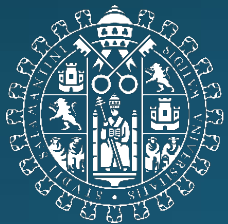


# Challenges and Institutions in Global Security

Master in Global and International Studies



VNiVERSiDAD  
D SALAMANCA

**Fulton T. Armstrong**

American University  
Syracuse University

Washington, DC

∞ Welcome ∞

Supporting Policy Through Actionable Analysis

Session 1: Understanding the Policymaker's Universe

# AGENDA

1. General info
2. Intros
3. Syllabus
4. Session 1: Understanding the Policymaker's Universe
5. Anything else?

## DATES / TIMES

Session 1	Wed	11 Dec	4pm-7pm
Session 2	Thu	12 Dec	4pm-7pm
Session 3	Fri	13 Dec	6pm-9pm
Session 4	Wed	08 Jan	4pm-7pm
Session 5	Thu	09 Jan	4pm-7pm
Session 6	Fri	10 Jan	10am-1pm
Session 7	Mon	13 Jan	10am-1pm
Session 8	Tue	14 Jan	10am-1pm

*All times CET*

# SYLLABUS

Global and International Studies Program

## CHALLENGES AND INSTITUTIONS IN GLOBAL SECURITY

COURSE SYLLABUS  
2024-2025

“Cluster A”  
Prof. Fulton Armstrong

### DESCRIPTION

The lectures, readings, discussions, and exercises in this course prepare students to understand, support, and ultimately participate in foreign policy policymaking in a wide range of governmental and non-governmental contexts. The eight sessions of “Cluster A” – entitled “Supporting Policy Through Actionable Analysis” – focuses on enabling decisionmakers and institutions to respond effectively to foreign policy challenges and opportunities. This cluster zeroes in on the inputs and dynamics of decisionmaking in a variety of contexts, from the press and intelligence, through analytical processes, to the development and recommendation of options. It also emphasizes sharpening the skills needed to effectively communicate foreign policy analysis and recommendations in written and oral products, which students practice through a project they undertake on an issue that interests them. Cluster B includes three sessions entitled “Global Security Context from a European Perspective,” taught by Professor Ana Hernández.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Several (of many) points:

Advanced concepts

- how policy works
- inputs, outputs
- success, failure

Practical skills

- research
- advanced analysis
- writing and briefing

Useful product

Fun

OK?

## DESCRIPTION

The lectures, readings, discussions, and exercises in this course prepare students to **understand, support, and ultimately participate** in foreign policy policymaking in a wide range of governmental and non-governmental contexts. The eight sessions of “Cluster A” – entitled **“Supporting Policy Through Actionable Analysis”** – focuses on enabling decisionmakers and institutions to respond effectively to foreign policy challenges and opportunities. This cluster zeroes in on the **inputs and dynamics of decisionmaking in a variety of contexts**, from the press and intelligence, through analytical processes, to the development and recommendation of options. It also emphasizes sharpening the skills needed to **effectively communicate foreign policy analysis and recommendations** in written and oral products, which students practice through a project they undertake on an issue that interests them. Cluster B includes three sessions entitled “Global Security Context from a European Perspective,” taught by Professor Ana Hernández.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course enables students to:

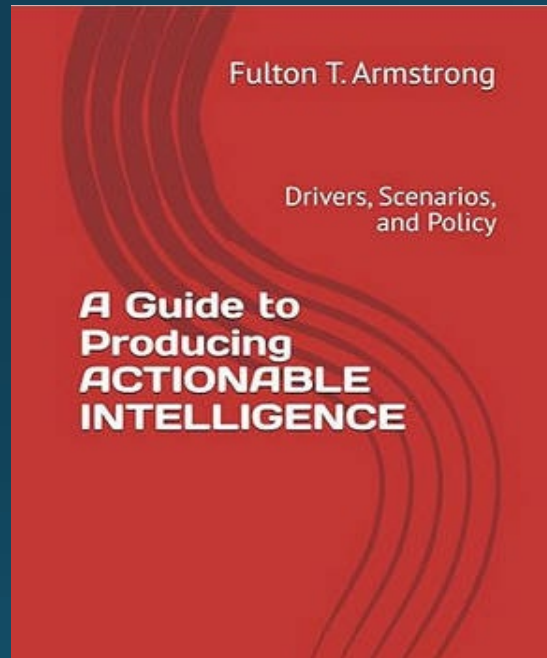
- Achieve a deep understanding of the **needs** of decisionmakers, particularly in the foreign policy universe, and to craft strategies to give them the **information, analysis, and recommendations they need** to pursue the interests of the organization, community, or nation.
- Identify **why policies succeed and fail**, troubleshooting where defects in information, analysis, or deliberative processes cause policy breakdowns and exploring ways of **avoiding or reducing them** in the future.
- Implement a time-tested **model for producing actionable intelligence** – analysis that enables decisionmakers to take action with better odds of strategic success. In particular, appreciate the importance of identifying drivers and their trends; defining scenarios and their probabilities; articulating the implications of different evolving situations – all to maximize positive outcomes.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Manage personal and institutional **biases, political pressures, information gaps**, and other human factors that can derail the development of sound policies that serve local, corporate, or national interests.
- Understand how to **develop effective policy options** based on clear analysis of short-, medium-, and long-term factors, while conceding that policymakers also often have to appear responsive immediately – and understand how to balance such competing requirements.
- **Communicate** analysis and recommendations in written and oral briefs better, increasing their impact and utility to decisionmakers. Adapting to changing circumstances in how the analytical and policy product can be delivered for positive effect.



# READINGS



And variety of other readings, most very interesting but not required.

# ASSIGNMENTS

Readings to prepare for class.

Think and write to prepare for class discussion.

Build a “semester” project, through each phase.

Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

Let's introduce ourselves

# Fulton T. Armstrong

A spontaneous career in information, analysis, policy and politics

Forty years of analysis

Linguistics and study in Spain → journalism in Taiwan

U.S. House of Representatives → CIA

State Department  
National Security Council  
National Intelligence Council  
U.S. Military – Intelligence Advisor

U.S. Senate → AU/CLALS  
SU/Maxwell

Taught junior analysts  
Led intelligence community  
Wrote about tradecraft  
Teach AU, SU, URJC and others

**Analysis** is now more important than ever – whether we're drowning in information, choking on fake news, or simply trying to get a handle on what's going on. To understand events and make sound decisions in international relations, national security, politics, economics, business, and even our personal lives, we need analysis.

**Actionable intelligence** comes from understanding the underlying drivers of events, enabling anyone making a decision to identify where they can influence events to protect or promote the interests of their country, community, institution, or selves.

This manual shows you how to produce **analysis for action** in a straightforward format that is, if you wish, as easy as filling in a form. It's a model used by the best strategic analysts in the U.S. Intelligence Community – enriched by the author's years of experience as a collector, analyst, and policy consumer of intelligence.

Fulton T. Armstrong worked in U.S. intelligence and policy for more than 30 years before becoming a senior faculty fellow at American University in Washington, DC, and adjunct professor at Syracuse University's DC program. He specializes in intelligence as an input into foreign policy, and conducts research into Latin America and Asia issues.



A Guide to Producing ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE

Fulton Armstrong

Fulton T. Armstrong

Drivers, Scenarios,  
and Policy

# A Guide to Producing ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE

# I ...

Have seen hundreds of times the power of information ... the power of good argumentation ... as decisive in policy-making.

Have seen copious evidence that analysis is a *learnable* skill.

Have seen the interrelation between our thinking and communications skills ... that improving one, improves the others.

Think that, while analysis is an inherently idealistic task, it is an ESSENTIAL task if we want success (or at least reduced failure).

## PLEASE INTRODUCE YOURSELF

1. Name you like to be called, a little background, past studies.
2. Most interesting or hardest parts of analysis, policy, and writing for you.
3. Your personal topic for this course.

Eesha  
Justin  
Tirza

Identifying what's important and needed?

Figuring out how to begin a project?

Controlling the question?

Getting my professors/bosses to see my brilliance?

Saying something unique?

Separating my facts from my opinions?

Mechanics? Models? Styles?

Receiving feedback?

Defining my scope?

Sitting down and just doing it?



## Simple Ground Rules

- Respectful, non-judging, non-competing environment
- Lean forward in your work
- Keep distractions to minimum (screen on zoom; no phone)
- Participation is important
- Help me make it fun

OK???

Questions?

Comments?

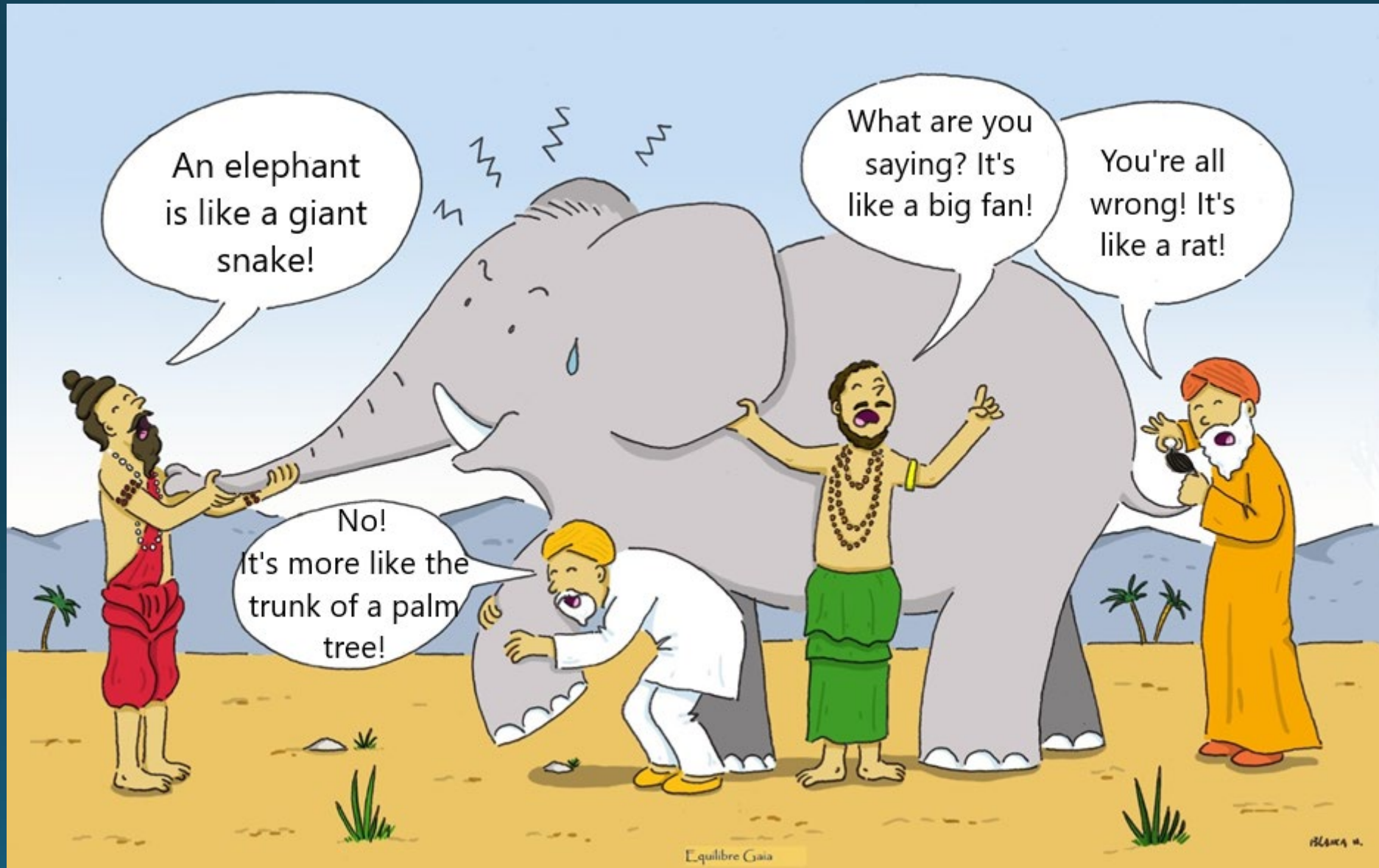
Today ...

What we all need when we make a decision ...

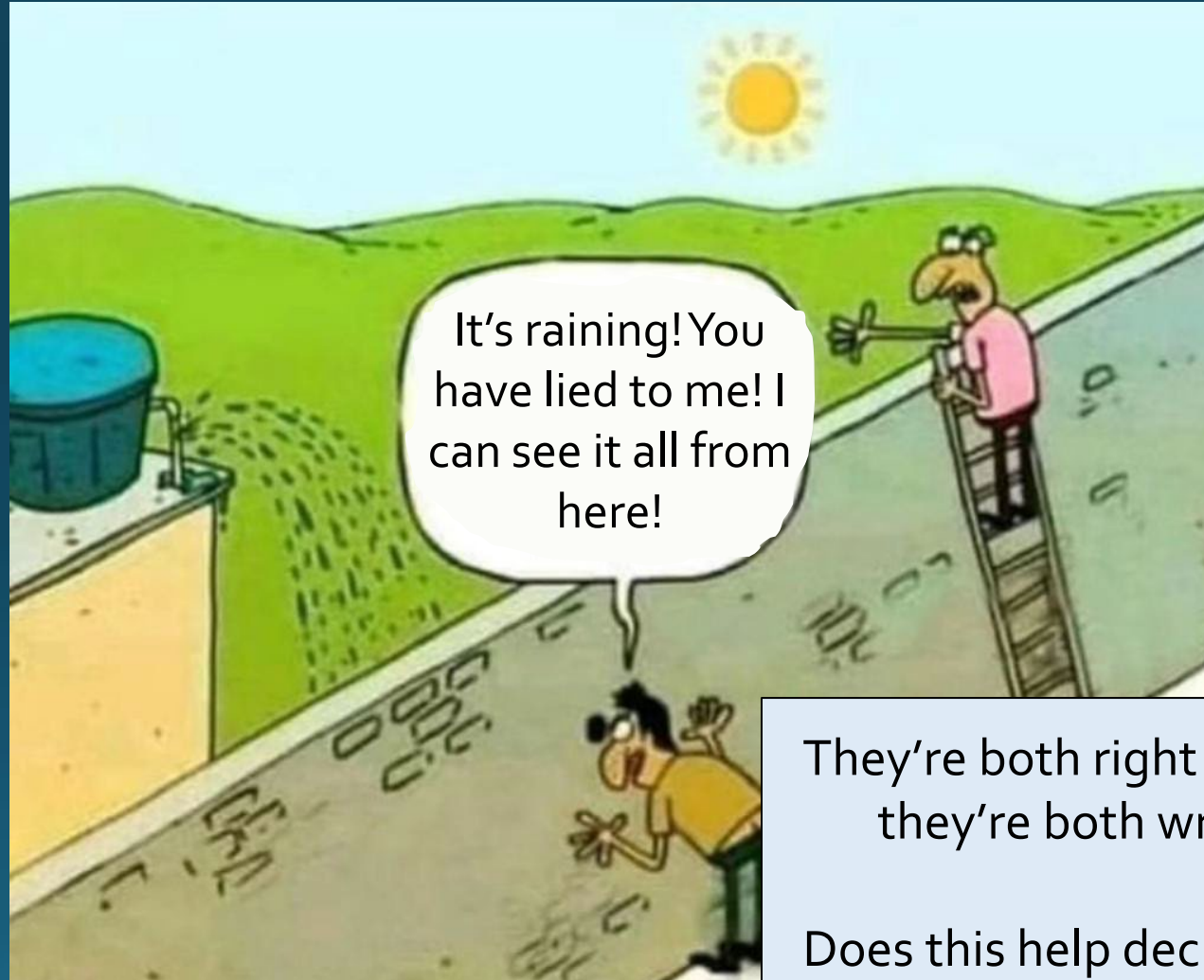
What is analysis?  
(What is “intelligence”?)

What is it about someone that makes you  
think, “That person is intelligent”?

## *Indian Story: The Blind Men and the Elephant*



*Versione italiana: Due uomini e un muro*



They're both right ... and  
they're both wrong.

Does this help decisionmakers?

# What is analysis?

Telling our readers or audiences ...

- What we know about what's happening  
Who, what, when, where
- But more importantly ...  
WHY it's happening  
HOW it's happening  
And WHAT WILL happen  
and WHY we should care
- And by doing that – without being  
prescriptive – showing what can be done  
about it

This makes it

**ACTIONABLE**

analysis!



# What is analysis?

Telling our readers or audiences ...

- What we know about what's happening

Who, what, when, where

who told you this?

- But more importantly ...

WHY it's happening

HOW it's happening

And WHAT WILL happen

and WHY we should care

but not this?

- And by doing that – without being prescriptive – showing what can be done about it

and gave you no  
**ACTIONABLE**  
analysis?

# What would you think of a DOCTOR

Telling our readers or audiences ...

- What we know about what's happening

Who, what, when, where

who told you this?

- But more importantly ...

WHY it's happening

HOW it's happening

And WHAT WILL happen

and WHY we should care

but not this?

- And by doing that – without being prescriptive – showing what can be done about it

and gave you no  
**ACTIONABLE**  
analysis?



# Why do we (or others) make mistakes?

Bad or inadequate information?

Inability to understand the meaning and consequences?

Unable or unwilling to act?

Conflict of interest?

Too much pressure?

*How can we improve?*

Unable to articulate info and/or analysis?

Sloppy presentation, with unclear bottom line?

Inability to get access to deliver message?

AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT STEP: Follow a CONSCIOUS process

Because humans lack ... ???

Discipline?

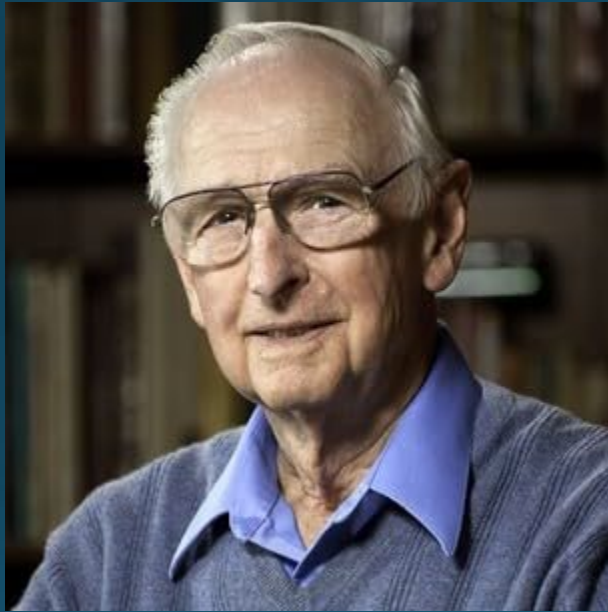
Honesty?

Attention span?

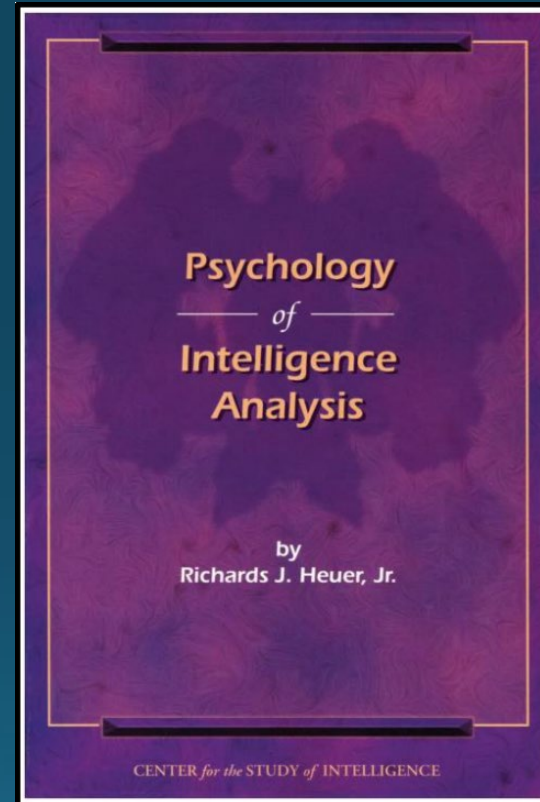
Self-awareness?

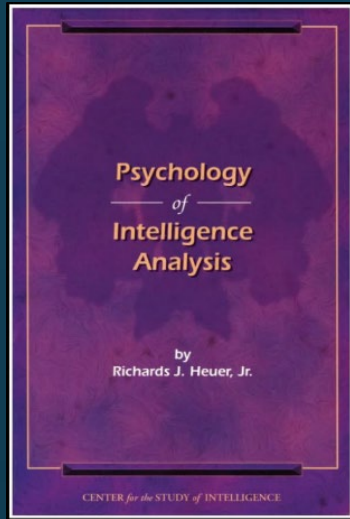
All of the above????

## The guru of U.S. intelligence analysis



Richards Heuer





- The mind is poorly "wired" to deal effectively with both inherent uncertainty (the natural fog surrounding complex, indeterminate intelligence issues) and induced uncertainty (the man-made fog fabricated by denial and deception operations).
- Even increased awareness of cognitive and other "unmotivated" biases, such as the tendency to see information confirming an already-held judgment more vividly than one sees "disconfirming" information, does little by itself to help analysts deal effectively with uncertainty.
- Tools and techniques that gear the analyst's mind to apply higher levels of critical thinking can substantially improve analysis on complex issues on which information is incomplete, ambiguous, and often deliberately distorted. Key examples of such intellectual devices include techniques for structuring information, challenging assumptions, and exploring alternative interpretations.

OUR  
MISSION:  
TO  
OVERCOME

## EXAMPLES in U.S. or other countries' foreign policies?

Quality of information

Quality of analysis

Receptivity

Independence

Pressure

Message clarity

Message delivery



More important than ever.

We're going to talk about and practice ACTIONABLE analysis.

But there are other kinds.

Counting and measuring.

cause-effect  
decline/growth  
trends

Sorting and classifying.

## Other Models

Chronological

Clarifies cause-effect of events



## Other Models

Flow chart

Clarifies processes



## Other Models

### “Value-chain”

Indicates the value-added at each stage of a process ... for economic analysis



## Other Models

### “Event-flow”

Indicates the patterns in a series of events, including places, victims, circumstances, suspects, etc. ... for criminal analysis

## Other Models

Decision Matrix      Helps achieve an understanding of the interests (and decision costs) of decisionmakers

Most basic structure:

