Do you have what it takes?

- Do you want to make a difference by helping to protect your country?
- Do you like researching a wide variety of topics critical to national security?
- Do you enjoy learning about new cultures and languages?
- Do you want to work with the best and brightest while solving challenging analytic questions?
- Are you interested in a career of service to others?

If so, you may become an intelligence analyst.

CENTER FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI
The U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) is made up of 16 different agencies led by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. The IC includes the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of State, Department of Treasury, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), National Security Agency (NSA), U.S. Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps and Navy.

Analysts, also known as intelligence analysts or intelligence officers, manage and produce intelligence on regional, transnational, scientific, military and technical topics. Key functions include conducting research and gathering information, identifying intelligence gaps, interpreting and evaluating information from multiple (and sometimes contradictory) sources, monitoring trends and events related to a particular country or issue, and preparing written and oral assessments based on current events. As an analyst, your customers would include national policymakers, military commanders and other IC members.

Overview

The ISS program is unique in that, unlike other minors at UM, students must apply and undergo a selection process to gain admittance. Each spring semester, the CISS accepts a new cohort of students to its program.

The Center for Intelligence and Security Studies (CISS) at the University of Mississippi offers an 18-hour minor in intelligence and security studies (ISS), which prepares outstanding students for entry-level positions in the U.S. Intelligence Community.

To apply, students must have taken or currently be enrolled in ISS 125 and pass the course with at least a B average as well as have at least a 3.0 overall GPA. Applications are available from January to February with a new cohort chosen each March. Once accepted to the minor, students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA to remain in the cohort. Our students major in different programs including critical languages (e.g., Arabic, Chinese), computer and physical science, international studies, accounting and business. We encourage outstanding students from any academic discipline on campus to apply.
Internships

What is an internship? Most people think that an internship involves getting coffee for people, making copies and running countless errands. Internships are different in the IC. An internship with the intelligence community serves more like a 10-week-long job interview. You will gain valuable experience, do real work that matters, and often obtain a security clearance, which is necessary for the important work required of you.

The ISS minor requires all students to complete an internship. This opportunity allows you to put into practice what you have learned in the classroom. It opens up new avenues for employment and will provide you with valuable work experience that gives you a competitive edge in the job market. CISS encourages students to apply for internships with federal IC agencies such as the CIA, FBI and NSA. However, we understand that, due to other commitments, not all students can align their schedule to complete a federal IC internship. Therefore, students may opt for many local internship opportunities and even telecommuting options that still allow you to contribute to the security of our nation and gain valuable work experience.

Internships are one of the most important experiences students can undertake to aid in securing a job after graduation. CISS will help you find the right internship: one that aligns with your career and academic goals. This can be an intimidating experience, but our staff will aid you every step of the way and help make your internship a rewarding experience.

The ISS minor consists of six mandatory courses:

- **ISS 125: Introduction to Intelligence Studies**
  CISS offers this course to all students at UM. It includes an overview of the IC, including its history, the intelligence cycle, laws and ethics, and future national security issues.

- **ISS 351: Advanced Analytics I**
  This course introduces students to advanced analytic methodologies used by the IC as well as skills related to writing and briefing for policymakers. By the conclusion of the course, students will demonstrate their ability to analyze information and communicate effectively.

- **ISS 352: Advanced Analytics II**
  This course follows ISS 351 and continues developing students’ advanced analytic, writing and briefing skills. This course concentrates on “learning by doing” with students completing numerous case studies and writing and briefing assignments.

  This course, which relies heavily on fundamentals of strategic intelligence and futures research, introduces students to challenges they will likely face over the course of a career in the IC.

- **ISS 490: Internship**
  Students complete an internship involving intelligence analysis. Internships may be completed at a government intelligence agency or within the private sector. CISS has a career-planning specialist to assist students in procuring an internship.

- **ISS 499: Senior Thesis/Capstone Project**
  Students will apply the skills they learned in all previous courses to complete a project of practical benefit to the IC.
CISS offers many opportunities for students admitted to the cohort, including participation in international intelligence conferences and visits to agencies across the region as well as in Washington, D.C. In addition, CISS hosts the annual Days of Intrigue, a weekend-long practical intelligence case study that includes participation from agencies across the IC and takes place in the spring. All students accepted into the CISS program are invited to participate as well as students from similar undergraduate and graduate programs throughout the country. Students are divided into teams of different U.S. intelligence agencies including the CIA, FBI, DIA, NGA and the State Department. Mentors, who are real-life analysts from the U.S. Intelligence Community, support and guide the students through the exercise, and provide insightful tips on briefing, communication and assumptions.

Students form valuable professional networks and relationships with their mentors. These relationships usually assist students later on in their internship and career search.

Previous Days of Intrigue topics have included Russian intrusion in Ukraine and Belarus, Chinese military movement near Africa, hostage situations with large terrorist organizations, a large-scale cyberattack and threats from international biomedical warfare.

Students receive a vast amount of information during Days of Intrigue. The agencies in the exercise are tasked with interpreting information, finding trends and sharing the intelligence with other agencies. By the end of the weekend, students have become familiar with the analytic process, producing reports and briefing. On the last day of the simulation, students prepare a brief to policymakers to explain their assessment of the situation at hand. Analysts hope to equip the policymakers with enough knowledge to make a thoughtful decision. Days of Intrigue gives students a great opportunity to practice briefing and analysis, and receive tips and feedback from real-life policymakers.