

Capstone 2018 – Team W

Overview:

Capstone is an interdisciplinary group project designed to apply what students have learned in their CGS coursework over the past two years to real world issues and/or problems. Students are expected to submit a double-spaced, 50- page research paper on a topic from the list below and defend it before the Team W faculty in a two-hour oral defense. *No extensions will be permitted.* All individual research findings will be posted on e-portfolio. Each member of the group should create a tab on their e-portfolio where individual contributions, as well as the final project should be posted.

Format:

In addressing a topic, groups will assume a fictional identity, such as relevant governing body, subcommittee or task force, or, perhaps an appropriate citizens' advocacy lobby, or an independent panel of experts. By taking this hands-on approach, it is hoped students can gain a better understanding of the pros and cons of a particular issue and respond accordingly. The group will consider many of the ethical, philosophical, social, domestic political, international security, scientific, and technological implications of the chosen problem and of the proposed policy. Policy proposals should reflect careful research and clear thinking.

Sourcing:

Only references from credible newspaper, magazine, book, government, academic journal and web sites will be acceptable. Oral interviews with relevant individuals pertaining to the subject matter are also strongly encouraged. All cited sources will be presented in a manner consistent the MLA 8th edition style: use in-text parenthetical citations for quotations and summarized/paraphrased material; use footnotes or endnotes in limited fashion only for brief explanatory and extra information too distracting to be in the main text; provide a Works Cited for all sources referenced in the Capstone paper itself; provide also a Bibliography for all sources consulted and used during the research and the writing. The Purdue Owl MLA 8th edition link has all the particulars and good visual examples: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Requirements:

- 1. Groups:** The Capstone project is a group project. The groups will be constructed according to criteria established by your team's faculty. You will be a member of your group during the entire project. Each group will need to work out for itself some form of division of labor and responsibility. Each member of the group will be responsible not only to herself or himself, but to the other members as well.
- 2. Project Grades:** You will receive one grade for the Project as a whole. This grade will make up 25% of your semester grade in each of the CGS classes in which you are enrolled second semester: Social Science 202, Natural Science 202, and Humanities 202. There will be three components of your grade: the Capstone paper, the oral defense, and your individual participation in the project. You will be evaluated as a **group** on the Capstone paper (in other words, each member of the group will receive the same paper grade), but as **individuals** on the oral defense and participation. Thus, each individual will be evaluated on the paper, his or her performance during the oral defense, and his or her participation in the total project. Your overall Capstone grade will be a combination of these three components. (Note: While Capstone groups will not receive written comments on their papers, the faculty team will provide each group with substantial verbal feedback during the oral defense.)

3. Reporting of Capstone Grades: Team faculty do not assign individual Capstone grades until all oral defenses have been completed. In order that reporting may be uniform among teams, all individual Capstone grades will be posted electronically Monday, May 14th. You will receive only your overall Capstone grade as this is what constitutes 25% of your grade in each course.

4. The Capstone Paper: The length of the Capstone paper should be no more than 50 pages (typed, double-spaced, 12-point font). The 50-page limit does not include preliminary pages (table of contents, etc.) or endnotes, bibliography, or appendices. Bound copies of the paper must be provided for each faculty member. Also, each member of the group needs access to a copy of the entire document (either written hard-copy or electronic) in order to prepare for, and participate in, the oral defense.

5. The Oral Defense: After the Capstone paper has been submitted to the faculty, your group will meet at an appointed time to defend its work before your team faculty. The oral defense usually lasts about two hours. Each group member should be prepared to answer questions on *all* aspects of the paper, the topic, and the research.

6. Eportfolio: As part of the Capstone project, you need to set up a "Capstone" tab on your Digication e-Portfolio site and keep a record of your work on the project. Your e-Portfolio can be a good tool for keeping track of your progress on the project, and it can also be useful in determining your participation. **Add a page link** for each of the following: **1.** A weekly log of your individual contributions to the project (discuss the books and articles you have read, discuss the drafts you have written, list the group meetings you have attended, etc.). **2.** All drafts you have written even those bits that do not make the group's final cut. **3.** Your individual Capstone self-assessment which you will write once your group's final Capstone paper has been submitted and to assess the Capstone project as the culmination of your two years at the College of General Studies. This information will help the College better understand how the Capstone experience relates to your coursework and your intellectual development. The Capstone self-assessment consists of three questions. Please respond thoughtfully to each question. The total length of your self-assessment should be approximately two double-spaced pages. You should post your self-assessment on the Capstone tab of your e-Portfolio site before your oral defense, and you also should bring a printed copy of your self-assessment to your oral defense. Here are the three questions: (1) How did the Capstone project contribute to the development of your research, writing, and editing skills? (2) Did you learn anything new about how to use evidence to formulate a strong argument? Please provide specific examples. (3) To what extent did your coursework at the College of General Studies prepare you for the interdisciplinary nature of the Capstone project? Again, please provide specific examples.

Plagiarism:

Any student/students found guilty of using unauthorized or uncredited portions of a work not their own will be disciplined to the fullest extent under the guidelines established by the University's Academic Conduct Code. All students, all Capstone groups are required to run the finished Capstone document through TurnItIn on the Capstone Blackboard site.

SCHEDULE

Capstone Kickoff: Friday, March 23rd at 10:10 in room 130 SED. Required attendance.

Meeting for Topic Selection: Thursday, March 29th and/or Friday March 30th, meet with *all* your group members independently and select topic.

First and Second Mandatory Faculty-Group Meetings: Week of April 2nd (TBA)

Third Mandatory Faculty-Group Meetings: Week of April 9th (TBA)

The purpose of these mandatory meetings is to finalize project topics and to ask all relevant questions pertaining to the research, composition and sourcing of the paper. Additional meetings can be scheduled at the request of the individual group.

Completing the Capstone: Weeks of April 16th and April 23rd

During this critical fortnight, individual team faculty members will be available for office hours on a daily basis

Capstone Turn-In: Friday, April 27 at 12 noon in the JSA. Mandatory attendance by all members of Capstone Groups.

Oral Defenses: Weeks of April 30th and May 7th (TBA)

TOPICS

1. The Future of Space Exploration

In 2002, Elon Musk launched SpaceX, a private entity that has the purported goal of colonizing Mars. Since that time, SpaceX has become the first private company to launch a rocket into orbit and has gained a contract with NASA to supply the international space station. This contrasts with how space exploration has been funded in the past. National control of space exploration has led to the development of many technologies that are useful for the public, but has also suffered from lapses in funding. Furthermore, there has been hot debate over the types of projects federal funding should be used for. Should space exploration be used to develop weapons? Should it be used to search for extraterrestrial life or mine for minerals on other planets?

For this topic, think about what (if any) the regulations on private space exploration should be? How should the remaining federal funding be distributed among projects and who should decide which projects get funded? Look at the current funding and rules for space exploration and design a comprehensive policy to deal with the future of space exploration considering both the private industry and federal programs.

2. The Opioid Crisis

While all agree that the United States is in the grip of an opioid epidemic, a substantial number of conflicting attitudes about addiction and about obligations to those the opioid crisis affects have failed to resolve or even to offer viable and actual practical approaches or solutions that would help. Whether at the local, the state, the regional, or the national level, politicians, health professionals, social workers, and so forth, institutions and individuals

acknowledge the need for clear policy measures, but disagree with the ideal way(s) to formulate and then to implement a policy. Historically, what hurdles have hindered lawmakers and health advocates from producing a coherent and workable policy? What effects have recent approaches to addiction brought to current governmental regulations about drugs and drug use in the United States? How does scientific research intersect or collide with socioeconomic realities and with community values? How do approaches such as safe injection sites blur the lines between law, medical treatment, and addiction? These kinds of questions are only a few that inevitably arise when considering this problem. Design a policy for treating the opioid epidemic that draws on the past and current research, trials, and approaches to underpin your new policy's practicality and sustainability.

3. The United States' Nuclear Arsenal: What Meets the Need?

The United States' nuclear arsenal has been reduced dramatically under a series of nuclear arms reduction treaties signed with the Soviet Union in 1991 and with its successor state, the Russian Federation, in 1993 and 2002. The Russian nuclear arsenal has been similarly reduced by those treaties. The most recent treaty, New START, which was signed by the United States and the Russian Federation in 2010 and took effect in January 2011, calls for further reductions by both countries to a level of 1,550 deployed warheads and 700 delivery vehicles by 2018. In 2013 President Obama suggested that US arsenal could be reduced to even lower levels, to between 1,000 and 1,100, and there are specialists in the field who are arguing for even deeper cuts. In sharp contrast, there are prominent defense specialists who argue that the United States needs a force of 2,700 to 3,000 deployed nuclear warheads to meet its defense needs. They argue further that going below New START levels would be irresponsible before the impact of that treaty's reductions has been assessed, especially in light of Russia's extensive nuclear modernization program, China's nuclear arsenal, and other emerging security threats such as those posed by Iran and North Korea. Which side's argument is more compelling, and why?

