

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Security and Global Studies

HLSS699

Capstone in Homeland Security

Credit Hours: 3

Length of Course: 16 Weeks

Prerequisite: All MA Coursework

Course Description (Catalog)

This is a 16-week course that must be taken after all other courses in your program are complete. The Master's Capstone Seminar option includes a thesis, or a major research project or paper. This option is desirable for those students who wish to focus on specific subject matter of an interdisciplinary nature or who would like to continue their education at a higher level.

Course Scope

The Master's Capstone includes a thesis project that has a substantial research component, presents an original argument using proper academic writing conventions including carefully documented primary and/or secondary sources, and should be 50-100 pages.

The course is tailored specifically to each graduate program and must be the **last course** students take from APUS. Thus it can only be taken after the student has completed his/her coursework. It cannot be taken concurrently with coursework. Students must successfully create this requirement before the award of a degree. Students must apply for graduation in order to be able to register for the course.

Program Objectives

In addition to the institutional and degree level learning outcomes objectives, the Master of Arts in Homeland Security also seeks the following specific learning outcomes of its graduates. [Note: The Capstone Thesis Project encompasses each of these objectives.]

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

- In addition to the institutional and degree level outcomes objectives, this degree seeks the following specific learning outcomes of its graduates. Graduates in this degree program will be able to:
- Evaluate specific domestic security challenges for the 21st Century that face the United States and other industrialized nations.
- Evaluate and propose changes at federal, state, and/or local levels, to reflect the evolving strategic policy issues associated with a statutory and presidential direction for homeland security.
- Recognize terrorist groups' proclivities in order to forecast the risks, types, and orders of magnitude of terrorist threats most likely to confront the nation-state.
- Define and describe by example the statutory, policy, strategy and legal differences between homeland security and homeland defense. Describe the roles/missions of USNORTHCOM, and the DSCA mission, compare and contrast these with the DHS mission.
- Predict the likelihood of a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Explosive (CBRNE) incident, and their consequences using existing research and resources. Analyze/defend your position.
- Recognize the interdisciplinary nature of Homeland Security functions and be able to assess and integrate various functional areas.
- Evaluate existing policies, procedures and protocols by DHS and inter-agency community to allow seamless agency integration through prevention, protection, incident response and recovery scenarios. Validate literal and procedural alignment/compliance with the National Response Framework, National Incident Management System, and Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPDs).
- Critique the theories of international relations, the heritage and development of the discipline, its major debates, its inherent nature as an interdisciplinary study, and a critical appreciation of the essentially contested nature of politics in general and international relations in particular.
- Evaluate the nature and distribution of power in the international systems, the problems of political order and the social economic, historical and cultural context within which international actors operate.
- Assess the current challenges to international order, cooperation, identity, social formations, and global issues, and possible strategies to address them.
- Evaluate the changing role of the state in the context of globalization and regional integration and the implications for international peace and security.

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

- Conceptualize the different kinds of actors on the international scene, their respective interests, and their influence across a range of issues.

Course Delivery Method

This course, delivered via distance learning, will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET and include all written assignments submitted for grading. Weekly Forum questions (accomplished in groups in a Forum) require an initial response by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET, with all other required responses due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET. The assigned faculty will support the students throughout this sixteen-week course.

Course Resources

Required Course Textbooks

There are no required textbooks for this course.

Evaluation Procedures

Students are expected to work with their instructor and must follow all guidance provided in the course including submitting all required components of the research process. Students should not expect to submit a final product at the end of the course without having completed each stage of the research process as outlined in the assignments below.

Please note: The language in the evaluation procedures section is a compilation from the APUS *End of Program Assessment Manual for Graduate Studies*. Some passages are *verbatim* from the Manual. For clarity, these passages have not been specifically identified as quoted passages but are integrated into the syllabus. The student should read this syllabus in conjunction with the *End of Program Assessment Manual*.

The course grade is based on the following assessments:

Discussion Forums – 1 percent

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Discussion questions will be provided and posts should reflect an assimilation of the readings and respond to the assigned topic(s). Students are required to provide a substantive initial post by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET and respond to two or more classmates by Sunday 11:55 pm ET. Forum posts are graded on timeliness, relevance, knowledge of the weekly readings, and the quality of original ideas.

Final Research Question and Purpose Statement – 1 percent

As above, revised to address instructor critique and peer-interaction in the discussion forums. The components of this assignment include a research question and a purpose and design statement. It must contain at least eight sources, at least six of which must be peer-reviewed. The specific research question should be of depth and breadth required for a major project. Length: 3 pp.

