

Assessment and Evaluation of DoD Security Programs

(CDSE ED 509)

Defense Security Service (DSS)

Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE)

Sample Course Syllabus*

1.1. Course Description/Overview

Security professionals occupy a unique position within the DoD. They are highly valued for their contributions to national security; yet because of their perceived narrow focus, they are often times relegated to the periphery of organizations and key decisions. How or where security lands on this scale often depends on the senior civilian or military leadership responsible for advocating and protecting security equities. As with so many things in life, credibility is the key. The higher the degree of professional expertise and credibility a security professional holds, the stronger his or her influence is within an organization.

Accordingly, CDSE has established as a primary goal the development of future security leaders who are adept generalists across the wide range of DoD security responsibilities rather than being focused specialists. To accomplish this goal, CDSE is creating a graduate program in Defense Security Studies, with the Assessment and Evaluation of a Department of Defense (DoD) Security Program course as an important optional course in the overall program.

The *Assessment and Evaluation of DoD Security Programs* course contributes to the need for security managers to assess and improve programs under their supervision. It also helps managers understand how and why their programs would be evaluated for effectiveness by outside organizations. The course will:

1. Examine how the evolving field of program evaluation provides an important tool for assessing and evaluating security programs and help decision-makers identify short- and long-term objectives and methodologies to bring about or adopt change.
2. Examine ways in which a senior security manager can collect and analyze data, employ measurements (metrics), and establish a business case to optimally convey performance of security programs, improve performance in effective programs, and determine whether to fix, reduce, or eliminate ineffective programs.
3. Address approaches in which a senior security manager can effectively demonstrate accountability to commanding officers, agency heads, and policy leadership in a credible, objective, and persuasive manner.
4. Explore whether security programs require unique approaches to assessment and evaluation.

*Sample syllabus is subject to change each semester.

This is not a “skills” training course designed to produce expert inspectors. The course will begin with an appreciation of program evaluation basics and the continued evolution of this field. Evaluations, with a goal of improving performance, are not just a managerial nicety. In the American defense establishment, they have a long history rooted in wartime success, expediency, and desire to achieve objectives at the lowest cost. The course will examine part of this historical background. It then moves to a thorough understanding of the processes for establishing standards and criteria. Without this context, it is impossible to understand what a quality assessment program can and should do. Assessment concepts and processes will be the next focus area as it is a field that has evolved greatly and rapidly in the last two decades. The course will also examine closely the concept and challenges of “cost-benefit analysis.” Finally, the students will apply this background knowledge to explore the unique aspects of program evaluation in the defense arena. The students will be exposed to the broader aspects of assessing and evaluating programs necessitated by expanded security manager responsibilities for a wider range of security programs.

Consistent themes and questions that will be addressed throughout the course include:

1. Student understanding of the evolution and growing role of program evaluation and assessment to assist decision-makers in the best allocation of resources among competing programs
2. Use of metrics and data that demonstrate change and effectiveness
3. Establishment of a business case for building, improving, modifying, or eliminating a program
4. Data collection and analysis to assess success or shortcomings of a program
5. Demonstration of accountability to commanding officers, agency heads and policy leadership
6. Reporting evaluation data in a credible, objective, and persuasive manner
7. Program evaluation challenges in determining successful program performance
8. Exploration of unique methods and challenges to the assessment of the effectiveness of security programs

Because this class is designed for security professionals with varying levels of expertise in differing security disciplines, it takes the combined efforts of all class participants to stimulate discussion and exchange ideas in the learning environment. Adequate class preparation will be required to successfully complete this course.

1.2. Credits Conferred

This course will be designed to equate to three credit hours at the graduate level.

1.3. Target Audience/Prerequisites

This course is intended for DoD civilian and military personnel who perform security leadership and management duties. It is assumed that all students will be prepared to take on graduate-level work in the security field.

1.4. Student Outcomes/Objectives

This course will enable students to:

- Examine representative methods used in assessing and evaluating security programs in DoD
- Describe how effective assessments and evaluations have become key parts of security programs for mission assurance
- Assess the impacts of policies and plans on assessments and evaluations on security programs
- Examine the impact of assessments and evaluations from higher echelon and installation level perspectives
- Analyze and validate collected data and metrics from assessments and evaluations to effectively justify, modify, or reduce (when appropriate) expenditures for security program requirements
- Articulate how cost-benefit analysis, as challenging as it can be, can support establishing and presenting an effective business case for resource allocation
- Examine the importance of solid data collection and analysis prior to presenting recommendations to decision-makers
- Assess the effectiveness of new and existing security policies and procedures relative to other options and opportunities

1.5. Delivery Method

This is a graduate-level distance-learning course in assessment and evaluation of a DoD security program. The course will consist of readings, prerecorded lectures and presentations, asynchronous sessions, participation in the discussion forum, three graded take home assignments, two short research papers and three quizzes.

Because this is a 3 credit hour equivalent course, the contact time over the 16 weeks should be approximately 30 hours. A typical week will include a prerecorded lecture; it will be followed by a quiz (about one hour duration to complete), a “take home” assignment, or an on-line discussion forum. Generally a discussion will be based on instructor-provided discussion question(s) with each student providing a response and then commenting on other student inputs. Students should be prepared to critically discuss and debate the readings as well as analyze them for biases and multiple perspectives. Students should also be examining how other disciplines relate to the readings and be prepared to discuss this aspect.

The assigned course readings will draw from a variety of resources, such as authoritative readings (legislation, executive orders, policies, plans and strategies, and journals), implementation readings (government products that are responsive to or attempt to fulfill the requirements of authoritative documents), and external reviews (from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, Congressional Research Service, or other agency or office). Students will be provided with a large number of open access and password protected sites yielding a tremendous number of research assets.

Students will be expected to do research at the graduate level in this course. To provide a substantial research capability to all students in the program, a number of internet-accessible research sites will be sent to each student prior to the first lesson. The primary research site will be the CiteULike virtual

library. Students will also receive information for signing on to approximately a dozen other research sites or databases relevant to security and defense studies; one example would be opening an account with the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC). This will ensure that every student has more than enough resources to do the research expected in this course. The instructor may provide additional research sources or sites. Students are also encouraged to make use of library and research sources available to them in their own geographical area or through their own professional or academic networks (such as the Defense Acquisition University and National Defense University libraries).

1.6. General Course Requirements

Class participation is important and required. If, due to an emergency, students are not able to respond to a discussion in the week it is assigned, they must contact the instructor by e-mail and will be expected to post their response in the following week.

Weekly assignments must be posted in the Sakai CLE by 2359 on the day they are due. It is expected that assignments will be submitted on time; however, students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should contact the instructor in a timely fashion.

1.7. Grading

The following provides an approximate breakdown of how each assignment contributes to the overall performance in the class.

Class discussion (for eight lessons)	15%
Quizzes (lessons 5, 9, 16)	31%
Take home assignments (lessons 4, 6, 10)	14%
Research paper 1	20%
Research paper 2	20%

A letter grade will be assigned to each graded assignment, following the grading scale below:

A = 90% – 100%

B = 80% – 89%

C = 70% – 79%

D = 60% – 69%

F = 59% and below

Individual graded assignments with a score lower than 80% are acceptable; however, a student's final grade at the end of the semester must be 80% or higher to pass the course.

Evaluation criteria for **discussion question responses** are listed below.

ASSIGNMENT EVALUATION CRITERIA
• Uses complete sentences
• Uses proper grammar structure
• Responses reflect depth of thought and critical thinking skills
• Integrates material from class/readings into responses
• Provides coherent and reasoned responses to all questions
• Integrates real world examples into responses
• Meets submission timeline

Evaluation criteria for research papers (grading matrix adapted from design by Professor Jay Aronson, Carnegie Mellon University)

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Poor	F
Overall Impression	Author directly addresses main question or issue, and adds new insight to the subject not provided in lectures, readings, or class discussions. The author has retained nearly all of the knowledge presented in class. He/She is able to synthesize this knowledge in new ways and relate to material not covered in the course.	Author competently addresses main question or issue, but does not add much new insight into the subject. That said, it is clear that the author has learned a great deal in class and is able to communicate this knowledge to others.	Author attempts to address main question or issue, but fails. The author has retained some information from the course, but does not fully understand its meaning or context and cannot clearly convey it to others. Minimal use of previous feedback and corrections.	Paper does NOT address main question or issue, and it is obvious that author has not retained any information from the course. Repeats same mistakes as previously seen in draft paper(s).	P L A G I A R I S M
Argument	Paper contains a clear argument—i.e., lets the reader know exactly what the author is trying to communicate. Argument/thesis is further divided into a logical and balanced set of points or sub-arguments	An argument is present, but reader must reconstruct it from the text. Sub-arguments are not balanced and/or do not flow logically.	Author attempts, but fails, to make an argument (e.g., starts with a rhetorical question/statement or anecdote that is never put into context). Difficult to discern the sub-arguments.	No attempt is made to articulate an argument.	
Evidence	Provides compelling and accurate evidence that convinces reader to accept main argument. The importance/relevance of all pieces of evidence is clearly stated. There are no gaps in reasoning—i.e., the reader does not need to assume anything or do additional research to accept main argument.	Provides necessary evidence to convince reader of most aspects of the main argument but not all. The importance/ relevance of some evidence presented may not be totally clear. Reader must make a few mental leaps or do some additional research to fully accept all aspects of main argument.	Not enough evidence is provided to support author's argument, or evidence is incomplete, incorrect, or oversimplified. Information that could be useful from lectures and readings is not effectively used.	Either no evidence is provided, or there are numerous factual mistakes, omissions or oversimplifications. There is little or no mention of information from lectures and readings even if this is a highly accessible source of research and support for the paper.	

