Case Study Handbook

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The case study program is run by the BG Charles Young Research, Analysis, and Lessons Learned Institute (the Young Institute) at the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU).

DSCU is the Department of War's primary security cooperation educational institution. Its mission is to advance the knowledge and practice of security cooperation through education, training, workforce development, advising, research, analysis, and lessons learned. DSCU strives to be the center of intellectual life for the security cooperation enterprise; we prepare a global network of professionals to achieve outcomes that enhance the security of the United States and its partners and allies.

The Young Institute serves as the premier resource for research and knowledge on security cooperation. The Young Institute advances the DSCU mission by fostering analysis, research, scholarship, and critical inquiry that advances the field of security cooperation, enables application of lessons learned, and promotes evidence-based decision-making.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the U.S. Department of Defense, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, or the Defense Security Cooperation University.

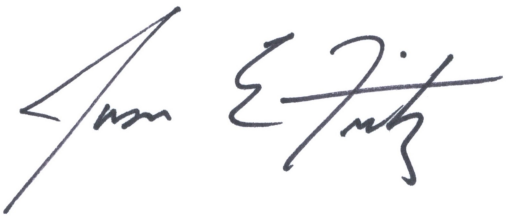
The launch of the Defense Security Cooperation University's (DSCU) Certification 2.0 program is a major milestone in the history of the security cooperation workforce (SCW) that moves the training and education of the workforce beyond a focus on compliance, process myopia, and death by PowerPoint. Competency-based Certification 2.0 will experientially train and educate the SCW through problem-based learning using recent and contemporary case studies. This approach produces critical thinkers with decision-making heuristics that will accelerate delivery to our partners and allies and enable the Department to deliver the capabilities that our partners and allies can sustain in pursuit of enduring warfighting advantages that undergird credible deterrence.

Our educational approach is grounded in case-study methods to support curriculum development. Historically, too many SC case studies have focused on failures and served as guides to proverbially keep the SCW out of jail. That is not nearly enough. Case studies must also illuminate best practices, highlight innovation, and explore areas for experimentation. Cases should uncover *conditionality*: under what conditions will some factors drive a particular outcome. This andragogy instills decision-making heuristics in the SCW, enabling individuals to act faster and more accurately towards our desired outcomes.

The *DSCU Case Study Handbook* is an excellent guide for DSCU faculty, the SCW broadly, and faculty at other Department schools to develop cases relevant

to Certification 2.0 and other workforce-enabling products. The *Handbook* and its templates will help faculty and practitioners translate their experiences into analytical discussions in the classroom that drive better security cooperation outcomes—outcomes that directly support our warfighters around the globe.

Certification 2.0's experiential learning and case-study methodology are essential to empower the SCW to drive change, navigate a turbulent security environment, and achieve impactful outcomes. We want the SCW to think strategically, act decisively and swiftly, and innovate to overcome burdensome bureaucracy. We owe this to our fighting forces. This *Handbook* provides clear and proven approaches to developing the case studies that are essential to advancing the profession of security cooperation.



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DSCU Case Study Handbook

The Defense Security Cooperation Agency established the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU) in 2019 to address the increasing complexity of security cooperation. Mandated by Congress in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 and codified into law in 2024, DSCU is the Department of War's primary security cooperation educational institution, with a mission to advance the knowledge and practice of security cooperation through education, training, and workforce development.

In 2024, DSCU further enhanced its commitment to improving security cooperation practices by establishing the BG Charles Young Research, Analysis, and Lessons Learned Institute (Young Institute). In line with its congressional mandate, DSCU, through the Young Institute, develops and shares educational and training materials, research findings, and lessons learned with the security cooperation workforce and the broader security cooperation enterprise. A key component of this effort is the development and dissemination of case studies.

A case study is an in-depth, detailed examination of a particular topic through various data sources within a real-world context. Instead of a broad survey, case studies focus on a specific group, event, phenomenon, or outcome to understand its nuances and complexities. Case studies also offer thorough analysis of key players, behaviors, attitudes, and mindsets. Security cooperation case studies, then, may examine a particular program and its outcomes so that practitioners can identify the key players, their actions, and their decisions and determine which ones to emulate or to avoid.

