From Global to National Security: Emerging Trends and Challenges

Course Agenda

MONDAY, July 30

Module 1: 9 a.m. to noon: The International Security Environment

We live in a world of rapidly changing threats to our security, a world vastly different from that of the Cold War. While state actor threats persist, the international security environment now includes threats posed by non-state actor groups, such as terrorist organisations, threats generated by the effects of globalization, and looming problems affecting the environment. This module tries to address a fundamental question—what do we now mean by “global security.”

Brown Bag Lunch, noon to 1 p.m.

Module 2: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.: The Canadian Security Environment

Canadians have traditionally thought of themselves as living in a security safe space. This assumption has been challenged by changes to the global security environment in recent decades as well as the role that Canada has played internationally. In this module we try to understand the linkages between global security and national security, and come up with a working understanding of what the key challenges to Canadian national security might be, now and stretching into the future.

Topic: What are the core threats to Canadian national security?

TUESDAY, July 31

Module 3: 9 a.m. to noon: Terrorism and its Impacts on Global Security

Terrorism has emerged as a significant global security threat, leading to instability, state failures, stresses on state foreign and domestic policies, violence at home and abroad, sectarian divides and civil wars. While terrorism is not new, it has a new face and poses a new kind of threat to global peace.

Lunch, 12:00 noon to 1:00

Module 4: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.: Terrorism at Home: The Canadian experience and response

Canada’s historical experience of terrorism involved concerns about the importation of homeland conflicts from abroad. Our current experience is fundamentally different, involving the challenges of dealing with attacks undertaken by individuals or small groups in Canada inspired by the ideology and strategic messaging of overseas groups. Canada, like many other societies also faces the perplexing challenge of dealing with returning “foreign fighters,” who are dispersing globally from terrorist conflict zones. This module explores the contemporary terrorism threat within Canada and the complex mix of national and international actions that might be required to fully meet that threat.

WEDNESDAY, August 1

Module 5: 9 a.m. to noon: The New World of Global espionage

Spying is an ancient practice that has been fundamentally transformed by new technologies, new opportunities, new actors, and the new shape of the global security environment. Espionage is no longer a monopoly of the state and is no longer simply about stealing state secrets. We are witnessing the expansion of the spy game and the arrival of full-on ‘influence operations,’ designed not to understand an adversary but to change an adversary’s behavior or limit its power. More intensive spying of all kinds promises the potential of greater global security, and at the same time of much less global stability.

Brown Bag Lunch, 12:00 noon to 1:00

Module 6: 1 p.m to 3 p.m.: Canada’s spy establishment

Canada deploys intelligence gathering both at home and abroad, to be serve the national interest and sustain national security. This effort has grown substantially since 9/11 with new resources, new organisations, new powers, and new challenges. New commitments have been made to increase Canada’s spy capabilities further, to meet global challenges. One big question is whether Canada pivots from domestic to international intelligence gathering in the face of the new global security environment.
THURSDAY, August 2

Module 7: 9 a.m. to noon: The Security-Rights Balance in Western Democracies

One of the most challenging features of dealing with new global and domestic security threats is the maintenance of the critical balance in protecting both democratic rights and security. This module explores the nature of that balance and the societal elements that contribute to it, including governance, democratic institutions, the rule of law, public culture, and resilience.

Guest Expert, Professor Craig Forcese, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa

Brown Bag Lunch, 12:00 noon to 1:00

Module 8: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.: The Canadian context: Democratic Accountability for security and intelligence

One of the ways in which security powers can be controlled and the balance achieved between security and rights protections is through strong review and accountability mechanisms. The current Liberal government in Canada is engaged in a fundamental overhaul of the system of security and intelligence review system in Canada, including a new role for Parliament. This module will explore the evolution of the Canadian practice of accountability and seek to assess the new measures that are being introduced. Will they make us safer? Will they make us more cognizant of our rights and their protections?

Guest Expert: Susan Decker, Director of Research, Security Intelligence Review Committee

FRIDAY, August 3

Module 9: 9 a.m. to noon: Global Cyber: From Information to Aggression

New cyber capabilities in the global information space have opened up a range of threats, from all-out cyber warfare, to cyber criminality, cyber espionage, influence operations and cyber covert operations. The range of threats is dramatic and new, and global institutions and global diplomacy are finding them hard to cope with. Can this cyber “wild west” be effectively moderated and tamed by global action, and what harms does it pose, now and in the future, including to the freedom of the internet, if not?

Guest Expert, TBA:

Democratic interference: A New Threat on the Block?

In 2011, the Canadian government issued its first ever Cyber Security Strategy. Changes to the nature of the cyber universe and its threats rapidly outpaced this strategy. What are Canadian capacities and policies designed to deal with the new forms of cyber threats? How effective are they? Do the terms cyber defence and offence make sense? Are we leaning towards a future in which offense is the new defence? What would a new cyber security strategy for Canada look like?

* Course ends for SPI registrants at noon *