*Sample syllabus research to change each semester

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Poor	F
Counter-Evidence	The author considers the evidence, or alternate interpretations of evidence, that could be used to refute or weaken his/her argument, and thoughtfully responds to it.	Author acknowledges that counter-evidence or alternative interpretations exists, and lists them fully, but does not effectively explain to reader why his/her argument still stands.	Author acknowledges some of the most obvious counter-evidence and alternative explanations, but is not comprehensive in this task. There is little or no attempt made to respond to them.	No acknowledgement of counter-evidence or alternative interpretations.	
Sources Note: You should always consult the assignment description to find out what kinds of sources are required.	Evidence is used from a wide range of sources, including lectures and course readings (as appropriate to the specific paper topic). When required, author also consults scholarly books, websites, journal articles, etc. not explicitly discussed in class.	Evidence is used from many sources, but author relies heavily on a more limited set of sources. Some effort is made to go beyond material presented in class when required, but not much. If outside sources are used, they are primarily non-scholarly (i.e., intended for a general audience) and/or web-based.	Uses only a few of the sources provided in class, or does not go beyond what has been provided by professor when required to do additional research.	Does not use sources, only minimally uses sources provided by instructor, or relies exclusively on non-scholarly outside sources.	
Citations	All evidence is properly cited in footnotes or endnotes.	All evidence is cited in footnotes or endnotes, but there are some minor problems with completeness or format of some citations.	Some pieces are unreferenced or inaccurately referenced, and there are problems with completeness and format of citations.	No attempt is made to cite evidence.	

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement	Poor	F
Organization	Paper contains an intro, main body, and conclusion. Introduction lays out main argument and gives an outline of what the reader can expect in the paper. The conclusion brings everything together, acknowledges potential shortcomings of the paper, and gives the reader a sense of what further work might be done to advance the subject matter described in the paper.	Paper contains an intro, main body, and conclusion. The introduction lays out the main argument but gives the reader little idea of what to expect in the paper. The conclusion nicely summarizes the main argument and evidence, but does not move beyond what has already been presented in the paper.	Paper contains an intro, main body, and conclusion. The introduction gives the reader an idea of what to expect in the paper, but does not effectively lay out the main argument. It may begin with a set of rhetorical questions, or an anecdote that is never fully explained. The conclusion does little more than restate the problematic introduction. Intro and/or conclusion may be too wordy or short.	Paper has no clear organizational pattern.	
Clarity and Style	All sentences are grammatically correct and clearly written. No words are misused or unnecessarily fancy. Technical terms, words from other languages, and words from other historical periods are always explained. All information is accurate and up-to-date. Paper has been spell-checked AND proofread (ideally by you and somebody else), and contains no errors.	All sentences are grammatically correct and clearly written. An occasional word is misused or unnecessarily fancy. Technical terms, words from other languages, and words from other historical periods are usually, but not always, explained. All information is accurate and up-to-date. Paper has been spell-checked AND proofread, and contains no more than a few minor errors, which do	A few sentences are grammatically incorrect or not clearly written. Several words are misused. Technical terms, words from other languages, and words from other historical periods are rarely explained. Not all information is accurate and up-to-date. Paper has been spell-checked AND proofread, but still contains several errors.	Paper is full of grammatical errors and bad writing. Several words are misused. Technical terms, words from other languages, and words from other historical periods are rarely explained. Not all information is accurate and up-to-date. Paper has not been spell-checked or proofread, and contains numerous errors. Reader has a difficult time understanding paper	

		not adversely affect the reader's ability to understand the paper.	Reader's ability to understand paper may be compromised by these errors.	because of errors.	
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Class Participation (15%):

To meet the requirement for sufficient contact time each week, there will be a combination of recorded lectures by the instructor along with online discussions by and among the students. This approach will be true for eight of the lessons. In a typical weekly lesson, the recorded presentation will be up to 60 minutes long (the student can listen to the presentation in smaller periods if desired). The students will then be presented discussion questions for response to the instructor and then comment on the inputs from other students. The time to complete this online response/comment is generally one hour; exceptions will be noted in individual lessons.