The *DSCU Case Study Handbook* is designed to guide the creation and analysis of case studies for students, faculty, researchers, and practitioners to write and use case studies effectively. By providing practical guidance, a framework, and examples, the handbook equips the security cooperation workforce and the larger enterprise with the necessary tools and resources to develop and use case studies in and out of the classroom. By equipping security cooperation professionals with the tools to write and analyze case studies effectively, the handbook enhances the professionalization of the security cooperation workforce and the enterprise as a whole, ultimately strengthening U.S. national security. We encourage all those involved in security cooperation execution to explore the handbook and discover the power of case studies.

Lt. Col. Dylan Monaghan, U.S. Embassy Tokyo, coordinates with officials from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Tokyo Electric Power Company, March 29, 2011 (Credit: Yasuo Osakabe)

Why Case Studies?

Case studies are a valuable research and learning tool to offer descriptive and analytical insights to security cooperation professionals. Case studies help both researchers and practitioners learn from the past, identify opportunities and challenges, and generate solutions efficiently. By writing and studying case studies, security cooperation professionals exercise and improve their critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making capabilities.

Case studies help make complex concepts understandable and add nuance to what might be oversimplified understandings of how change happens in the real world. They are particularly useful to explore the "how" and "why" questions behind a situation. The answer to "What works?" in security cooperation is often "It depends." Case studies that meet certain standards of evidence link "it depends" to best practices and lessons. Case studies help security cooperation professionals

better understand the "next case," especially if they combine storytelling with past insights to inform and advance the theory and practice of security cooperation.

Advantages of Case Studies

Case studies offer significant advantages for security cooperation researchers and practitioners. They go beyond superficial observations to explore the intricacies of a situation, individual, group, or phenomenon. Their narrative format is effective because it enhances engagement, improves memory retention, and makes complex information more relatable and accessible. This is beneficial for disseminating research findings and conveying different concepts to practitioners, policymakers, and the broader security cooperation enterprise. Additionally, because case studies examine real-life situations, their findings have direct practical applications. For instance, some case studies may follow a program or authority over an extended period, providing insights into how things change over time. This longitudinal perspective can be valuable for understanding developmental processes or the long-term impact of interventions and assistance. By understanding these benefits, security cooperation professionals can leverage case studies to gain insights into the complexities of security cooperation theory and practice.

Limitations of Case Studies

Despite their benefits, case studies have limitations. Their specific focus can limit generalizability. The unique characteristics of the chosen case may not be representative for all cases, making it difficult to extrapolate the findings. However, limited generalizability does not translate to limited applicability. Applicability concerns the extent to which the takeaways and lessons are useful and relevant, even if the elements of the case do not match another perfectly. Case study authors can employ strategies to mitigate this, such as selecting cases that represent a topic of high relevancy or interest. Additionally, case studies can be resource-intensive, often requiring a significant investment of time and effort for both the author and the reader. This can pose challenges in terms of both time constraints and budgetary limitations. For the author, defining the scope of the research, identifying the audience,and focusing on specific research questions helps manage

the time and resources required. Despite these limitations, the rich, contextualized insights offered by case studies make them a valuable tool.

How to Write a Case Study

Two of the most important considerations for writing a case study are focus and clarity. A strong case study must have a clear and well-defined focus. This means identifying the central challenge or opportunity that the case addresses and sticking to that focus throughout the narrative and analysis. It is important to avoid getting sidetracked by irrelevant details or tangents that do not contribute to the main subject and purpose of the case study. A focused case study is more likely to be engaging, insightful, and impactful. A case study must also be clear and easily understandable. This means using precise language, avoiding jargon or technical terms that the reader may not be familiar with, and organizing the information in a logical and coherent manner. The narrative should be easy to follow, and the analysis should be presented in a clear and concise way.

Guide to Choosing a Case Study

Developing a compelling case study requires careful planning and consideration of several questions:

1. What is the case (i.e., country, event, program, or activity)?
2. Why does this case matter to security cooperation professionals?
3. What is the case study's purpose (e.g., to describe a particular event, to explain why a particular outcome occurred, to evaluate a program's effectiveness)?
4. Are there sufficient sources of evidence, both primary and secondary, to write the case study?

Foremost among these is the rationale for choosing a particular case. What about the case is uniquely impactful, representative of a specific approach, or illustrative of a particular challenge or opportunity? A case study should also offer key takeaways, such as best practices or insights relevant to the security cooperation workforce and larger enterprise. When choosing a case study, the author should be able to answer the "so what" question, also known as the

U.S. soldiers assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division participate in Distinguished Visitors Day, Bemowo Piskie, Poland, May 19, 2023 (Credit: Staff Sgt. Agustin Montanez)

relevance or significance question. What is the significance of this particular case? Why should security cooperation professionals care?

