Course Syllabus

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NSIA 830: National Security Research Design and Methods

2025 Term 3: January 21 – March 14

Instructor

Bridget Nolan, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Security Studies, Department of Security Studies

Fully remote faculty

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Office hours: Thursdays from 7:30-8:30pm on Zoom:
https://unh.zoom.us/my/bridgetrosenolan and by appointment

Catalog Description & Prerequisites

NSIA 830: National Security Research Design and Methods

Credits: 3

UNH Credit Hour Policy:

https://catalog.unh.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/credit-hour-policy/ (https://catalog.unh.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/credit-hour-policy/)

What is research? In this class, students explore the differences between academic research and intelligence analysis. We will study 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. The importance and process of conducting literature reviews is examined. Student will learn how to construct a hypothesis and the related concepts and variables that are required to conduct research and intelligence analysis. The key research concept of measurement is defined and applied to security problems. Causal inferences are introduced as are the concepts of direct and indirect observation. Basic analysis concepts such as document and content analysis and the relationships between variables are reviewed and applied to security problems.

Prerequisites: None.

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Attendance, Class Format, and Instructor Contact

Attendance and Class Format

Students will use UNH MyCourses to access class lectures and assignments. There are no scheduled class times; however, we follow a Monday to Sunday schedule.

Office Hours

Office hours are Mondays from 4-5pm or scheduled by appointment. Please request office hours via email.

Email

Email is the primary communication method that you will use for contacting me regarding your work in this class. Please indicate in the subject line that this is a course-related question you are writing about.

Example email subject line: NSIA 830: Question Topic

Under normal circumstances, I will respond within 24 hours, Monday-Friday.

Telephone

Telephone contact should be used as a secondary method of contacting me. You may request a telephone call via email using the format provided above. Please note I am operating on Eastern Standard Time.

Required Materials

Most materials are available via MyCourses. There is a required textbook for this class: Introducing Social Research Methods: Essentials for Getting the Edge by Janet Ruane.

Assessment

You are expected to spend at least 16 hours per week on this class.

 The following chart details how you will be graded for this class.

Assignment	Description	Total Points
Participation	Weekly class discussion / quizzes / assignments / student-instructor dialogue	40
Analytical Paper 1	A 1500-2000 word submission based on work up to and including the module the week the paper is due.	30
Analytical Paper 2	A 1500-2000 word submission based on all work to the end of the course.	30
Total		100

Participation Assignments

The participation assignments are weekly discussion board inputs, quizzes, assignments, and student-instructor dialogue questions. For each of these assignments, you must complete the tasks asked of you to receive the full grades. For written materials, you must ensure that you have submitted relevant material.

Citations in coursework - You should cite the class materials in your submissions for this class. Please use the American Psychological Association (APA) citation and format style in this course.

See: https://www.library.unh.edu/research-support/citation-stylesLinks to an external site.

For materials that are assigned in class use the APA in-text citation style.

Example: In the article *The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism* Abrahms (2012) argues that terrorist groups rarely gain their political objectives by using violence against civilians.

You do not need to add a bibliographical citation in participation activity submissions.

For papers and other assignments, use APA bibliographical citations.

Example: Abrahms, M. (2012). The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism Revisited. Comparative Political Studies, 45(3), 366–393. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414011433104

Late Assignments

Your assignments are due on or before the deadlines listed in the class materials. You are free to request an extension from me via email before the due date. I will determine if the situation warrants an extension based on your email and may request more details or documentation (example: a doctor's note). If you do not meet the deadline for any assignment, you have 6 days to submit it. MyCourses will automatically subtract 15% of the total grade per day it is late as follows:

Days Late	Points subtracted
1	15%
2	30%
3	45%
4	60%
5	75%
6	90%
7 or more	Will not be graded

Missing assignments are automatically graded as zero.

Extra credit is not generally offered for this class.

UNH uses the following grade scale and grading policies for graduate school: https://catalog.unh.edu/graduate/academic-regulations-degree-requirements/grading/#:~:text=Letter%20grades%3A%20The%20following%20grades,grade%20of%20B%2D%20or%20higher.

Course Outline

Class materials may be revised or supplemented by the instructor with advance notice.

Module 1	Topic
Week 1	What is research?