Quizzes (31%):

Three quizzes will take place during the course at select intervals. Each quiz will be the equivalent of one hour of contact time. The first two are worth 100 points and the last is worth 110 points.

Take Home Assignments (14%):

The course will include three take home assignments that focus more deeply on the evolution of and performance of standard setting and program evaluation. Each is distinctly different and is an individual student effort. There will be sufficient readings provided to do each assignment though the student is free to include other materials that he or she finds. There will be additional instructions for each of these assignments.

Research Papers (40%):

Two research papers (approximately 10 pages each) will allow the students to delve more deeply into the challenges of establishing, maintaining, and improving meaningful standards and assessment programs. While each of the papers will be important to the student's future management and leadership responsibilities in the defense security field, the possible topics for the papers can come from a number of historical or future-oriented perspectives and from the experience or challenges in a wide array of enterprises. The papers will be focused on strategic level work and not tactical (e.g. building an inspection checklist). Each paper will be worth 20% of the total course grade and will be written/submitted in stages. Outside research will be required and the Chicago style of writing used to ensure the instructor's ability to check sources.

1.8. Course Textbooks and Other Readings

The bulk of the readings for this course will draw from a variety of resources, such as authoritative readings (legislation, executive orders, policies, plans and strategies, and journals), implementation readings (government products that are responsive to or attempt to fulfill the requirements of authoritative documents), and external reviews (from the U.S. Government Accountability Office, Congressional Research Service, or other agency or office).

Unless otherwise noted, the readings that are in addition to the three textbooks will be in the appropriate readings folders on Sakai for the applicable week.

1.9 Required textbooks:

- Boulmetis, John & Dutwin, Phyllis. (2011). The ABCs of Evaluation: Timeless Techniques for Program and Project Managers, 3rd Edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Lockhart, Paul. (2008). The Drillmaster of Valley Forge. New York, NY: Harper Collins
- Wholey, Joseph S., et al. (2010). Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation (Essential Texts for Nonprofit and Public Leadership and Management), 3rd Edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

2.0. Course Outline

The following table outlines the 16-week course agenda. Graded assignments are in bold.

Week	Topics	Instructional Method	Student Assignments Due
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course overview • Introductions: Instructor and students • Overview of strategic planning and program objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Asynchronous presentation • Discussion and sharing of research resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Forum 1 • Turn in the following on first day of class: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Integrity statement 2. Student Introduction 3. Student reports on access to research databases and sites
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of assessments and program evaluations • Introduction to assessing and evaluating programs • Introduction to cost benefit analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Asynchronous presentation • Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Forum 2 • Thesis 1 due

Week	Topics	Instructional Method	Student Assignments Due
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth examination of a representative DoD program assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Forum 3 Bibliography 1
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolution of assessments in the defense establishment Defining the evaluation's scope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take Home Assignment #1
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History/evolution of standards setting processes and assessment processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper 1 Outline Quiz 1
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The business of standards, criteria, measures, and metrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take Home Assignment #2
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost benefit analysis I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Forum 4 Bibliography 2
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost benefit analysis II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Forum 5 Paper 1: Rough Draft of Paper 1
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs for assessing programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous instructions and guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thesis 2 Quiz 2
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DCIP Exercise on Challenges in Assessing Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take Home Assignment#3
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducting evaluations and assessments Measurements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Draft of Paper 1

Week	Topics	Instructional Method	Student Assignments Due
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotated Bibliography 3 Discussion Forum 6
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business case establishment Use of assessment recommendations Managerial and leadership perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotated Bibliography 4/Paper 2 Outline Discussion Forum 7
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on assessment challenges in communications security, information security, personnel security and physical security programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation Discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper 2: Rough Draft Discussion Forum 8
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on assessment challenges in R&D, operations security, industrial security, counterintelligence, and special access programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Paper 2 Final Draft
16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspectors General, ombudsmen, and whistleblowers What's ahead in program evaluation Course Wrap-Up and Critique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Asynchronous presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiz 3