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weekly activity report 184 (loughry)

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I reviewed the requirements for Confirmation of Status (COS) in the departmental handbook and the DGS presentation on COS. GSO.14 and MAT.3 forms will be done and fedexed to Julie Sheppard tomorrow. I will send the written work that completes the application after I have had a chance to go over it carefully first with Dr Martin. It will not all be turned in at the same time but I think Julie will give me a bit of slack before the Easter holiday. The plan all along has been to meet the assessors later in the summer after I had time to perform a suitable amount of research using the new methodology. It is only the COS application (but technically with written work attached) that is due now.

Beginning in December, I first went back to the original data that the assessors were so interested in seeing, to review it and see what I had. After that I read up on grounded theory and its origin in sociological research. Following that I looked at examples of GT analysis that had been done on similar problems, to see how those researchers had done it. This led me to earlier research, published before the GT methodology was first named. It was there I found the model of what I wanted to write. Allow me to expand on that point:

I spent this week writing but also reading more deeply into the research of Melville Dalton from the late 1940s. His writing is extremely dense, but rewarding once parsed. I read his entire book in spite of the lack of time when I should have been writing this week. Dalton provided necessary inspiration: until recently, I was only cataloguing problems with the CDS C&A process under the GT methodology without thinking about 'why' the people involved were apparently working at cross purposes. I found a defensible answer in the aforementioned book and other published research (Ginzberg, 1955; Laski, 1930) on the nature of experts and their interaction with others---particularly with engineers (Moore, 1951; Mills, 1946). [The expert], said the early 20th century political scientist Harold Joseph Laski, '...is an invaluable servant and an impossible master'. It seems to be exactly the problem that was occurring in the case study. The impedance mismatch amongst UCDDO, the programme office, NSA I173, I733 and the developer's software engineers is understandable now as a special case of line--staff relations. This necessitates some alterations to the written work I planned to turn in for COS, which I am doing now.

Dr Martin reminded me, 'best is the enemy of good.' I keep repeating that to myself and forcing words to come out onto the page. I will have time to polish the prose later.

Other activity this week: I found a new journal on DIACAP that will be useful. I attended a Saturday conference of Lockheed infosec engineers at which Cross Domain Access Solutions and CT&E were discussed. In a meeting with the R'' developer, the systems engineering manager reported that version 5.01 regression testing is now complete with no new software build required. The BOE is to be handed to CDTAB soon. Recall that the

technical risk of 5.0 at CT&E was rated 'high'; they are still, to my surprise, trying to get that reduced to medium. Transfer CDS solutions carrying a 'high' technical risk rating under the RMF require flag approval for deployment. Additionally, a 'medium' TR rating will allow the developer to include some higher risk protocols such as VoIP that would be considered to present an unacceptable AR or DR when associated with a high TR. The systems engineering manager is travelling to CDTF next week with Mr Fletcher. I have a meeting with him booked.

Current status: concentrating on writing. I requested a meeting with Dr Martin. Julie Sheppard is expecting the COS application forms to arrive.

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End of WAR 0184.

References