The size of the United States' nuclear arsenal actually is only half the question of how to make sure the U.S. arsenal meets the country's twenty-first-century security needs. The other half involves the advanced age of U.S. warheads and delivery vehicles – intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), bombers, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and the submarines that would launch them – that make up that arsenal. The last American nuclear warhead was built in 1989, and all of the warheads and delivery systems in the U.S. arsenal are based on 1970s technology. They are well beyond their intended lifetime. The average age of the Minuteman III missiles, the backbone of the U.S. ICBM force, is forty-one years, and the average B-52 H bomber, the backbone of the U.S. nuclear bomber force, was first deployed a half-century ago. And it is not only the weapons that are old; the facilities to build them are even older and in a serious state of disrepair. A start in addressing this problem has been made with the construction of a huge new factory designed to modernize the United States' aging nuclear warheads. Planned during the George W. Bush administration, it was completed at a cost of \$700 million in the fall of 2014. But many experts argue that much more must be done. The current plan to modernize America's nuclear arsenal, which was formulated under the Obama administration and inherited by the Trump administration, carries an estimated price tag of 1.2 trillion dollars. Meanwhile, the American effort currently lags far behind Russia's. Other nuclear powers, including China, which has successfully tested a new multiple-warhead ICBM, also are modernizing their nuclear forces. Thus the second half of the question: Is the current program to modernize America's nuclear forces sufficient, does it need to be accelerated, or is it unnecessary and too expensive?

4. Artificial Intelligence

The development of artificial intelligence (AI) has been a cause of growing concern among both scientists and the public. This anxiety has been expressed in movies that predict apocalyptic results due to out of control artificial intelligence. Stephen Hawking and other prominent scientists has sounded more grounded fears and warned against the uncontrolled development of AI. At this time, the general public has access to what would be called narrow AI. Narrow AI refers to AI that is focused on a specific task and often able to outperform humans on that task. However, broad AI, that is able to outperform humans in many or all tasks, is likely around the corner. Yet there is no comprehensive regulation of this technology.

For this topic, define the risk of uncontrolled and unregulated AI development. Weigh the benefits against those risks and discuss regulations at a national and international level that would be needed to ensure responsible development of this technology.

5. Monuments, Memorials, and Art Exhibitions

In October 2017, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit claimed that the Peace Cross, a 40-foot-tall memorial World War I memorial in Bladensburg, Maryland was unconstitutional, turning to the First Amendment's statements about the separation of church and state for its justification. The Bladensburg Peace Cross case is only one of many examples in the conflicts about public memorials, monuments, and other artworks. More recently, the conflict has escalated to include the correctness and suitability in keeping on display works that celebrate a dominant group and negate the disenfranchised. Skeptics challenge the value in letting certain public memorials remain if they symbolize regrettable and shameful periods in America's history. Supporters fear the revisionist consequences in stripping memorials, monuments, plaques from our cities' parks and boulevards or our universities' buildings and halls, or the ramifications in remapping and relabeling the routes and sites along an historic walk or trail. The skirmish spills over into questions about a museum's obligations in its display practices. The growing power in the #MeToo, #TimesUp, and Black Lives Matter movements finds voice in the demand that art institutions prove accountability in how their collections honor, describe, and acknowledge the artists' complicity in exclusion and exploitation. Student groups and organizations at universities and colleges protest mascot, team, and club names, as, for instance, with Worcester's Holy Cross's recent conflict over keeping "Crusaders" as its sports team name. The national and/or state government's changing role in funding public institutions and public monuments complicates the discussion. Different administrations have different agendas about the arts; nonetheless the question always brings the government into playing a role in aesthetic decisions that could offend certain groups for religious, political, gender, ethnicity issues. And while private institutions may be shielded from governmental interference (or negligence), boards of trustees, alumni, historical committees, chambers of commerce, and sponsors occupy the same complicated role. Your policy should address this particular conundrum whether at the civic or institution level using past cases and legislation to support your justification for your set of recommendations and revisions you know particularly crucial.

