

Harris School of Public Policy
University of Chicago
PPHA 33420
Mondays 8:00 am – 10:50 am, Keller 2112

Congressman Mike Quigley

Fall 2025: Contemporary US Intelligence (PPHA 33420)

Background and Goals

The course examines the U.S. Intelligence Community and its role in national security. It will analyze the intelligence cycle including planning and direction, collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination. It will also focus on topics such as warning and surprise, denial and deception, covert action, oversight and the role of policy makers, civil liberties, ethics and accountability, and intelligence reform. Additionally, it will compare the organization and activities of foreign intelligence agencies with the U.S. model. Many of these topics will be analyzed through the context of current events including Trump's impact on the intelligence community, intelligence / counterterrorism operations in Afghanistan, Ukraine, and the classified documents issue. The course will feature high ranking current and former intelligence officials as guest speakers. No prior study of intelligence issues is required.

This course is taught by Congressman Mike Quigley (IL-5), a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Congressman Quigley is currently serving his fifth term on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which oversees the activities of the U.S. intelligence community.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to taking this course.

Relationship to other programs

This course is not part of any Harris certificate programs.

How this class will work

- **Logistics:** This class will meet in-person on Mondays from 8:00 am – 10:50 am.
- **Special Dates:**
 - Midterm: Monday, November 17, 2025
 - Final paper due: Monday, November 24, 2025
- **Canvas Usage:** All course correspondence will be handled via Canvas. Canvas will be used for material dissemination, class communication, course scheduling, and assignment submission.
- **Class Content:** Class time will be used primarily for lectures and instruction by Congressman Quigley, class discussion, and presentations from guest speakers. Please see the schedule below for a list of this year's guest speakers.
- **Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to attend every class in-person. Attendance will be part of your final grade. Please refer to the "Student assignments" section below for

more details about the attendance policy. If there are circumstances that arise that prohibit a student from attending class, please email the Teaching Assistants (TA's).

Student assignments

- Major assignments with weighting:
 - Midterm: 40% of grade
 - Final Paper: 40% of grade
 - Attendance: 10% of grade
 - Students can earn up to 10 attendance points - 1 point for each week they are in attendance except for week 9, where they can earn 2 points.
 - Students are authorized 1 “excused” absence where they will still receive credit for attendance despite not being in class. For an absence to be considered “excused”, the student must email the TAs prior to class beginning. No credit will be given if the student fails to contact the TAs prior to the beginning of class. Students will not receive more than 1 excused absence for any reason.
 - Participation: 10% of grade
 - Students can earn up to 10 participation points by engaging with speakers in class and / or engaging with Congressman Quigley during lectures. Grades will be assigned using a holistic view of participation (number of times spoken, quality of questions asked, etc.).

Readings, Topics, and Schedules

- Course Reading Material:
 - Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy*, 10th Edition (CQ Press, 2025)
 - Old Testament, The Book of Numbers, Chapter 13 (all) and Chapter 14 (verses 1-8, 26, 30-38) (Available Online)
 - Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Chapter 13 on “Using Spies” (Available Online)
 - Mike Morell, *The Great War of Our Time*, (Grand Central Publishing, 2015) – Paperback Edition
 - Michael G. Vickers, *By All Means Available*, (Penguin Random House, 2023)
 - Additional reading materials will be distributed throughout the quarter in accordance with our guest speakers’ lecture topics

Grading Policies and Procedures

- All assignments for this course are to be completed individually. There are no group assignments.
- Assignments that are submitted late without the consent of the instructor will be penalized accordingly.

- Course grades will follow the Harris Core Courses curve (12.5% A, 25% A-, 25% B+, 25% B, 12.5% B- or below). Congressman Quigley reserves the right to slightly modify the grade distribution (upwards) based on student performance.
- To take the course Pass / Fail, students must obtain written consent from Congressman Quigley. Email the TAs if you wish to take the course Pass / Fail.

Electronics Policy

Cell phones are prohibited during class. If you must use a cell phone, please step out of the classroom to do so. Laptops are allowed during class, but only for taking notes. Neither cell phones nor laptops will be allowed when guest speakers visit.