It is not necessarily important how *current* the case is. What *is* particularly important is the relevancy of the issues presented and availability of data to evaluate the outcome. A useful case presents ideas and concepts that are timeless in their applicability. Having said that, in some cases, recency matters. If security cooperation professionals want to examine the effects of the current defense industrial base on foreign military sales (FMS), a World War II case study—in which the military industrial base exploded to match demands of large-scale combat operations—would likely be less suited than one from the U.S. response to the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. The government-industry relationship of the 1940s is significantly different from today due to technological and economic developments. However, the government-industry relationship that affected FMS in the early 2020s are similar to the relationships that govern FMS now. Thus, the 2022 Russo-Ukrainian War may be more relevant for understanding the defense industrial base and FMS.

In other instances, recency does not matter as much. In fact, cases that are not recent may be more relevant because they illustrate principles that have endured for decades or centuries. Writing in 400 BC, Athenian historian Thucydides argued that the cause of the Peloponnesian War was "the growth of Athenian power and the fear which this caused in Sparta." In the 2017 book *Destined For War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?,* Professor Graham Allison identified sixteen historical cases of rising powers rivaling established powers, and twelve of these cases led to war.[1] Although scholars continue to debate this so-called Thucydides's Trap, it is nevertheless clear that power changes in the international system are important. Thus, even though the Peloponnesian War occurred over 2,400 years ago, it is a relevant case study because it says something useful about how the world works and the role of great power competition. These enduring lessons about power dynamics in the international system inform the work of security cooperation professionals by clarifying the competitive dynamics that the U.S. faces today.

Determining the case study's purpose is also crucial. Defining its purpose informs its depth and breadth. Is the goal to share lessons, inspire action, document a significant moment, or provoke thoughtful discussion? Identifying these elements will shape the narrative and analysis. For instance, if the purpose of the case study is to describe a particular FMS case, the author may want to spend more time detailing the specific weapon system being purchased.

Perhaps the most critical consideration is the availability of sources—primary and secondary—for writing a case study. Case studies require as many sources of information as can be reasonably obtained to provide an in-depth look into the case. Case studies require sufficient evidence to enable analysis, illustrate outcomes and key takeaways, and demonstrate clear and replicable practices. Considering these factors early in the process will streamline the writing and ensure a useful product.

[1] Graham Allison, *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017).

Guide to Writing a Case Study

Case studies tell the story of what happened with a predictable flow and organization. Case studies have an abstract, introduction, main narrative, outcomes, key takeaways, conclusion, and references. This format increases readability and accessibility for various types of readers across the security cooperation workforce and the broader enterprise as well as increases credibility and reliability of the case study. The ideal case study is about 3,000 words long.

Key Elements

Several elements are essential for producing a useful case study.

Abstract. An abstract is an excellent way to easily and quickly provide a description and purpose of the case study. This helps to guide the reader from the big picture to the specific context of the case and familiarize them with the necessary details and the overall purpose. It also allows for security cooperation professionals to review the case study and judge whether it will work for their purposes without having to read the entire document. The abstract is generally 100–150 words long.

Introduction. The most important and challenging part of writing a case study is the beginning. The author must bridge the gap between the reader's lack of knowledge about the case and the knowledge sufficient for analysis. An introduction is essential for a case study as it provides context, defines the opportunity or challenge, identifies key players, states the purpose, and offers a roadmap for the reader. Understanding the political, military, social, cultural, and economic context is particularly necessary for security cooperation professionals to analyze the case. By setting the stage and providing foundational information, the introduction ensures the reader can effectively analyze the case, grasp its complexities, and appreciate its significance. The introduction is generally 300–500 words long.

Main Narrative. The main narrative, or body, of the case study is a detailed, chronological account of events, actions, and decisions that form the core of the analysis. It presents a rich description of what happened, who was involved, and the challenges encountered, exploring the perspectives and motivations of key players while highlighting critical moments or decision points. The main narrative is usually 1,500–2,000 words long.