6. The Future of NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has been the cornerstone of American and Western European security since its founding in 1949. During the Cold War, NATO tied North America and Western Europe together ensuring a unified military front against the Soviet bloc. Even with the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, NATO remained central to the trans-Atlantic relationship. Today NATO has 29 member countries, 21 countries that

associate with it through the Partnership for Peace initiative, and another 15 countries that partner with NATO through a variety of forums. While originally a collective defense organization, a role it continues to play, NATO also conducts humanitarian operations across much of the globe, especially in Africa and Asia.

Yet, the election of Donald Trump has brought into question the future of NATO. Trump's apparent hostility to NATO during the campaign and subsequent very weak affirmation that the U.S. would remain a part of it stem from his America First agenda. While prone to making wildly inaccurate claims about the NATO alliance, Trump also raised several long-standing issues that have complicated America's relationship with the organization since the Cold War ended. These problems include a lower-than-required level of funding and manpower from several NATO countries, uncertainty about NATO's long-term mission, and frictions with Russia as NATO has expanded across the entire European continent. All of which raise several core questions. Does NATO remain relevant to American security? What part should the U.S. play in helping to maintain a secure Europe?

7. Testing in Education

Increasingly states and the federal government have relied on standardized tests to measure student progress and teacher effectiveness. Funding for the school is often tied to these test results. Proponents of testing say this increasing accountability and allows for an unbiased measure of how the school is performing. However, critics question the reliability and validity of these tests. They point to issues of socioeconomic bias, discount different developmental rates in children, limit the subjects that can be covered in the classroom ("teaching to the test"), and cause unnecessary anxiety and stress in students. They also point out that countries that are rated very high in educational success, like Finland, rely less on standardized testing.

For this topic, identify the current educational testing standards for a specific group either at the state or the federal level and the agency responsible for implementing testing rules. Discuss a strategy to improve the current regulations and maximize student learning.

8. Global Food Economy

The Obama Administration's Feed the Future initiative, begun in 2010, declared the global dilemma of food insecurity was solvable. Progress in combatting food insecurity has been made, but this progress has been geographically inconsistent. For instance, in January 2015, five years after Feed the Future's inception, studies showed that some 800 million people, more than 10% of the world's population, were food insecure. Despite the number of successful programs that have been and are utilized still in some areas, they are not in place in others. Globalization adds additional concerns about public health and exploitation to food security in countries with extreme poverty. Multinational companies have found willing markets in places like Brazil and Ghana, and many who live in those countries welcome the employment opportunities they find in working for these companies. Some countries, such as Chile, have enforced a number of marketing restrictions aimed at companies like Kellogg to curb advertising practices' deleterious effects on public health. The remarkable changes in the production and distribution of food, and in the advertising for it, has been the cause of great concern from nutritionists and health experts and social theorists, even while they acknowledge the potential economic advantages for those impoverished nations. The question, then, becomes one that must address the concerns and potential best outcome for all involved – a nation's struggling economy, the nutritional well-being and good health of its people, a company's financial wealth. Your capstone

should draw on past and current corporate records, government documents, and health reports to justify the policy recommendations your group offers as its solution.

9. A Broken Relationship?: The United States and Turkey

The relationship between the United States and Turkey is a mess. Close allies during the Cold War and through the decade thereafter, the two countries have found less-and-less common ground since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. Serious disagreements over how to handle the conflict in Iraq, the civil war and subsequent refugee crisis in Syria, the rise of ISIS, and the fate of the Kurdish people have largely undermined the ability of Turkey and the United States to work together in the Middle East. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's turn toward dictatorship in recent years and his anger at the American refusal to hand over his rival, Fethullah Gulen (he lives in Pennsylvania), have further weakened the relationship.

The problem for the United States of the fractured partnership is that Turkey is of tremendous strategic importance for furthering American interests in the region. Turkey houses U.S. nuclear bombs, as part of NATO's arsenal, Turkey hosts two major American airbases, Turkey controls the Turkish Straits, which places a limit on Russia's ability to exert naval power on a global scale, and the Turkish-American intelligence partnership provides major benefits for both countries. Can the Turkish-American relationship be repaired? If yes, how? If no, then what can the U.S. replace it with?

