

Teaching Intelligence in America's Universities

A

Simulation

Developed by

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Presented at the
American Political Science Association's
Annual Teaching and Learning Conference
Charlotte, NC
February 9-11, 2007

ABSTRACT

It is difficult to teach students about the process of intelligence analysis and the skills required to produce effective analytic products without using simulations. Simulations expose students to the ambiguities associated with incomplete information, the challenge of conveying substantive uncertainty, and the attendant difficulty in conveying accurate analysis to policy makers through written and oral briefing instruments. While this simulation has been developed with intelligence analysis in mind, it can provide ideas for teachers concerned with improving students' critical thinking, writing and briefing abilities.

Teaching Intelligence
Simulation Instructions

The purpose of this exercise is to build on and reinforce several of the principles of rigorous intelligence analysis. The two almost identical lists are intended to illustrate the impact of words to transmit certainty vice uncertainty; assessment/judgments vice conclusions. They touch on analytic concepts such as the need for a standard lexicon (what does “likely” really mean?), source reliability and levels of confidence. The exercise can also be a jumping off point for discussing the similarities/differences between writing an academic paper or an intelligence estimate. Likewise, it can generate discussion on bias, mind set, group think and a host of other psychological factors that not only impact intelligence analysis but can be the basis for a country to go to war.

1. Starting materials: Table B, p. 294, entitled Primary Differences in the Key Judgments of the Classified National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) and Unclassified White Paper.
2. Six of the nine Classified NIE conclusions were altered slightly, accentuating differences and/or sharpening details (see attachments).
3. Process: Participants will be divided into four groups. Groups A and B will work with the [modified] Classified NIE conclusions; groups C and D will work with the White Paper conclusions.
4. Working individually, participants will be asked to assign a numerical probability to each statement based on the specific language used. They will be asked to pay particular attention to words/phrases that are ambiguous or create uncertainty, for example “we judge...,” and “probably.”
5. In each of the four groups, participants will be asked to come to agreement [reach consensus] on a single probability for each conclusion. Agreement should be based on analytical reasoning rather than averaging or a similar compromise approach.
6. Having reached consensus, each group will be asked to generate from 3-5 additional collection requirements to address what are perceived as critical information gaps. These can be stated in any appropriate “request for information” (RFI) format.
7. Groups A and B will be asked to repeat step 5 (reach a single probability) and through consensus reduce the number of RFIs to the top 3. Groups C and D will do the same.
8. Each combined group will be given __ minutes to prepare an executive briefing for policy makers and __ minutes to brief its conclusions.

9. Facilitator moderated Q&A. Sample questions:
- a. What were the principal factors that led you to arrive at your estimates? Were there particular phrases that conveyed important meaning (write these down for later comparison)? Would you have liked to see different language used in your "raw intelligence?" What terms are more useful as descriptors?
 - b. Comments on collection tasking?
 - c. Do you feel that the need to meet a deadline detracted from your analysis?
 - d. What were the major factors involved in obtaining agreement during your group sessions? How did you persuade analysts who disagreed with your position? Did you feel pressure to conform to another analyst's views? How was this issue resolved? (Look for evidence of groupthink, lowest common denominator.)
 - e. Was the initial view adopted by the group the one that made it into your estimate/briefing?
 - f. How would you rate your group's use of critical thinking?
 - g. Comments on briefing? Comments on policymaker/analyst interface?

10. Conclusions.

Attachment 1 – Word changes in the Classified NIE

1. In block 1 - Change "missiles with ranges in excess of UN restrictions" to "missiles with ranges in excess of 600 km." Change "if left unchecked, it probably will have.." to "it may have..." Change statement in parentheses to "INR does not concur with this assessment."
2. In block 3 - Add the statement that "INR does not concur with this assessment."
3. In block 4 - Shorten the parenthetical statement to "DOE...assess that the tubes are...not part of the program."
4. In block 6 - Drop "although" and begin sentence with "We have little specific information..." Change 2nd sentence to "Sadam **possibly** has stocked..."
5. In block 7 - End judgment with "more advanced than they were **a decade ago**."
6. In block 9 - Change language to "...including for a UAV **possibly** intended to deliver...." Then conclude with "USAF Intelligence believes UAVs' primary role is reconnaissance."

None of these changes are inconsistent with the findings. They add uncertainty by emphasizing differences and/or sharpening details (such as the missiles' range).