Outcomes. Security cooperation outcomes should be directly linked to the activities and decisions of the case. Outcomes may also encompass a wide range of results, from strengthening alliances and deterring threats to enhancing partner capabilities and improving global security. These outcomes can be at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. Authors may choose to include a section on specific event, program, or objective outcomes. This section is usually 150–300 words long.

Key Takeaways. Security cooperation case studies offer insights into how others have approached past opportunities and challenges. These may include lessons observed, lessons learned, and best practices. Lessons observed are simply things noticed during an event or experience, while lessons learned involve a deeper understanding and application of those observations to improve future actions or behaviors. Best practices may be the procedures or guidelines that are known to produce positive outcomes. Because cases are written with a particular audience in mind, it is best to present a handful of thoughtfully developed takeaways linked to the central issue of the case rather than a comprehensive yet undeveloped list of every potential takeaway. Key takeaways are usually 150–450 words long.

Conclusion. A conclusion summarizes key findings, synthesizes information, and highlights the main takeaways. It may offer recommendations or solutions based on the analysis, discuss broader implications of the case, and/or encourage reflection. By wrapping up the narrative and tying together loose ends, the conclusion ensures the reader understands the significance of the case and can apply the insights gained to current and future situations. The conclusion is generally 150–300 words long.

References. Including references is crucial for credibility, accuracy, and giving proper credit to sources. Authors should rely on a variety of primary and secondary sources. These may include, but are not limited to, interviews, observations, documents, or archival records. To reference sources properly, review the DSCU style guide and *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Optional Elements

In addition to these essential elements, a case study may benefit from optional elements to familiarize the reader and guide learning and professional develop-

ment. It is up to the author to determine which details are critical for analysis and discussion. The descriptions below serve as examples of the information the author may choose to include for each element.

Context. While the introduction provides the essential background information, sets the scene, and explains the broader context, authors may also choose to include a lengthier context section to illuminate the strategic and operational environment in which the case occurred. In addition to the political, economic, social, and cultural context, historical background may also be important because it provides the broader context in which the case study takes place. By understanding the past, case studies can offer more comprehensive insights into complex situations, including their origins, underlying causes, and outcomes. Authors may also want to include descriptions of the relevant weapons, capabilities, authorities, and programs. Not all security cooperation case studies examine a topic that requires elucidation of weapons or capabilities, but some FMS or building partner capacity (BPC) cases will benefit from this information. Likewise, older historical topics may not contain recognizable authorities, programs, or initiatives. For those cases, the author may choose to discuss the activity, response, or intervention in more detail for the readers' awareness.

Key Players. Authors may also choose to include a lengthier description of the key players whose actions, decisions, or perspectives are central to the study. These individuals can be internal stakeholders within an organization or external parties like government agencies or industry. This expanded section may be useful for cases in which personalities played a dominant role.

Vignette(s). A vignette is a concise summary of the case to facilitate further discussion. These are excellent teaching tools that enable individuals to analyze a situation, apply knowledge, and develop problem-solving skills, even when they do not have time to review the entire case study. These can be used alongside the case study or independently. Authors can include several vignettes to highlight specific aspects of the case for different audiences. For instance, a case study that focuses on BPC may include a vignette on spending and its role in BPC or a vignette on relationship building and its role in BPC. A vignette can also be a human-interest story that engages the reader's interest and elicits reactions. Vignettes can also incorporate primary source documents,such as interviews, to

encourage the reader to dissect a key player's words, motivations, and decision-making. An ideal vignette is 150–450 words long.

Discussion Questions. This part of a case study includes prompts and questions for professional development or for an instructor facilitating discussion among students. These questions should be open-ended and designed to make learners engage in critical thought and analysis. Usually "how" or "why" questions work best to encourage readers to analyze, evaluate, and interpret information; make an argument; and support that argument with facts. Although these questions should be open-ended and can have more than one answer, the case study should include a list of possible answers, allowing the reader or instructor to guide analysis, play devil's advocate, and elicit more discussion as needed.

Additional Resources. Authors are encouraged to provide a list of additional resources for each case study. Visual aids and other resources enhance the learning experience.