10. The Use of Neurological Drugs

In the past few decades, there has been a substantial uptick in the use of drugs to treat neurological conditions such as ADHD and depression. This has not been without controversy. Critics of drugs to treat ADHD, such as Adderall, point to the fact that these drugs have potential ill effects including reduction in adult height and personality changes that are not fully understood. Antidepressant critics point to a possible connection with increased suicide and the fact that full effects of these drugs are not understood. For this topic, suggest a guideline that could be used by medical professionals in prescribing these kinds of drugs. You should address the concerns of critics (listed above and others), the economic and social costs of these drugs and off label uses that result from widespread prescriptions being available.

11. Philanthropy and Corporate Investment/Research Sponsorship

The United States has a long tradition of billionaire philanthropists. Think of the good works and institutions founded by those like Andrew Mellon, Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller. Think of a humanitarian like Bill Gates. The wealth of these men makes them almost as powerful as governments, letting them often set their own agendas, making them less answerable to others. Think of those like former presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, men who are not themselves rich, but whose third-party fundraising not only enriches the lives of others but, simultaneously, rehabilitates the individual behind the foundation. Unwilling to be labeled blind to human need and the human condition, large corporations or institutions enlist themselves in social causes and contemporary dilemmas. But that involvement brings with it disturbing conflicts of interest and blurred ethical boundaries. Purdue Pharma, for instance, one of the US's biggest OxyContin producers, highlights the educational services it provides the consumer and the health-care community. A convention for the American Psychiatric Association has featured symposia sponsored by the drug companies manufacturing the drugs the doctors presenting papers themselves prescribe. Other corporations and businesses seem more open in accepting responsibility for problems linked to their products and their profits. Recently, some of Apple's largest

investors have urged the corporation to address smartphone addiction in children. Tristan Harris, who originally in his work for Google, lauded the internet as a “bicycle for the mind,” founded the Center for Humane Technology in 2013 as one means to combat digital addiction. Your capstone should address the role of businesses and/or government and/or philanthropic institutions in social welfare issues and design recommendations that address the benefits and practical feasibility in their potential coexistence and collaborative goals.

12. Dealing with North Korea: A Rogue State with Nuclear Weapons

The North Korean nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs have long been perceived as a serious danger to the United States, to South Korea and other U.S. allies in the East Asian region, and to the international community more generally. In the words of Nicholas Eberstadt (“The Method in North Korea’s Madness: A Monstrous Regime’s Rational Statecraft,” *Commentary*, February 2018), for more than fifty years North Korea “has been the most exceptionally and unwaveringly militarized country on the face of the planet.” During the reign of the late Kim Jong Il (1994-2011), North Korea conducted three long-range missile tests and detonated two atomic bombs. Since 2011, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un (the son of one of Kim Jong Il’s mistresses), the pace of missile and nuclear development has accelerated, with, so far, more than a dozen launches of long-range missiles and four nuclear tests. There is no doubt that North Korea – a brutally oppressive country with a totalitarian government that flagrantly disregards its citizens’ human rights – now possesses at least a small arsenal of nuclear bombs. Since January 2017, the Kim Jong Un regime and the Donald Trump administration have engaged in name-calling and have repeatedly exchanged dire threats. North Korea insists that it now possesses hydrogen bombs and the capacity to deliver them against U.S. targets.

The rapid progress of North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs is a grave issue for American political leaders and the American people. The direct security danger to the United States is the foremost concern. Also, based on the past behavior of the North Korean regime, including its collaboration with Iran on long-range missile advancements, the U.S. government is worried that nuclear material might be sold by North Korea to a terrorist group or to another rogue state.

China, the one country with the political and economic leverage to force an end to North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, has long been unwilling to take the steps necessary to do so. Russia too has played a significant role in enabling North Korea to withstand international economic pressure. Sanctions enacted by the United Nations Security Council late in 2017 are the most far-reaching to date and have the potential to inflict major economic damage on North Korea – but only if they are vigorously enforced and are not undermined by China and Russia.

How should the United States approach the North Korean threat going forward? Can the current policy of “maximum pressure” through economic sanctions potentially succeed in forcing the abandonment by North Korea of its nuclear weapons? Conversely, can and should the United States and its allies accommodate themselves to a nuclear North Korea? Is there a viable U.S. military option for dealing with this problem? Would a very destructive but victorious war in the near future be preferable to accepting a situation where North Korea will soon be able to threaten the United States permanently with nuclear devastation?