Instructor Office Hours

The TAs will hold weekly office hours on Mondays after class from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm in Keller 2050. Students can email the TAs to set up individual office hours if they prefer. Congressman Quigley will make time for student appointments; available times will be announced throughout the quarter. Please email the TAs with any requests to meet with the Congressman outside of normal class time.

Teaching assistants

TA: Syed Ahmad

Contact Email: sahmad40@uchicago.edu

TA: Liam Gluck

Contact Email: lgluck@uchicago.edu

Teaching and learning in person, dual-modality, and/or remote environments

All students are expected to attend each class in person, although select classes may be held virtually due to Congressional scheduling constraints. Apart from those exceptions, lectures will not be provided virtually and will not be recorded.

General Resources Available to Students

- [Harris Academic Support Programs and Handbook](#)
- [Student Wellness](#)
- [University Learning Resources](#)

Harris School and University of Chicago Policies

- [Harris School Policies](#)
- [University General Policies](#)
- [University Academic Policies](#)
- Policies on audio and video [recordings](#) and [deletion](#)

Academic Integrity

All University of Chicago students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Among other things, this means that students shall not represent another's work as their own, use un-allowed materials during exams, or otherwise gain an unfair academic advantage. All students suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Harris Dean of Students for investigation and adjudication. The disciplinary process can result in sanctions up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University. I, Congressman Quigley, will impose a grade penalty of 0 for students who have committed academic dishonesty. The Harris School of Public Policy and the University of Chicago policies that outline these expectations are linked above.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

- A. Course Policy:
 - a. AI cannot be used to compose any content for submittable assignments.
 - b. AI can be used to conduct research for course assignments, but the information taken from an AI source must be properly cited.
- B. Responsible Use of AI:
 - a. Students take full responsibility for the accuracy of AI-generated content.
 - b. Students should review and edit any generated content to avoid inaccuracies, biased outputs, or misinterpretations. Over-reliance on AI content, without proper attribution, may lead to unintentional plagiarism, as LLMs (Large Language models) have been accused of plagiarism. Students must exercise caution to ensure their contributions are appropriately credited.
 - c. Over-reliance on LLMs may limit students' accumulation of skills and understanding of the material, so it is advised that students conduct their own research before using AI.

Course Schedule

Monday, September 29 Lowenthal, Ch. 1-4 Old Testament Readings Sun Tzu, Ch. 13 Intel 101 Handout	Class Introduction – Class Overview, Review of Intelligence Basics and the Intel 101 document
Monday, October 6 Lowenthal, Ch. 5-6 Morell, Ch. 1-14	Collection and Analysis, Covert Action Guest Speaker: Former CIA Director Mike Morell
Monday, October 13 Handout	Human Intelligence Collection, the Art of Recruiting Spies and Stealing Secrets

	Guest Speaker: Daniel Hoffman, Former CIA Station Chief, Moscow
Monday, October 20 Lowenthal, Ch. 9-10	Managing the CIA Under President Trump
Monday, October 27 Lowenthal, Ch. 8	The Evolution of Surveillance Law, Reform, and Ethics Guest Speaker: Glenn Gerstell, Former General Counsel, National Security Agency
Monday, November 3 Lowenthal, Ch. 7 Handout	Military Intelligence, Covert Action Links Between the CIA and the Military Guest Speaker: Michael Vickers, Former Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence
Monday, November 10	Counterintelligence, Intelligence Community Under the Trump and Biden Administrations, and Lessons From Mar-a-Lago
Monday, November 17	Midterm Exam
Monday, November 24 Lowenthal, Ch. 11-12	Final paper Due No Class – Thanksgiving Break
Monday, December 1 Lowenthal, Ch. 13-15	Relationship Between Intel and Policy Makers
*As Needed	Remote Lecture(s) and/or Exam Review(s)

*** Congressman Quigley reserves the right to adjust this schedule based on the availability of the course's guest speakers.**