Strengths  
Weaknesses  
Opportunities  
Threats



## Other Models

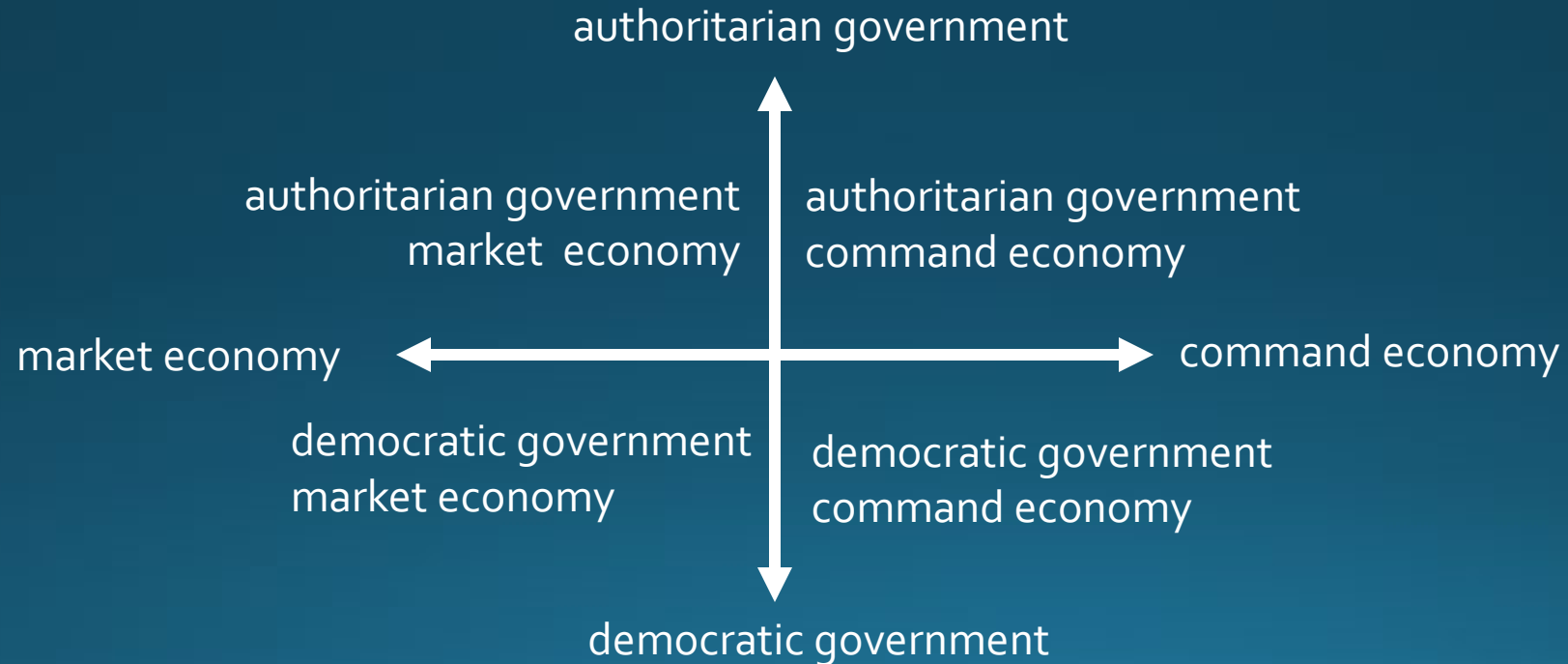
### Link Analysis

Reveals the relationships between possible actors ... useful for CT, CN, and criminal analysis

## Other Models

### Scenarios Quadrant

Explores possibilities based on variable key factors



# “Let’s Start a Family Feud”



Edith Pritchett  
15 December 2023

The Washington Post

But ... (imho)

The DRIVERS model does more

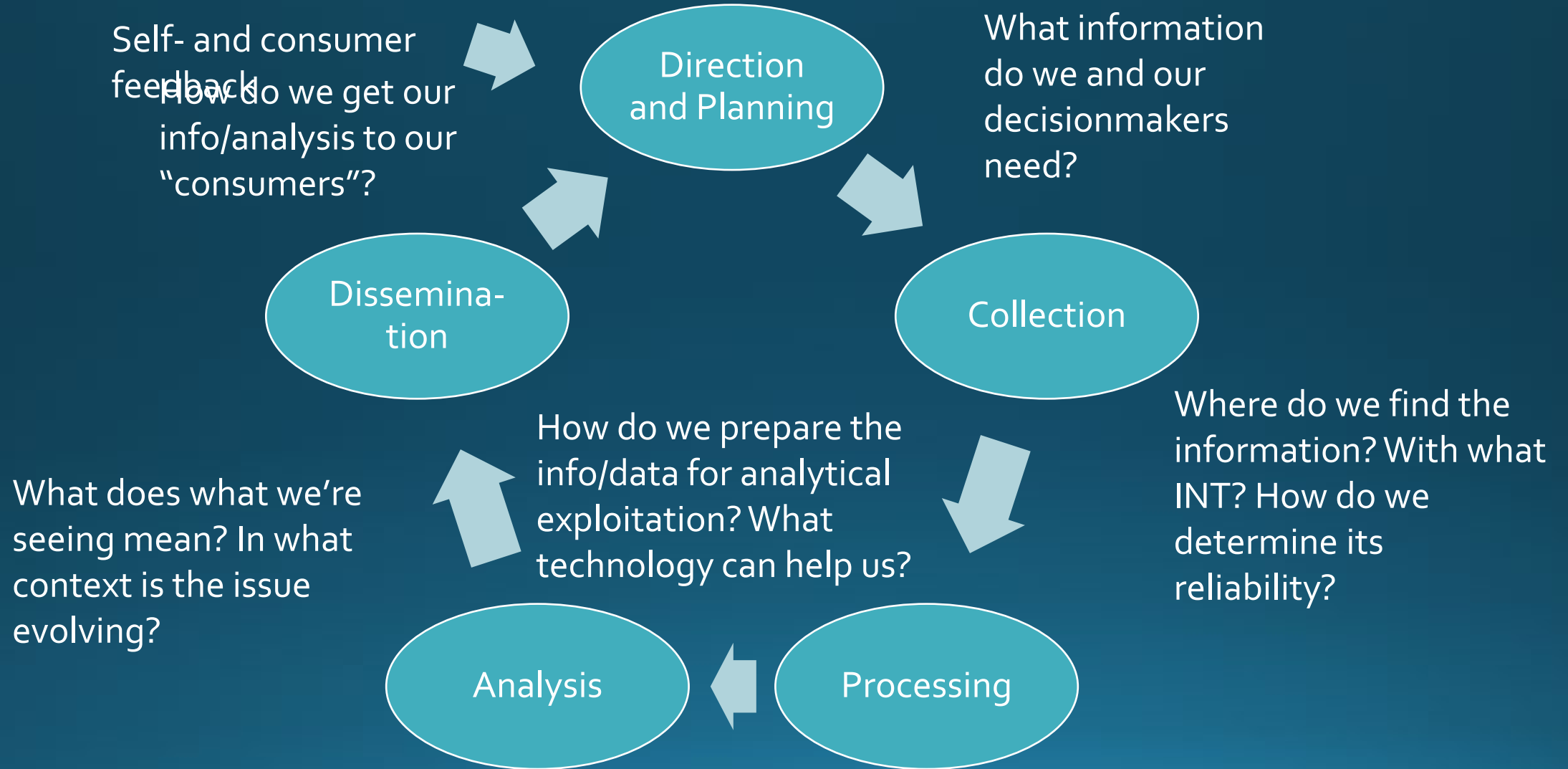
- Combines many elements of other models
- Gives the decisionmaker something ACTIONABLE



What do decision-makers need?  
What is intelligence?  
What is analysis?

Let's look for a moment at the  
INTELLIGENCE CYCLE

# The INTELLIGENCE CYCLE



What do decision-makers need?

What is intelligence?

What is analysis?

Once we have a defined analytical question ...

Once we have some basic information ...

What is our FIRST analytic contribution on an issue?

And how do we do it?

Evaluate the reliability of the “facts”

Let's play a couple games...

What do we see and believe in the following  
videos and pictures?

A bystander takes a video of something they saw.  
Posts it in social media,  
as an example of “police incompetence.”

What is happening?  
How do we know?

[[ video ]]

# Why your memories can't be trusted

Innocence project

The Guardian



\*Total is more than 100% because wrongful convictions

Memory does not work like a video tape. It is not stored like a file just waiting to be retrieved. Instead, memories are formed in networks across the brain and every time they are recalled they can be subtly changed. So if these memories are changeable, how much should we trust them? With experts Dr Julia Shaw and Prof Elizabeth Loftus, the Guardian's Max Sanderson explores the mysterious world of human memory, how false memories can be implanted - and how this can be harnessed for good and ill

With experts Dr Julia Shaw and Prof Elizabeth Loftus, the Guardian's Max Sanderson explores the mysterious world of human memory, how false memories can be implanted - and how this can be harnessed for good and ill

Max Sanderson Josh  
Toussaint-Strauss Phil  
Maynard Simon Robert  
Joseph Pierce Paul Boyd  
Katie Lamborn, Source:  
Explainer

06:30 EDT Thursday, 14 March 2019

How do we know what we “know”?

What’s REAL and what’s FAKE?

Exercise #2: Real or Fake?

[[ series of pictures ]]

How did you determine “real” or “fake”?

Because you really know something as fact?

Because you can tell that a photo has been  
Photoshopped?

By some sort of logic?

Because you know of precedents or parallels?

How did you process your information?

Did wishes or biases or fears influence you?

*An analyst is conscious of all this.*



## Another Exercise

How much can you trust your own eyes?

[[ series of graphics ]]

Our job is to see everything as clearly as possible – what it is and isn't.



Can you trust your eyes if it's  
multimedia?

[[ videos ]]

Should we be alarmed?

Yes!

Should we become nihilists?

No!

Our job is to assign levels of confidence in our information ... to be honest ... to know our limits.

No bluffing. No exaggerating. But no copping out.

## “The Instrument” \*

Several hundred multiple-choice questions

- Choose A,B,C or D
- Choose level of confidence – 25, 50, 75 or 100%

Humbling/validating experience

- Measuring how aware or honest we are about our knowledge
- Measuring if misinformed or uninformed
- Measuring BS or imposter issues

\*Self-efficacy: Your belief in your own abilities in various situations.

OUR JOB when we are in analyst mode is to

- To find the truth the best it can be found.
- To evaluate our information as rigorously as reasonable.
- To make sense out of disparate information.
- To apply our art as scientifically as reasonable.
- To be honest ... transparent ... humble.

AND ENJOY IT!!!



Ready to dive in?



# EXERCISE



The Snowflake: A simple analysis





Write an analysis of a topic that interests you ...

## SNOWFLAKE

In 40 words,

Write a thesis or conclusion.

Write an argument or explanation.

Write something about future or implications.

### THREE MAIN ELEMENTS

1. What's happening?
2. Why or how is it happening?
3. What's going to happen?  
or  
Why does it matter?



EXAMPLE

# WRITE

EXAMPLE: What does collapse of Afghanistan mean? \*

**BLUF**

The Taliban victory in Kabul has created conditions of repression and instability in Afghanistan. ... Restoration of Sharia Law, which international community rejects, will provoke suspension of financial, humanitarian aid, intensifying economic crisis and hunger. ... Taliban reaction likely to result in collaboration with terrorists.

**INFO / ARGUMENTATION**

**PREDICTION / IMPLICATION**

\* circa Aug 2021

43 words!

WHAT is going on  
WHY it is going on,  
WHERE it is going, and  
WHY we should care

A

### EXERCISE

#### Building a “Snowflake” of Analysis

Choose a topic (or ask to be assigned one) and do a quick analysis of it.  
Write key facts or thoughts. Sentences can be ungrammatical.  
“It’s the thought that counts.”

**TOPIC:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

A couple basic facts on [Click here to enter text.](#)  
WHAT is going on:

---

One or two ideas on [Click here to enter text.](#)  
WHY it is going on:

---

One or two thoughts on [Click here to enter text.](#)  
WHERE the issue is  
going:

---

One or two thoughts on [Click here to enter text.](#)  
WHY we should care:

---

SNOWFLAKE TEXT [Click here to enter text.](#)  
(<40 words)

*SIS Sharpening Analytic Skills*

# Write an analysis of a topic that interests you ...

- U.S. elections
- Middle East
- Ukraine
- Climate change
- Liberal democracy
- China intentions
- Migration
- Inflation
- Cyberwar
- Social media
- Technology
- etc., etc., etc.