13. Chronic Traumatic Brain Injuries (CTEs)

Scientific research conducted by Boston University’s CTE Center and the forensic

pathologist Dr. Bennet Omalu of California revealed an unsettling connection between playing professional football and the degenerative brain disease known as chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE). In early 2017, the CTE Center at BU found that 99% of former NFL players suffered from CTE like changes in their brains, including one of the worst cases even seen in former NFL player and convicted murderer Aaron Hernandez. In January of 2018, another study led by the BU CTE center found that any head injury, not just concussions, can lead to CTE. The result in the individual is symptoms that include dementia, mood and personality changes and loss of cognitive function.

In your estimation, what specific measures need to be taken to address the issue. You can consider this at the youth, high school, collegiate or professional levels. Should serious consideration be given to banning the sport?

14. Greek Life at Universities and Colleges

Since the late 1980s, the number of states that have passed laws ruling that deaths and injuries from fraternity hazing rituals should be regarded as crimes rather than accidents has grown to 44. Universities and colleges across the country have taken on this painful problem with seriousness and concern. In August 2017, American University in Washington, D.C., expelled 18 students for infractions caused by their hazing rituals. In September 2017, Louisiana State University (LSU) in Baton Rouge set up a Task Force on Greek Life to examine the fraternity culture on its campus; in early 2018, LSU's Task Force requested an extension for its study and recommendations. Florida State and Texas State Universities have requested a suspension for greek life; Penn State seeks a way to hold greek life chapters on their campus accountable for hazing deaths while also accepting their own institutional responsibility. The mission statement for the *Fraternal Information and Programming Group (FIPG)* states it is "organized for the purpose of providing information on risk management issues. The mission is to promote sound risk management policies and practices [and] to be the leading resource of risk management education, programming and information" (<https://www.bu.edu/greeklife/>). Boston University has not escaped the plague of hazing related injuries, alcoholic- and drug-fueled infractions, and civil disturbances. How does a college or university continue to support the long-respected traditions fostered by fraternities and sororities and the communal bonds they establish and, at the same time, guarantee safety for their members and respect for their place and role in our higher education system? Your capstone must address the different interests and obligation, traditions and histories, legal and philosophical avenues that guarantee the feasibility in your set of recommendations.

15. Japan

Article Nine of Japan's Constitution reads:

1. Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat of force as means of settling international disputes.
2. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of the belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Article Nine has become a focus of controversy among policymakers in both Japan and the United States because the administrations of Shinzo Abe and Donald Trump have advocated changes to Tokyo's military readiness, changes that directly challenge the validity of Article Nine. Abe's Liberal Democratic Party has a goal of creating a "normal"

Japan. The LDP has defined that term to imply that a stronger military presence is necessary so that Japan would no longer be dependent on the U.S. for defense. Among the reasons for the new position include the shifting balance of power in the Pacific caused by China's rise as well as the Trump administration's rhetoric demanding American allies provide for their own security.

Abe was the first foreign leader to meet with President Trump following his election and Japan remains one of the U.S.'s closest allies. However, the Abe administration has expanded the role of Japan's Self-Defense Forces, increased Japan's missile capabilities, and taken a more aggressive stand against China's expansion into the South Pacific. The LDP has also called for a revision of Japan's Constitution to eliminate Article Nine.

Could such changes potentially harm the balance of power in East Asia that is now dependent on a formidable American military presence? How should the Trump administration respond to the possibility of a new militarized Japan? What role, if any, should the U.S. play in supporting Abe's and the LDP's apparent quest to alter the Constitution? A Capstone on this topic could take the form of a policy proposal by the National Security Council, Congressional committee, or another government agency and should also include the impact of your proposal on other East Asian nations.

16. Public Health Regulation

Public health regulations, such as requirements that children are vaccinated before attending school, have faced opposition since they were first implemented over 100 years ago. However, it would be difficult to deny the effect these measures have had on improving health and life span. Today we continue to see opposition to these measures. Vaccination rates are falling due to movements that encourage parents to refuse inoculations for their children. Other measures, such as water fluoridation, have also been questioned. On the other hand, public concerns about toxins have proven to have merit (for example, water in Flint Michigan or BPA found in water bottles and baby bottles) and have been subject to regulation.

For this topic, you can focus on one aspect of public health regulations (vaccinations, toxins in water or food, or others) and come up with a plan to implement reasonable recommendations that will be ethical, acceptable to the public and consider the overall impact on public health.