1. **Maps**. These are the most common and useful visual aid. It is not necessary to have a map, but a map can familiarize the reader with the geography of the partner nation, its terrain, and its critical sites.
2. **Images**. These may include photographs, drawings, and paintings of key individuals, locations, equipment, vehicles, et cetera. Images may be quite helpful in bringing the history of the case to life for the reader and familiarizing them with the details of the case.
3. **Diagrams**. These can help illustrate complicated relationships or processes to help readers understand a concept, idea, or system more clearly.
4. **Films and documentaries**. These may not be as practical for classroom showing, but they can be linked for readers to review before or after they read the case study. These can be helpful to illustrate historical context of the topic and can be accommodating for visual and auditory learners.
5. **Audio or video recordings**. Recordings can provide a rich and detailed record of conversations, interviews, or speeches to showcase the nuances of communication, such as nonverbal cues, tone of voice, and interruptions. These can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of the case, especially when analyzing key leaders and their decisions, and can be accommodating for visual and auditory learners.

6. **Graphs and visual data**. These can illustrate trends, comparisons, and relationships in case studies, making them more engaging and insightful. Bar charts are useful for comparing different categories, line graphs for showing changes over time, and scatter plots for illustrating correlations between variables. Infographics can combine multiple visualizations to present a comprehensive overview. These can be helpful for visual learners.
7. **Further Reading**. This section allows readers to deepen their understanding of the subject and broaden their knowledge base. Authors may also choose to include materials that answer additional questions related to the case, such as "What else was occurring at the strategic level during this event?" or "What is the larger story of why this case is strategically important?"

How to Read a Case Study

Case studies enable security cooperation professionals to examine the opportunities, challenges, and complexities inherent in security cooperation. The cases present ideas, issues, and problem-solving dilemmas security cooperation professionals could face in their careers. Reading and analyzing case studies requires a more active and analytical approach. The key to this process is active reading. Active reading is interrogative, purposeful, and iterative. Because case studies are complex and detailed, they often do not lend themselves to a single read. With each pass, the reader may gain more insight into the case.

To make sense of the case, readers are encouraged to first frame the case study. The first step in framing is to review the case study abstract and introduction. Readers should always start here because these sections provide a concise overview of the subject, context, and purpose. These sections provide the context for everything else. While reading the introduction, the reader should also determine who the key players are in the case and what their interests include. Interests encompass needs, wants, desires, motives, concerns, and fears of the individual. Often there will be numerous players in the case; it is important to discern the *key* players. After reading the abstract and introduction, scan headings and subheadings to understand the overall structure and key sections of the

case. Readers may also want to review any visual aids, such as maps, graphs, or images, as they often highlight key players, data, or trends. After reviewing these elements, the reader may want to read the first and last paragraphs of each section to locate the main ideas.

Once the readers complete an initial pass, they should then carefully read the case study a second time to identify and analyze the key elements. This second pass includes determining the facts and assumptions in the case study. A fact is an actual event, occurrence, or piece of information that is relevant to the case. It describes the "who, what, when, where, and why." Facts are concrete details that help readers understand the subject, the people involved, and the key issues at play. An assumption is a supposition or presupposition about the current or future situation that is assumed true in the absence of facts. To not overwhelm the reader with details, the author may leave out some details and allow for the reader to make assumptions. For example, in a case study on U.S. and French responses to Ukraine, the author does not need to provide a detailed review of the U.S.-France alliance. That is an assumption based on common knowledge on which students can base their analysis.

Figure 0.1: Army 1st Sgt. Marissa Lowe talks with a Djiboutian officer during a State Partnership Program planning conference, Djibouti City, Djibouti, March 8, 2022 (Credit: Courtesy)

Readers should also consider the paradigms in the case. Paradigms are generally accepted models or patterns of thinking that have had repeated validation within the group and have become conventional wisdom. Paradigms often guide behaviors because they are rooted in doctrine or tradition and are frequently reinforced by ideology and dogmatic belief systems. Many paradigms are rooted in culture and are not apparent to the person in the group without reflection. While facts may be explicit in the case, discerning paradigms requires critical thinking and reflective analysis of the key players' actions. The actions of players in a case study often reveal paradigms that might be guiding behavior. After framing the

case to understand the situation, the detailed analysis begins by determining the problems within the case study.

Once the readers determine these key elements, they can evaluate the solutions or responses, assess the outcomes, and identify key takeaways. Questions such as "What actions were taken to address the challenge?" or "What lessons can be learned from this case?" can help move beyond simple understanding of what happened to analysis of why it happened and how those lessons can inform ongoing and future security cooperation practice.