A

EXERCISE

Building a “Snowflake” of Analysis

Choose a topic (or ask to be assigned one) and do a quick analysis of it.  
Write key facts or thoughts. Sentences can be ungrammatical.  
“It’s the thought that counts.”

TOPIC:

Click here to enter text.

A couple basic facts on  
WHAT is going on:

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One or two ideas on  
WHY it is going on:

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One or two thoughts on  
WHERE the issue is  
going:

Click here to enter text.

One or two thoughts on  
WHY we should care:

Click here to enter text.

SNOWFLAKE TEXT  
(<40 words)

Click here to enter text.

SFS Sharpening Analysis Skills



SNOWFLAKE

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# Why invest time in a 40-word product?

"If you can't say it in 30 seconds,  
it's not ready for prime time."



It later becomes your  
"elevator briefing"

Comments?

Q: Where does any analytical process begin?

A: Defining the question.

Q: And how do we do that?



## Understanding the “requirement”

How can we know what the decisionmaker  
(or their intermediaries) want?

Same as what they NEED?  
Who are we to know/decide?  
Who determines interests?



and think for a few minutes ...

Who are these people we call “policymakers” or “decisionmakers”?

What do they need?

Might I be one someday?

What’s on their plate today?

What does the world look like to them?

# Who are the decisionmakers, and what do they need and want?

Three perspectives:

1. How do any of us make decisions? What do we need and want?
2. What are the differences between “them” (decisionmakers) and “us” (analysts)?
3. What is the difference between what people want to have and what they need? Why are they different?

## How do you make decisions?

Think ...

- What's a decision you made recently?
  - related to work or studies?
  - related to a purchase?
  - related to boy/girlfriend?
  - related to housing situation?
- How did you make the decision?
  - research?
  - consult with friend or professional?
  - pray?
  - ask a fortuneteller?
  - toss a coin?

Moreover ... think

- How did you control your impulses?
  - excessive optimism
  - assumptions, biases, prejudices
  - image and ego
- Were you aware how you'd know if it was the right decision?
  - clear results
  - increase/decrease in benefits, profits
  - other indicators

**So ... How would you describe your analytical method?**

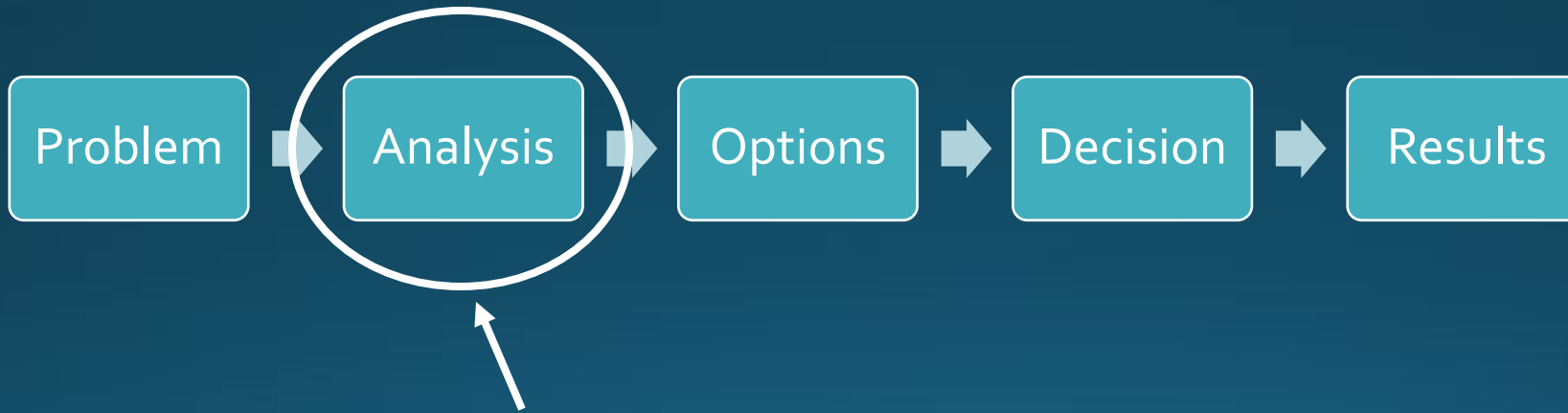


## To make GOOD decisions “decisionmakers” need ...

A clear understanding of ...

- their needs and desires (“interests”)
- the causes of their situation (“drivers”)
- how the drivers are changing (“trends”)
- probable and less-probable outcomes (“scenarios”)
- the consequences for their interests (“implications”)

# A Decisionmaking Model



Our part – essential to the entire process

# Analysis

## INFORMATION

- + Compilation
- + Collection

What is this process we call "analysis"?

## ANALYSIS

- + Identification
- + Evaluation

When decisionmakers ask for analysis, what do they want and need?

n / dynamics

## IMPLICATIONS

le & impact

e & impact

• "wild cards" & impact

# Analysis

## INFORMATION

- + Compilation
- + Research / collection
- + Evaluation / validation
- + Contextualization

## ANALYSIS OF DRIVERS

- + Identification
- + Hierarchization
- + Evolution
- + Interrelation / dynamics

## SCENARIO & IMPLICATIONS

- + Most probable & impact
- + Less probable & impact
- + "Wild cards" & impact



# Who are the decisionmakers, and what do they need and want?

Three perspectives:

1. How do any of us make decisions? What do we need and want?
2. What are the differences between “them” (decisionmakers) and “us” (analysts)?
3. What is the difference between what people want to have and what they need? Why are they different?

# Differences between “them” and “us”

Same personality?