17. Dealing with a Resurgent, and Adversarial, Russia

Hopes that a post-Soviet Russia would develop into a democratic society now look misplaced. Under current president Vladimir Putin, Russia has become an autocratic country that draws on its long tradition of governance by a strong, centralized, and undemocratic state. Russia's illegal takeover of the Crimea in 2014 combined with ongoing and substantial material and military assistance for Russian separatists in the Republic of Ukraine demonstrate Putin's effort to reestablish control over Russia's near abroad. Western economic sanctions, including significant American ones, placed on Russia in response to its intervention in Ukraine have helped further undermine an already poorly performing economy. Meanwhile, direct Russian military action in the Syrian civil war has strengthened the regime of Bashar al-Assad, an enemy of the United States. Recent Russian air bombings of hospitals and civilian neighborhoods in rebel-controlled areas indicate the lengths Putin will to keep Assad in power. Finally, Putin, through the Federal Security Service (Russia's principal security agency), has waged and continues to wage a campaign against Western democratic countries, including the United States. Electoral interference is

the best known aspect of this interference, which also includes cyber warfare, a Russian bot army focused on disseminating false and misleading information to Western societies, and the provision of substantial, secret assistance to neo-fascist political parties in Europe.

There are other areas of U.S.-Russian disagreement ranging from how to handle Iranian nuclear desires to Russian support for the North Korean totalitarian dictatorship. For your Capstone project, you should choose one area of conflict in the U.S.-Russian relationship, study it closely, and define a set of American policies for handling the conflict. Although you are American foreign policymakers, you should not forget that the U.S. has allies who have similar concerns about Russian behavior.

18. Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp

The military prison often called “Gitmo” continues as a fraught political and legal problem for the United States. Established by President George W. Bush in 2002 as part of his War on Terror, the prison quickly became emblematic of torture and infractions of prisoners’ rights outlined by the Geneva Convention. President Barack Obama promised to shut down the Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp, but his efforts to do so early in his presidency were met by strong opposition from both Democrats and Republicans. Despite that opposition, the number of prisoners held in Gitmo were considerably reduced; however, the debate and concerns about secret prisons, interrogation methods, terrorist threats, and plaintiffs rights continues with various acts and legislations and executive orders continued to be struck. Just this past January – 2018 – President Donald Trump signed an executive order to keep Gitmo open and to continue to send prisoners there, thereby reversing much of his immediate predecessor’s policy. A major concern for those in international as well as Constitutional law is how to dutifully and responsibly defend those imprisoned in Guantánamo, particularly when the military system itself makes the potential for its tribunals to offer a fair trial. Many cases to be tried have stagnated; just this year, the trial for Abd al Rahim al Nashiri, whose prison term began in 2011, shut down when the lawyer assigned to defend his case, former Navy SEAL Lieutenant Alaric Piette, stepped down, claiming his lack of legal experience would be a detriment to his client. Your Capstone should present the current administration with policy recommendations for what to do with Guantánamo drawing on history, international and national legal policies, and government documents to substantiate the soundness and viability of your recommendations.

19. China

The January 8, 2018 edition of *The New Yorker* magazine featured an article by Evan Osnos entitled, “Making China Great Again.” Osnos argued that the China policy of President Donald Trump is undermining longstanding American goals for China and East Asia. For decades, since the U.S. fought Japan in WWII, the United States has maintained a formidable strategic, military, and economic presence in the Pacific, which WWII president Franklin Roosevelt referred to as an “American lake.” Each president since Roosevelt has strengthened that position through treaties with Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, and southeast Asian states, a nuclear presence, and strong economic ties. Osnos concluded, “As Donald Trump surrenders America’s global commitments, Xi Jinping is learning to pick up the pieces.”

U.S. relations with China today are changing because the Beijing government is pursuing more programs that may be in conflict with American interests. China’s naval growth, its expansion into the South China Sea with military bases, the Belt and Road Initiative, and the Trans Pacific Trade Partnership all challenge what was once indisputable American military and economic superiority in the region. Your task will be to choose one of the

many programs/policies initiated by Xi's government since 2012 and analyze how the Trump administration should respond. Is the U.S. backing out of commitments made by previous presidents? How has the Trump administration altered, for example, former president Obama's "Pivot to Asia Policy?" Are there ways to be more cooperative with China for the benefit of the American people? A Capstone on this topic could take the form of a policy proposal by a committee of Congress, the State Department, National Security Council, or National Security Administration.