

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Political Science 142j
National Security Strategy

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Fall Quarter 2006

**Policy Memorandum #2:
How to Induce Iran and Syria Not to Meddle in Iraq**

As instability inside Iraq becomes an increasing problem, President George Bush has grown concerned about meddling by the governments of Iran and Syria to support some groups with ambitions antithetical to American interests and to increase instability in Iraq. The President would like to announce a policy that would deter (or compel) these two governments not to meddle covertly or overtly.

The President has asked you, “As an expert on coercive diplomacy, you can advise me on the options that are available to me to address this problem: Enumerate the options available to me, evaluate these options in the context of the current insurgency in Iraq and the wider war against terrorism, and recommend a policy that I can announce.”

Your Research and Analysis

Your memorandum should be five to seven double-spaced pages. It should follow carefully the guidelines outlined on the back of this assignment.

You do not need to undertake any research for this paper beyond reviewing the assigned readings and lectures. When using the assigned materials, you do not need to use footnotes or include a bibliography. You may simply refer to materials in the readings by the author’s last name. Assume that the material in lectures is common knowledge that does not need to be cited.

If you use sources outside the assigned reading, please give proper credit to the source with [1] either footnotes or in-text citations and [2] either a bibliography or a list of references. (If you are unfamiliar with university policies on plagiarism, please consult the university documents that define these.)

Submission of Your Paper

Please complete both of the following submission requirements:

- [1] You should submit a hard copy of your paper no later than the final examination, which begins at **3:00 pm on Tuesday, December 5**. Note that this is 4 days later than the deadline printed in the syllabus.
- [2] You should also submit an electronic copy of your paper to turnitin.com. The Class ID is 1691981 and the Enrollment Password is 573275. This is, of course, assignment #2.

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What is a Policy Memorandum?

Policy memoranda are prepared by analysts who work in either the public or private sector. These memoranda are consumed by all governmental agencies from the Department of Agriculture to the White House Staff and by a wide array of private clients from banks to charitable-relief agencies. A client typically requests such a memorandum when the client must make a decision to take action (or take no action). Analysts then identify the options available to the client, assess the consequences (both positive and negative) that would follow from each option, and suggest one or the other of the options (or some combination of options).

When preparing your own memorandum you should keep in mind the following guidelines:

1. **Address the client who will receive your memorandum.** You should write your memorandum with a clear sense of the objectives of your client. You must put yourself in the client's position in order to help her/him solve her/his problem (nor *your* problem).
2. **Open with a summary of the central points of your memorandum.** You may want to give this section the heading "Summary" or (even better) a section heading that expresses the main point. You should state at the very beginning in a few sentences the major point of your memorandum that you want the client to take away. A client is almost always a busy person and you want your main message to grab her/his attention *immediately*.
3. **Frame "the problem."** What is the problem and what interests does the client have at stake? The client in this case has already focused this on "the context of the current insurgency in Iraq and the wider war against terrorism."
4. **Enumerate the options for responding to these problems.** What can the United States do? State the options clearly and crisply. Once again, remember that you are trying to grab the attention of a busy person. "Bullets" or numbered lists may make key points stand out, but always explain each point in a full sentence.
 - a. **Predict the consequences of each alternative.** Most options will have a mixture of desired and undesired consequences. Some may be ineffective. The consequences of others may be uncertain. You should identify these consequences and uncertainties. You should attempt to assign some (notional) probability to each consequence; that is, which consequences are highly likely and which are improbable if the client selects a particular option?
 - b. **Provide some "evidence" for your expectations.** Since we cannot know the future (such as the future consequences of our current actions), we develop expectations based on observed consequences of similar actions in the past. What is the evidence for your expectation?
 - c. **Weigh the options with respect to the objectives of your client.** That is, will the net effect of an option serve the interests of the United States? Remember that you have defined these interests in your description of the problem, so you should weigh the consequences of each option in terms of the interests that you have said are at stake. Which option or combination of options do you recommend?

When actually writing your memorandum you should probably organize it with [1] information for transmittal (e.g., DATE:, TO:, FROM:, SUBJECT:), [2] an opening paragraph labeled "Summary" or with a punchy phrase that captures the central recommendation, [3] labeled sections such as "The Problem," "Options" (which includes evaluation of each), and "Recommendations." Of course, it might help a busy client, if you substituted for generic section labels a word or brief phrase that expresses the central point of each section.

Please remember that effective memoranda must be *brief, clear, direct, and crisply formulated*.