CSCI 1800: Cybersecurity and International Relations

**Group Project 1: Cybersecurity Crisis Training- Cablegate**

**Purpose:** This debate style exercise aims to help students understand how to form a policy response to a technical threat or attack to their organization. Students will work in teams to present an argument outlining their stakes and debate positions, and backing those positions.

**Exercise Description:** Prepare a five minute statement as a group based on your assigned team role. Your statement (delivered by three members of your group) should describe the problem as well as your organization’s response and solutions to the problem (ex. potential policy changes as a result of an attack). Following your presentation, the opposition team will conduct a short cross-examination with a small set of questions. They will then present their 5-minute counter statements, after which your team will conduct the cross-examination. When both teams have been cross-examined, the first team will have 3 minutes for a rebuttal and audience questioning, directly followed by the second team’s 3 minute rebuttal and audience questioning. Please note that all group members will be expected to participate in presenting, whether during the 5-minute statement or Q&A session.

- Team 1 Presentation (3 members) - 5 min.
- Cross Examination - 2 min.
- Team 2 Presentation (3 members) - 5 min.
- Cross Examination - 2 min.
- Team 1 Rebuttal (2 members) - 3 min.
- Audience Questioning - 2 min.
- Team 2 Rebuttal (2 members) - 3 min.
- Audience Questioning - 2 min.

Note: Page limits below are double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point standard font.

**Deliverables:** In addition to your verbal presentation, you will prepare a debate packet to turn in to your instructor and TAs. The debate packet should include the following items:

- **Debate Statement (2 pages)**
- **Short technical background sheet (2-4 pages)**
  - This section should describe in more detail the technical issues of the problem at hand. It may also include pictures and diagrams, but these will not count towards the 2-4 page limit.
- **Frequently Asked Questions (2 pages)**
  - This section should anticipate questions the other debate team or audience members would ask in response to the problem and should provide your organization’s answers.

**Preparation:** Read the material found via the links below. Additional research on debate positions is strongly suggested as well. You may use any accredited resource you find to prepare your statement, press kit, and for Q&A.

When you present, or enter the debate chamber, enter in character. Be sure to identify yourself using your full name and spell your name if it is not spelled phonetically. Also mention your title and role in the organization (it is okay to be creative!).

**Extra Credit:**
Strong dedication to playing up and maintaining your team’s characters throughout the presentation can be rewarded with extra credit points.
Extra Credit:
Strong dedication to playing up and maintaining your team’s characters throughout the presentation can be rewarded with extra credit points.

Potential roles:
There are two important debate roles in this cybersecurity crisis situation. You will be assigned one of the roles:

- U.S. Department of State
- WikiLeaks

Scenario: In February of 2010, WikiLeaks—a non-profit organization that publishes submissions of classified media from anonymous news sources, news leaks, and whistleblowers in “defense of freedom of speech and media publishing” began releasing classified cables that had been sent to the U.S. State Department between December 1966 and February 2010. The initial release of the cables, which were published in the New York Times and The Guardian, caused a stir among political leaders, defenders of free speech, as well as the general public. While some supported WikiLeaks and its founder Julian Assange for promoting transparency and protecting journalism, others viewed Assange as a criminal and endangered the nation’s security. In fact, WikiLeaks became a target for other “hacktivists,” some of which believed the organization acted as a threat to armed forces and government operatives overseas.

Consequently, both the U.S. Department of State and WikiLeaks have come under close scrutiny, leaving the public to question how outsiders were able to access classified information from the U.S. government, what negative consequences or international crises might arise as a result of the cables’ release, and whether WikiLeaks has created the “first serious info-war” as tweeted by Electronic Frontier Foundation co-founder, John Perry Barlow.

Your assignment is to explore this incident further, using your research to present it from the perspective of your assigned debate position. Your goal is to participate in a debate that explains the controversy and your organization’s future plans or suggested policy changes in response to it.

Note: For the timing of the exercise, we will assume its September 2011, a few days after WikiLeaks decided to release all unedited cables.

Sources and Additional Reading (Be sure to do your own research and cite!):
1. http://wikileaks.org