Simulation Exercise

- 1) We judge that Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of United Nations (UN) resolutions and restrictions. Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with ranges in excess of 600 km; it may have a nuclear weapon during this decade. (INR does not concur with this assessment).
- 2) We judge that we are seeing only a portion of Iraq's WMD efforts, owing to Baghdad's vigorous denial and deception efforts.
- 3) In the view of most agencies, Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program (INR does not concur with this assessment).
- 4) Most analysts believe that Saddam's personal interest in and Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes for centrifuge rotors...provide compelling evidence that Saddam is reconstituting a uranium enrichment effort for Baghdad's nuclear weapons program. (DOE assess that the tubes are not part of the program)
- 5) We assess that Baghdad has begun renewed production of mustard, sarin, GF (cyclosarin), and VX.
- 6) We have little specific information on Iraq's CW stockpile. Saddam possibly has stocked at least 100 metric tons (MT) and possibly as much as 500 MT of CW agents - much of it added in the last year.
- 7) We judge that all key aspects - R&D, production, and weaponization - of Iraq's offensive BW program are active and that most elements are larger and more advanced than they were a decade ago.
- 8) We judge that Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives.
- 9) Iraq maintains a small missile force and several developmental programs, including for a UAV possibly intended to deliver biological warfare agents. USAF Intelligence believes UAV's primary role is reconnaissance.

Simulation Exercise

- 1) Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of UN Resolutions and restrictions. Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with ranges in excess of UN restrictions; if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade.
- 2) Baghdad hides large portions of Iraq's WMD efforts.
- 3) Most analysts assess Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program.
- 4) Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain proscribed high-strength aluminum tubes are of significant concern. All intelligence experts agree that Iraq is seeking nuclear weapons and that these tubes could be used in a centrifuge enrichment program. Most intelligence specialists assess this to be the intended use, but some believe that these tubes are probably intended for conventional weapons programs.
- 5) Baghdad has begun renewed production of chemical warfare agents, probably including mustard, sarin, cyclosarin, and VX.
- 6) Saddam probably has stocked a few hundred metric tons of CW agent.
- 7) All key aspects – R&D, production, and weaponization – of Iraq's offensive BW program are active and most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf War.
- 8) Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives, including potentially against the U.S. Homeland.
- 9) Iraq maintains a small missile force and several developmental programs, including for a UAV that most analysts assess probably is intended to deliver biological warfare agents.

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Classified NIE	White Paper
<p>We judge that Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of United Nations (UN) resolutions and restrictions. Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with ranges in excess of UN restrictions; if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade. (See INR alternative view at the end of these key judgments.)</p>	<p>Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of UN resolutions and restrictions. Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with ranges in excess of UN restrictions; if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade.</p>
<p>We judge that we are seeing only a portion of Iraq's WMD efforts, owing to Baghdad's vigorous denial and deception efforts.</p>	<p>Baghdad hides large portions of Iraq's WMD efforts.</p>
<p>In the view of most agencies, Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program.</p>	<p>Most analysts assess Iraq is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program.</p>
<p>Most analysts believe that Saddam's personal interest in and Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes for centrifuge rotors . . . provide compelling evidence that Saddam is reconstituting a uranium enrichment effort for Baghdad's nuclear weapons program. (DOE agrees that reconstitution of the nuclear program is underway but assess that the tubes probably are not part of the program.)</p>	<p>Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain proscribed high-strength aluminum tubes are of significant concern. All intelligence experts agree that Iraq is seeking nuclear weapons and that these tubes could be used in a centrifuge enrichment program. Most intelligence specialists assess this to be the intended use, but some believe that these tubes are probably intended for conventional weapons programs.</p>
<p>We assess that Baghdad has begun renewed production of mustard, sarin, GF (cyclosarin), and VX.</p>	<p>Baghdad has begun renewed production of chemical warfare agents, probably including mustard, sarin, cyclosarin, and VX.</p>
<p>Although we have little specific information on Iraq's CW stockpile, Saddam probably has stocked at least 100 metric tons (MT) and possibly as much as 500 MT of CW agents - much of it added in the last year.</p>	<p>Saddam probably has stocked a few hundred metric tons of CW agent.</p>
<p>We judge that all key aspects - R&D, production, and weaponization - of Iraq's offensive BW program are active and that most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf War.</p>	<p>All key aspects — R&D, production, and weaponization - of Iraq's offensive BW program are active and most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf War.</p>
<p>We judge that Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives.</p>	<p>Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives, including potentially against the U.S. Homeland.</p>
<p>Iraq maintains a small missile force and several developmental programs, including for a UAV probably intended to deliver biological warfare agents. White Paper</p>	<p>Iraq maintains a small missile force and several developmental programs, including for a UAV that most analysts assess probably is intended to deliver biological warfare agents.</p>