Faculty Guide: How to Use a Case Study

Capitalizing on case studies as a learning tool requires a change in thinking about learning, increased student preparation and participation, and a dedication to active classroom engagement. Analysis of a case study requires a lot from the student. Unlike lecture-based teaching in which the instructor *delivers* knowledge to the students, case study analysis requires students to *construct* the knowledge with assistance of faculty.[2] The instructor does this by facilitating discussion between students—asking the right question at the right time, providing feedback on answers, and sustaining the discussion that gets at the relevance of the case. This will often include how a security cooperation professional might apply the concept in the lesson to a future situation.

To illustrate a pattern of question and response, here is a simulated case discussion for crisis response during the Greek Civil War:

> *Instructor*: What were the U.S. objectives at stake, and what guidance did senior leadership provide about the U.S. approach?
>
> *Student A*: The U.S. viewed the situation in Greece as more than a local conflict. The U.S. should prevent Greece from falling under totalitarian regimes. Senior leadership recognized the need for better-coordinated and -unified U.S. effort in Greece.
>
> *Instructor*: Okay, what does that coordinated effort look like then?

[2] William Ellet, *The Case Study Handbook: How to Read, Discuss, and Write Persuasively About Cases* (Harvard Business School Press, 2007), 7.

> *Student B*: Significant military aid to Greek military and economy and establishing the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group to Greece.
>
> *Student C*: Also, the United States engaged with Yugoslavia to limit support for the Greek communists.
>
> *Instructor*: Okay, so how does consideration of other regional partners affect the U.S. approach, and how did it inform senior leaders' decisions?

Depending on the format of the case study, students may need to provide most of the content of the discussion. Instructors merely guide the discussion and probe for more analysis. Some existing case studies, like those produced by the Harvard Business School, already contain an analytical section with answers identified. For these, the faculty may choose to offer additional discussion questions geared toward the course objectives, assign the students roles based on the key players in the case, or have the students construct a worksheet based on the available material. For case studies that do not contain this additional level of analysis, students need to be able to analyze the case, examine its meaning in relation to its key issues and questions, come to class with discussion points and conclusions, and consider gaps and uncertainties. Overall, the case study method requires students to prepare for class and engage actively in the class dialogue as well as actively listen.

Integrating case studies into virtual instructor-led training (VILT) or online training (OLT) sessions is an effective way to enable understanding and practical application of knowledge. The instructor should carefully select a relevant and compelling case study that aligns with course learning objectives and distribute the case study and accompanying guiding questions ahead of time to allow students to familiarize themselves with the scenario and begin their analysis.

For virtual learning, case studies can take a variety of forms, such as a text document, slide deck, or audio-visual media. Typically, case studies are in text format, but for subjects that benefit from various images, maps, diagrams, et cetera, a slide deck may work best to convey the assorted material. Slide decks and audio-visual media may also work best for VILT or OLT to provide an engaging and accessible learning tool other than standard text. This can be especially beneficial for auditory or visual learners.

Instructors should craft questions that prompt critical thinking and exploration of key issues within the case study. These questions should be open-ended and challenge learners to think critically, moving beyond simple recall to encourage analysis, application, and evaluation. Strong case study questions guide learners to identify key elements of the case, assess outcomes, and derive key takeaways applicable to other situations, fostering a deeper understanding of the subject matter and enhancing their problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. For instance, case studies are excellent tools for studying leadership and decision-making and to analyze the thought process of key players. To illustrate decision points, then, faculty may choose to insert a prompt within a VILT or OLT case study assignment, such as, "Why did the U.S. government approve this sale to this particular country?" or "If you had access to this same information, what decision would you have made in their place?" For VILT, these can be open-ended discussion questions for faculty review. For OLT, they can be mini scenario-based questions using the SEDA (Scenario, Evaluation, Decision, Action) model. An instructor could ask a SEDA question around a mini *scenario*, an *evaluation* of that scenario, making a *decision*, and choosing the correct *action* (answer) out of multiple choices. These are also effective ways to assess student learning throughout a course.

For VILT, case studies can boost engagement and discussion between students. The instructor can kick things off by setting the stage, reiterating objectives, and establishing ground rules for respectful discussion via the online discussion portal or in an online group setting. Then, the instructor can facilitate either individual or group work, using the online discussion portal or virtual breakout rooms for collaborative analysis. For VILT, the instructor may choose to have students directly engage with each other by requiring students to respond to each other's discussion posts. As learners work through the case, instructors should monitor their progress, answer questions, and offer gentle guidance. After the discussion, instructors should offer a debriefing session or final review of the case study's key takeaways. Some ways to do this are a structured approach like round-robin sharing, moderated discussion, or an answer sheet with the correct takeaways as they link to the course's learning objectives.