Module 2	Ethical conduct of research
Module 3	Research questions, hypothesis, variables, and measurement
Module 4	Literature reviews
Module 5	Causal inference and structured analytic techniques
Module 6	Case studies and ethnography
Module 7	Interviewing and survey research
Module 8	Statistical inference

University and Classroom Policies

Academic Honesty

Students who commit academic misconduct risk automatic course grades of F and my recommendation that they are expelled from the university. Please ensure that you have read and complied with the University's policies on academic honesty:

https://catalog.unh.edu/srrr/student-policies-regulations/academic-integrity/

Please ensure you have completed the UNH Tutorial on Plagiarism:

https://cola.unh.edu/academics/plagiarism-tutorial

The use of homework help websites and AI writing tools is strictly prohibited in this course unless authorized by the instructor.

Academic dishonesty includes "concealment of the true sources of information, ideas, or argument in any piece of work." This means if you use homework help (such as Chegg) or employ writing tools/language models such (as ChatGPT) in your work, it will be considered plagiarism, you will receive an F for the course, and I will recommend your removal from the college. It is your responsibility to cite any sources you use in your work properly.

Disability Statement

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended, 2008), each student with a disability has the right to request services from UNH to accommodate his/her disability. If you are a student with a documented disability or believe you may have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 201 Smith Hall. Accommodation letters are created by SAS with the student.

Please follow-up with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure the timely implementation of the identified accommodations in the letter. Faculty have an obligation to respond once they receive official notice of accommodations from SAS, but are under no obligation to provide retroactive accommodations.

For more information refer to www.unh.edu/studentaccessibility or contact SAS at 603.862.2607, 711 (Relay NH) or sas.office@unh.edu

Emotional or Mental Health Distress

Your academic success in this course is very important to me. If, during the semester, you find that emotional or mental health issues are affecting that success, please contact:

Manchester: The Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester in the Academic Advising department (located in the Student Services suites, 4th floor). Fall semester walk-in hours: Tuesdays from 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM and Thursday mornings from 9:00 AM – 1 PM. You may call ahead to be placed on the schedule by calling Academic Advising at (603) 641 - 4170.

Durham: Psychological and Counseling Services (PACS) (3rd floor, Smith Hall; 603 862-2090/TTY: 7-1-1) which provides counseling appointments and other mental health services.

Statement to address the needs of students of all faiths:
In the event that a student needs accommodation for a religious or cultural holiday/observance, that student is encouraged to make that request as early in the semester as possible.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

You are expected to spend at least 16 hours per week on this class.

To ensure a climate of learning for all, disruptive or inappropriate behavior may result in exclusion (removal) from this class. If class meetings are held, please note that cell phone/PDA, etc. use, including text messaging, are not permitted by Faculty Senate rule unless instructor permission is granted beforehand.

Please use professional language in all communications related to this class.

Netiquette Guidelines (from UNH Academic Technologies):
Netiquette guidelines provide a socially and professionally acceptable way to communicate on the Internet. All UNH community members are expected to abide by these guidelines of "netiquette" when using online communication tools with your classmates and instructor. Guidelines can be found at USNH:

https://td.usnh.edu/TDClient/60/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=2406

Academic Alert System

The University is invested in your academic success. If a faculty member is concerned about your academic behavior or performance, they may choose to submit an academic alert. Academic alerts are not punitive. The goal is to provide you with support and resources to support your success. They act as an important check-in point and, if you receive an academic alert, a professional advisor will email your UNH email address with the next steps. It is strongly recommended that you meet with a professional advisor and connect with your instructor to discuss the reason for the alert.

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

The University of New Hampshire at Manchester and its community are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students and for the university as a whole. To this end, the university requires UNH faculty and staff members, hall directors, resident assistants (RAs), and other students employed in leadership, supervisory, and/or mentoring roles [such as Peer Assistant Leaders (PALs), Mentor Ambassadors for Transfer Engagement (MATEs) and the Center for Academic Enrichment (CAE) mentors and tutors] to report to the university's Title IX Coordinator (Donna Marie Sorrentino, dms@unh.edu, 603-862-2930/1527 TTY) any incidents of sexual violence, domestic violence, stalking and harassment shared by students regardless of whether it occurs on or off the Manchester campus. If you wish to speak to a confidential support service provider who does not have this reporting responsibility because their discussions with clients are subject to legal privilege, you can find a list of confidential crisis centers here. Please contact the crisis center that services the town you live in. For more information about what happens when you report, how the university considers your requests for confidentiality once a report is made to the Title IX Coordinator, your rights and report options at UNH (including anonymous report options) please visit:

https://www.unh.edu/diversity-inclusion/sexual-misconduct