Thesis Proposal – 1 percent

A formal proposal shall be prepared in accordance with the standards of the academic discipline. The formal proposal must provide a clear and lucid description of a question or problem and a proposed method of answering the question or solving the problem. The instructor must approve the proposal before students move on to the next stage of the process.

The proposal should explain the question or problem to be investigated and convince the thesis instructor that the question or problem merits investigation. It should show that the student has read the relevant and recent literature on the subject and it should contain a list of academically appropriate resources consulted during the preliminary stages of research.

In general, the thesis proposal should include background information related to the research topic, purpose of the research, methodology, and analytic procedures to be used. Proposal drafting is considered a learning process and helps students avoid oversights and possible mistakes. The formal proposal should not exceed five (5) pages (proposal title page not included). Length: 5 pp.

Literature Review—2 percent

This document contains an annotated summary of the major sources that will be used in the research paper, all of which must be peer-reviewed

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

articles or scholarly texts. Students will identify the source, offer a short synopsis of its main argument, and offer a statement of relevance to the research project. Length: 10-15 pp.

Draft Capstone Thesis Project – 5 percent

The draft should include all substantive sections of the paper in their entirety as a working manuscript. The draft is not meant to be an outline of what the student *will* write for the final capstone thesis but rather the thesis in its complete form apart from any appendices. It must contain in-text citations in APA parenthetical style including a References List. Examples of successful capstone papers are available in the classroom to illustrate structures and formats that may vary depending on the research question and methodology of the specific project. Length: 50-100 pp. excluding appendices.

Final Capstone Thesis Project – 90 percent

Based on prior submission of all assignments in the course, the final capstone thesis project will reflect the substantive elements developed and approved throughout the capstone course, representing a partnership between the student and the instructor. Keep in mind that appropriate stylistic formatting and documentation are the student’s responsibility. Student papers that do not follow the prescribed style rules will not be accepted. All declarations, appendices, metadata, and submission information as outlined in the *End of Program Graduate Assessment Manual* shall be part of the final capstone thesis. Length: 50-100 pp. excluding appendices.

ASSIGNMENT	Percentage
Forum Discussions	1 percent
Final Research Question and Thesis Statement	1 percent
Thesis proposal	1 percent
Literature Review	2 percent
Draft Capstone Paper	5 percent
Final Capstone Paper	90 percent
TOTAL	100 percent

16 – Week Course Outline

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference the University's [grading scale](#).

Weeks	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1-2	Introduction: Developing the Capstone Thesis Project	Will vary according to discipline to support forum discussion on brainstorming about topics and research questions; research sources; defining a research question; IRB instructions.	Week One Forum Introduction and Discussion Proposed Research Question Due – end Week One Final Research Question and Hypothesis Due – end Week Two
3-4	Refining the Research Topic and Question	Will vary to include narrowing of topic areas, refining research questions, and building the hypothesis; writing the formal research proposal.	Week Three Forum Discussion (graded – 250 words initial post) Formal Research Proposal – due end Week Four
5-6	Writing the Introductory Elements	Will vary to include writing the introduction, problem statement, and background; writing the literature review.	Week Five Forum Discussion (graded – 1000-1250 words for introduction, problem statement, and background) Literature Review – due end Week Six
7-8	Designing the Capstone Thesis: Methodology and Theoretical	Will vary to include methodology and theoretical framework literature and examples.	Week Seven Forum Discussion (graded – purpose/rationale statement [250 - 500 words] and

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

	Frameworks		methods/project description [750 – 1000 words]
9-10	Beginning the Research and Analysis	Will vary but should include gathering results, addressing limitations, drawing conclusions, analysis	Week Nine Forum Discussion (graded – open to analysis in discipline]
11-12	Writing the Draft	Will vary but should include refining the literature review, drafting the thesis statement, structuring the analysis. Introduction of style elements (incorporating quotes revisited, frequent mistakes, editing techniques, copyright issues, Turnitin issues, etc.)	Draft Capstone Thesis Project – due end Week Twelve
13-14	Additional Elements and Finalizing the Draft	Will vary but should include declarations, metadata, appendices, tables and figures, and reference list formatting. Preparation for library submission and/or publishing.	Final Capstone Thesis Project – due end Week Fourteen
15-16	Results	Specific guidance on library submission.	Papers returned.

Policies

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

[Disability Accommodations](#)

Citation and Reference Style

Attention Please: Students will follow the APA 6 Style as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework. See http://www.apus.edu/content/dam/online-library/resources-services/Fuson_2012_APA.pdf.

All written submissions should be submitted in Times New Roman 12pt font with 1" margins, typewritten in double-spaced format. Graduate-level work is expected to be free of grammar, usage, and style errors.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

Netiquette

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺

Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors’ publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.

Request a Library Guide for your course (<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library: librarian@apus.edu.