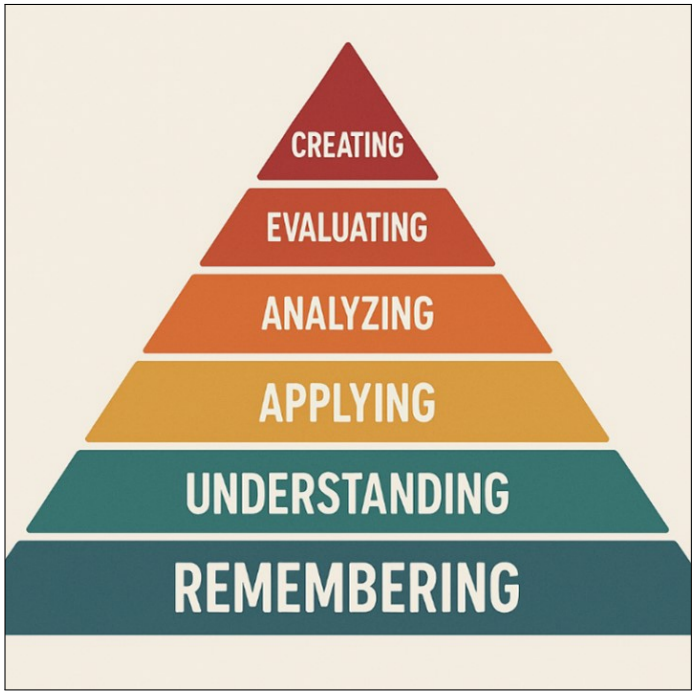
For OLT, case studies are less for discussion and more to encourage critical thinking. The instructor may require students to answer prompts as a knowledge

check or to review the case study and compose responses about the study's key takeaways and applicability. Here, the instructor may want to build pop-up responses or an answer sheet with the correct takeaways for the security cooperation workforce or specific functional area.

Finally, whether in person, VILT, or OLT, the instructor should wrap up the case study exercise or assignment by summarizing key takeaways, providing feedback if possible, and assigning follow-up activities to reinforce learning. It is important to be comfortable with the classroom or online platform's features, communicate clearly, and manage time effectively. By creating a well-structured and interactive environment, instructors can leverage case studies to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-world application.

Regardless of learning environment, students must be able to communicate their thinking and defend their conclusions. The ability to think clearly and communicate effectively have always been important skills for security cooperation professionals. It is now arguably more important as the Department of War prioritizes working with allies and partners to reestablish deterrence and increase burden sharing.

Instructors may want to develop learning objectives for each case study and link those to the course's terminal learning objectives. Learning objectives are useful because they provide a framework for both instructors and students to understand the purpose of the case study, guide the learning process, and ensure effective assessment. They help students focus their analysis, apply knowledge, and develop critical thinking skills within a real-world context. Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide,



Bloom's Taxonomy

authors and instructors can develop learning objectives for each case study. Learning objectives may look like:

1. **Define** cultural awareness, cultural intelligence, and cultural competence.
2. **Describe** the historical context of military advising program in the partner nation.
3. **Analyze** how the partner nation's needs and values affected logistical cooperation.
4. **Evaluate** how to best employ best practices in executing Section 333.

Additionally, pairing case studies with worksheets, PowerPoint presentations, and writing assignments enables students to reach their highest learning potential from multiple learning styles.

Conclusion

The writing, analysis, and discussion of case studies is not simple. It requires subject-matter expertise applied in a systematic way to guide professionals and students through complex intellectual exercises and analysis of security cooperation cases. Carefully designed and executed, case studies are a valuable tool to improve analytical, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills that are essential to success as a security cooperation professional.

Through case studies, practitioners and students gain useful insights into how they can apply to the practice and study of security cooperation. Understanding past challenges and opportunities enables security cooperation professionals to better facilitate FMS, strengthen relationships with allies and partners, and mitigate current and future challenges. Security cooperation enables allies and partners to address shared threats without the need to deploy U.S. forces in combat, build credible and effective coalitions to deter aggressors, and advance the mission of achieving peace through strength.