Same role in government, company, society?

Same objectives? Same urgency to get results?

Same definitions of interests?

Same skills and expertise?

Same information?

Despite differences, as analysts we embrace “one team” approach.

# Who are the decisionmakers, and what do they need and want?

Three perspectives:

1. How do any of us make decisions? What do we need and want?
2. What are the differences between “them” (decisionmakers) and “us” (analysts)?
3. What is the difference between what people want to have and what they need? Why are they different?



Any different from us?

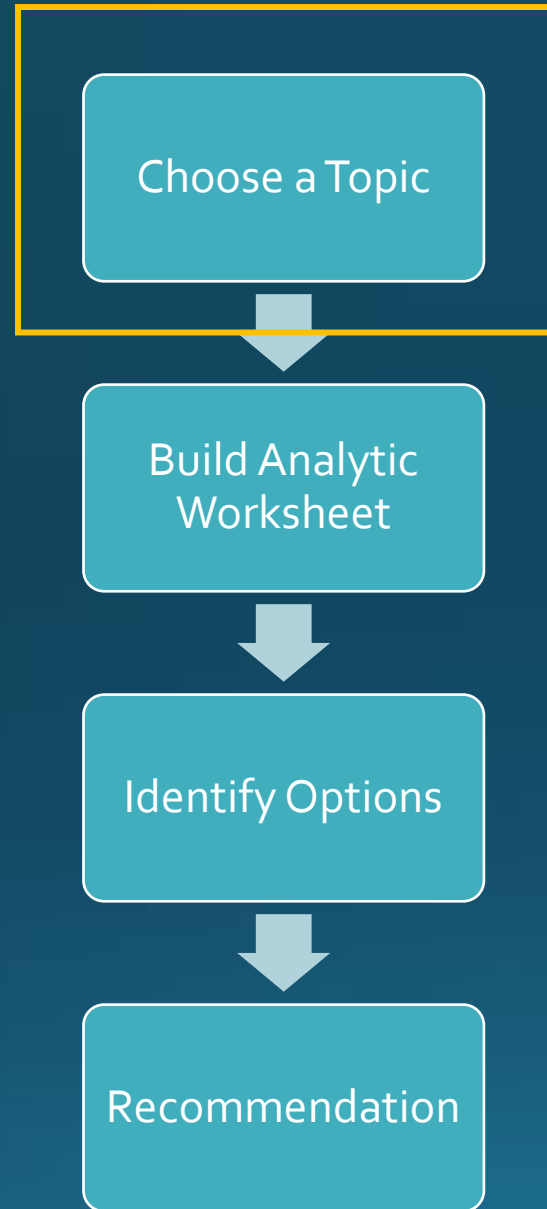
## WHY ARE WE DISCUSSING THIS?

Grasp of and respect for the decisionmaking process is essential for doing good analysis ...

if you want to be relevant

if you want to be correct

# Your Projects



What issue do you want to analyze and explore policies on?

What are the drivers, trends, scenarios, and implications of the issue?

What do the drivers tell you about your options for dealing with the issue?

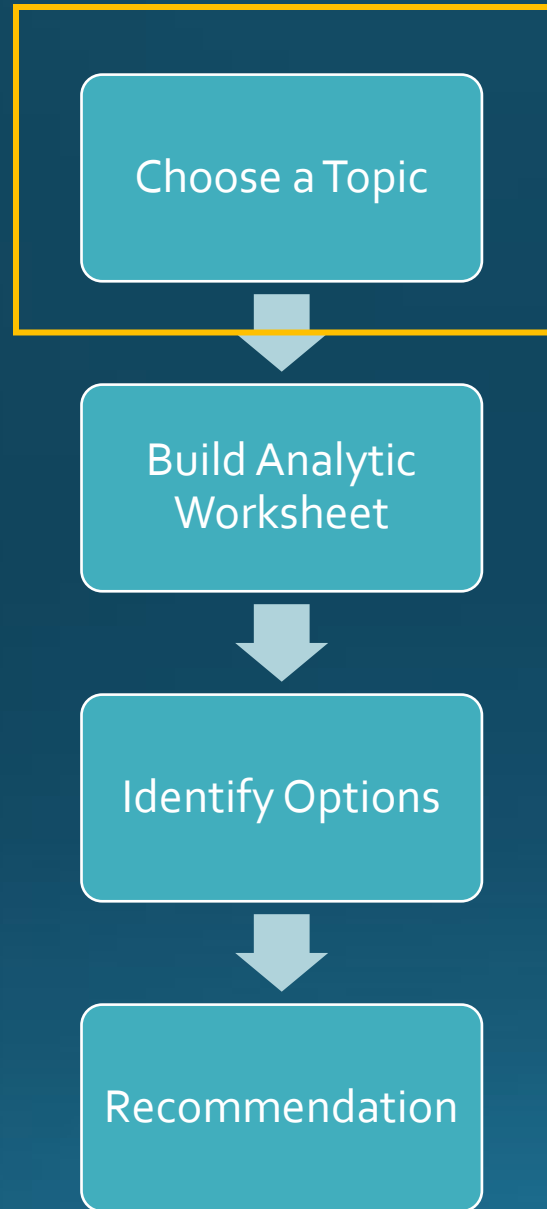
Which option do you recommend?



A topic that ... you already know quite a bit about  
haven't done already for a class  
(but may be doing now or soon)  
you're interested in doing

What is it?

# Your Projects



What issue do you want to analyze and explore policies on?

What are the drivers, trends, scenarios, and implications of the issue?

What do the drivers tell you about your options for dealing with the issue?

Which option do you recommend?

Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

[fultona@bmbs.org](mailto:fultona@bmbs.org)

See you tomorrow ( Thursday, 12 December at 4pm CET)



# Challenges and Institutions in Global Security

Master in Global and International Studies



VNiVERSIDAD  
D SALAMANCA

**Fulton T. Armstrong**

American University  
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Washington, DC