

PO382-30 Vigilant State: Understanding Secret Intelligence

26/27

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Richard Aldrich

Credit value

30

Module duration

20 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

In short, this module aims to introduce to the various debates that have characterised the use of secret service by the state in the international and domestic context. Although the terms 'espionage', 'intelligence' and 'secret service' are all central to the concerns of this module they have been deliberately avoided in the above module description given in the handbook. This is because this module aims to situate all these things in a broader governmental context, viewing them as aspects of international statecraft or as constitutional problems or as issues of civil rights. Accordingly, this module is as much about how policy-makers make use, or fail to make use, of intelligence, and how secret services might be regulated within a constitutional framework, as about the practice of secret service itself.

Module aims

The module aims to:

- develop an understanding of the origins and developments of intelligence services
- explore the main theoretical approaches to intelligence and surveillance
- offer an understanding of the issues surrounding intelligence failure

analyse key ethical and policy dilemmas and issues raised by CT intelligence
assess the contemporary debates about globalization and the future of intelligence

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

This module aims to investigate the nature of the 'vigilant state'. It focuses upon the apparatus developed by modern states to permit the surveillance of both international and domestic threats to their security - although the boundaries of the state are now fuzzy at best. It will examine the major competing theories concerning the repeated failure of the vigilant state in the face of surprise attack at the international level, subjecting these to careful comparative analysis and reviewing the competing theoretical explanations. Consideration will be given to the role of domestic political monitoring within both democratic and authoritarian states. Attention will also be given to the problem of reconciling clandestine and/or covert methods, traditionally associated with operational efficiency, with the degree of transparency and accountability normally expected of the executive of a democratic state. The final section of the module will turn to look at the future development of some of these issues against a background of rapid technical change and globalisation including cybersecurity and online covert action .

In short, this module aims to introduce to the advanced debates that have characterised the use of secret service by the state in the international and domestic context. Although the terms 'espionage', 'intelligence' and 'secret service' are all central to the concerns of this module they have been deliberately avoided because this module aims to situate all these things in a broader governmental context, viewing them as aspects of international statecraft or as constitutional problems or as issues of civil rights. Accordingly, this module is as much about how policy-makers make use, or fail to make use, of intelligence, and how secret services might be regulated within a constitutional framework, as about the practice of secret service itself.

The module seeks to:

develop an advanced understanding of the origins and developments of intelligence services
explore the latest theoretical approaches to intelligence and surveillance
offer a sophisticated understanding of the issues surrounding intelligence failure
analyse key ethical and policy dilemmas and issues raised by CT intelligence
assess the contemporary debates about globalization and the future of intelligence
examine the importance of cyberespionage and the rise of 'hybrid war'
consider the importance of conspiracy theory

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- demonstrate an advanced appreciation of the historical context of intelligence
- critically discuss the characteristics of the accountability frameworks in a sophisticated way
- assess the strengths and weaknesses of advanced theoretical debates governing the intelligence cycle

- critically analyse, in writing, the current issues facing national and regional approaches to intelligence

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

Subject specific skills

In addition to the acquisition of subject knowledge, students:

Will be able to debate and develop ideas about security and public policy.

Will be able to communicate scientific concepts to a non-specialist audience.

Will have the skills to plan and carry out an extended essay at an advanced level.

Will have demonstrated critical understanding of relevant theories and practices.

Transferable skills

Having studied this module, students:

Will be able to manage their time effectively.

Will be able to communicate effectively.

Will be able to organise, prioritise and negotiate effectively.

Will have demonstrated the ability to advance and extend their knowledge through significant independent learning and research.

Will develop their skills in the area of oral argument and policy debate.

Will have demonstrated the ability to produce a clear and detailed written literature report with appropriate presentation.

Will have demonstrated the ability to engage in reflective practice and produce a clear and detailed piece of reflective writing with appropriate presentation, reflecting on their work.

Will have demonstrated the ability to develop and deliver a clear and engaging oral presentation on their work.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	18 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	18 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	224 hours (86%)
Total	260 hours

Private study description

TBC

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Written Assignment 1500 word literature review	25%	10 hours	Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Essay	75%	30 hours	Yes (extension)
This extensive 4500 word essay will allow students to combine theoretical, empirical and policy studies perspectives on complex subjects such as the the role of intelligence failure 9/11 attacks. The previous essay length (3000) has proved rather too constrained and has not allowed students to realise their full potential.			
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Detailed written feedback on both Literature review and Essay

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- UECA-4 Undergraduate Economics 4 Year Variants
 - Year 2 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
 - Year 4 of LM1H Economics, Politics & International Studies with Study Abroad
- Year 3 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MQ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite) with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of V7MH Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Economics/Philosophy Bipartite (Economics Major) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MF Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Economics/Politics Bipartite (Economics Major) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MI Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Philosophy/Economics Bipartite (Philosophy Major) (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MJ Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Philosophy/Politics Bipartite (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MG Philosophy, Politics and Economics - Politics/Economics Bipartite (Politics Major) (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 4 of UPOA-M101 Undergraduate Politics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 3 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 4 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 4 of UPOA-M167 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - Year 3 of V7MR Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major)
 - Year 3 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
- UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MS Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of V7MQ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite) with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of V7MM Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite) (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law

- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 4 of UPOA-M16B Undergraduate Politics and International Studies (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 4 of UPOA-ML14 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- Year 4 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16D Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German (3 year degree)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 3 of UPOA-M16H Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies (3 year degree)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 4 of UHIA-VM15 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list C for:

- UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
 - Year 3 of V7MP Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite)
 - Year 3 of V7ML Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite)
- UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of V7MS Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite with Economics Major) (with Intercalated Year)
 - Year 4 of V7MQ Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Bipartite) with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of V7MM Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Tripartite) (with Intercalated year)

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 4 of UHIA-VM12 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad)
- Year 3 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics