your Grade:
  - Since this course is contract graded, grade records are not available on Moodle. You have evidence of your own progress toward fulfilling the contract in your contract evaluations.
- Feedback:
  - I will ask you to provide me with frequent evaluations of the course so that I can work to improve it for you and for future students.
- Contacting Me:
  - E-mail is the best way to contact me outside of student office hours. Please do not use Moodle Messages, as I am unlikely to see your message promptly. You can call my office phone, but my e-mail response time is likely to be quicker.
  - I will respond to your e-mails promptly. In general, you can expect a response within 24 hours and that e-mails will be answered between 9AM and 5PM, Monday through Friday.
  - Be sure to check the syllabus before e-mailing; questions answered in the syllabus will not be answered via e-mail.
  - Often, e-mail is best used to set-up an individual meeting, either in person or virtually. It is easier for us to understand each other in a meeting rather than via lengthy e-mail exchanges.

- Please treat e-mails as professional correspondence. E-mails may only come from your latech.edu e-mail address and should include a salutation (e.g., Dear Dr. O’Brochta), a clear message, and a signature with your name and the class you are enrolled in.

## University Policies and Resources:

- Coronavirus Policies:
  - This course is occurring during the coronavirus pandemic. I understand that the pandemic may impact you and your family. If coronavirus impacts you, please communicate with me as needed and follow all statewide, systemwide, and university-wide coronavirus-related policies and regulations.
  - The classroom is designed to be a safe environment where everyone can learn. I ask for your help in maintaining this environment by following university guidelines.
  - Students can access COVID-19-related information, guidelines, FAQs, and policies at Louisiana Tech’s website: <https://www.latech.edu/coronavirus/>.
  - If you test positive for COVID-19, Louisiana Tech no longer has a university protocol to follow (current as of March 9, 2023). Please do the following:
    - Take care of yourself and stay home from class.
    - All work is still due to be submitted on time. The dropped in-class writing assignments allow for you to miss class with no penalty. The absences policy described above still applies.
    - You are not required to communicate with me regarding your absence from class. However, you may wish to do so if you will be out of class for an extended period of time so that we can better discuss your progress in the course.
    - If you are exposed to COVID-19 but do not have symptoms, wear a mask for 10 days and get tested on day 5. Isolate and get tested if symptoms develop.
  - If I become ill, I will communicate with you as quickly as possible. We will arrange to meet via Zoom or I will arrange for another faculty member to cover my class if necessary.
- Accommodations: Students needing testing or classroom accommodations based on a disability are encouraged to discuss those needs with me as soon as possible. Please plan to make your request to me at the beginning of the quarter (during the first two weeks of classes) either during office hours or by appointment. Note: Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Testing and Disability Services Office is needed. Disability information is confidential. Information for Testing and Disability Services may be obtained in Wyly Tower 318 or <https://www.latech.edu/current-students/student-advancement-affairs/disability-services/>.
- Academic Honor Code: Students pledge the following: “Being a student of higher standards, I pledge to embody the principles of academic integrity” <https://www.latech.edu/current-students/student-advancement-affairs/student-conduct-integrity/>.

- Hazing: In compliance with Acts 635, 637, and 640 of the 2018 Regular Session and Act 382 of the 2019 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature and the 2019 Board of Regents Uniform Policy on Hazing, the System reaffirms its policy that any form of hazing of any student enrolled at any institution of the System is prohibited. Violations of this Policy can result in both disciplinary action imposed by the organization and/or institution as well as criminal charges.
- Emergency Notification System: All Louisiana Tech students are strongly encouraged to enroll and update their contact information in the Emergency Notification System. It takes just a few seconds to ensure you are able to receive important text and voice alerts in the event of a campus emergency. For more information on the Emergency Notification System, please visit <https://www.latech.edu/current-students/student-advancement-affairs/university-police/emergency-notification-system/>.
- Moodle: We will use Moodle throughout the quarter. As part of the University's Disaster Recovery Plan, all courses at Louisiana Tech will be making use of Moodle during any emergency that closes the University. It is your responsibility to monitor course announcements and assignments on Moodle during a natural disaster or other emergency event. Direct all Moodle questions/problems to the Computing Center Help Desk at <https://helpdesk.latech.edu>, [helpdesk@latech.edu](mailto:helpdesk@latech.edu), or 318-257-5300.
- Title IX: Please note that faculty are not confidential reporters for sexual misconduct. As a faculty member, I promise to keep all discussions with students as private and confidential as legally allowed. You may make a non-confidential report of sexual misconduct directly to the Title IX Compliance Director Mortissa Harvey ([mharvey@latech.edu](mailto:mharvey@latech.edu), 318-257-5911). You may obtain confidential support from the Counseling Center ([counseling@latech.edu](mailto:counseling@latech.edu), 318-257-2488, Keeny 310).
- Counseling Center: The Counseling Center provides a variety of services for students with personal, educational, and career concerns; these services are free and are provided by licensed professional counselors. More information may be found at <https://www.latech.edu/counseling-services/>.
- Writing Center: All students are encouraged to take advantage of free writing help offered by the writing center. Please go to the Writing Center! They can help you with many writing issues. Information can be found at <https://www.latech.edu/current-students/barc/writing-center/>
- Campus Food Pantry: All students welcome. <https://www.latech.edu/food-pantry>
- Graduation: All degree candidates must register for graduation early in the quarter. More information can be found at <https://www.latech.edu/current-students/registrar-office/graduation/>. If you are graduating this quarter, see the topics and readings for when all remaining assignments in the course are due.