National Security Intelligence Analysis Degree Requirements

NSIA 810 National Security Policy and the Intelligence Community
This course provides students an introduction to United States national security policy and the role of the intelligence community. Current and historical case studies will highlight the functions and limits of intelligence activities in support of decision makers policy making and implementation. In this course we survey political, institutional, and cultural challenges confronting analysts as they strive to provide intelligence products relevant to strategic and tactical policy goals.

NSIA 820 Intelligence Analysis
In this class we define intelligence and focus on analysis. We identify intelligence organizations relationships with policymakers and the types of intelligence products they produce. Students will learn to identify and create intelligence requirements and the related variables and collection targets. We will explore analytical approaches and develop critical thinking skills. In this class we will define data, the causes of intelligence failures, and identify creativity in intelligence analysis.

NSIA 830 National Security Research Design and Methods
In this class students explore the differences between academic research and intelligence analysis. We will explore research design and how to select a research approach based on intelligence requirements. You will learn about the ethical conduct of social science research. Building on the framework of intelligence requirements you will learn how to define a research problem and develop related research questions, hypothesis, and design research using appropriate methods.

NSIA 840 National Security Qualitative Research Design and Analysis
Qualitative research refers to meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of phenomena for study in the natural world. In this class we make linkages to existing research theories and intelligence methodologies. We introduce case study research and design issues.

NSIA 850 Intelligence Analysis Case Studies
The evolution of intelligence analysis is examined in this class using case studies to highlight analytical approaches. Institutional and personal perspectives of the role of intelligence analysis and analysts are explored. We will define and discuss the politicization of intelligence. Both strategic and warning intelligence case studies are provided to students to read and interpret.

NSIA 860 Survey Design and Analysis
In this course students will learn about surveys research. Questions such as "What is a survey?" and "Why conduct surveys?" will be posed and answered. Students will learn about ethical issues in survey design and methods. Additional topics include survey error, sampling, nonresponse issues, survey data collection strategies, and survey question design and errors.

NSIA 870 National Security Quantitative Research Design and Analysis I
Quantitative Design and Analysis I introduces students to data and data analysis. The course provides an overview of statistical learning. Students will learn approaches for stating and refining research questions. We will employ the epicycles of analysis approach to conduct exploratory data analysis. Students will learn how to describe data and use appropriate counting techniques. Basic data visualization will be employed using R.

NSIA 880 Analytical Writing and Briefing Seminar
Students in this course will investigate the cognitive science behind writing and intelligence analysis. Topics include heuristics and chunking, speaking and writing, writing schemes, creativity, analytical writing, organization, presentation, collaboration, editing, case studies, presenting technical information, and decision-maker feedback. Case studies on the psychology of political behavior are presented.

NSIA 890 National Security Quantitative Research Design and Analysis II
In this course students will develop a data science tool kit they may use to investigate research questions. The methodological approaches students will be exposed to include linear regression, classification, resampling methods, linear model selection, tree-based methods, unsupervised learning, and network analysis. Ethical approaches to the use of data science are reviewed in this class.

NSIA 898 Master's Capstone
The capstone provides the opportunity to demonstrate the students' mastery of program materials, areas of specialization, and professional goals, in a single intelligence product. In cooperation with a core faculty advisor, each student team designs, researches, and implements a project that is comprehensive and demonstrates their competency to perform as an analyst.