The purpose of this guide is to provide supplemental information and context for students taking courses in preparation for careers in national security law. Candidates for the LL.M. Degree in national security law should also consult the Curriculum Guide for LL.M. in National Security Law, available at: http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate-programs/degree-programs/national-security/degree-program.cfm, for specific information about academic counseling, LL.M. requirements, and course information. This guide is intended to be helpful both to LL.M. as well as J.D. students pursuing careers in national security law.

Georgetown Law offers over 40 courses in national security law, encompassing a broad scope of the field, including international law, foreign relations law, human rights law, law of war/law of armed conflict, civil rights law, intelligence law, cyberlaw, homeland security law, and the laws governing national security investigations and collection techniques. Accordingly, students focusing in this area will need to carefully select courses that meet their needs both in terms of interest, but also in terms of providing a solid foundation for practice. In terms of course selection, this will mean different things for different students. For LL.M. students who are already experienced practitioners, the course selection offers the opportunity to learn new and emerging areas of the law, expand knowledge of substantive law, and “deep dive” into particular areas of expertise. For students in the beginning stages of entering careers in national security law, it is important to first prepare to become an excellent lawyer, and second, to prepare to become a well-rounded national security lawyer. Students entering the field should not only focus on the courses designated in the national security law curriculum, but should ensure that they obtain a solid foundation (beyond the first year curriculum) in topics such as advanced constitutional law (particularly first and fourth amendment) and criminal procedure. Other areas, as examples, that may be useful include coursework in immigration, privacy, legislation, intellectual property and government contracts.

The 2011-2012 academic year witnessed certain growth fields within the field of national security law. Both government and the private sector are heavily involved in issues related to cybersecurity, cybercrime and data security. In the 2012-2013 academic year, Georgetown will offer an expanded program of courses related to cyberlaw, including the following courses: Cyber and National Security: Current Issues Seminar; Cyber Conflict, Cyber Defense and Internet Freedom; Information Privacy Law; Computer Crime; and Global Cybercrime Law. In addition, the following courses have previously contained units or sessions on cyber related law: Covert Action and Clandestine Special and Cyber Operations; Law of War; and National Security Crisis Law.
Students are often interested in how they can practice national security law in the private sector. In the past, national security practice at law firms often centered around defense contracting. In the last decade, “defense” contracting work has expanded significantly to include the growing homeland security contracting arena. To that end, advanced coursework in contracts and procurement, such as the course Government Contracts, will be useful for students intending to practice in either/or government or the private sector. Experienced and skilled government contracts attorneys are in demand. Attorneys at law firms and corporations are also involved heavily in the following areas:

- Matters subject to review by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), which is covered in the course National Security Law and the Private Sector.

- Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), which is covered in the course International Efforts to Combat Corruption, and, to a lesser degree, in the course International Law, Human Rights & Fighting Impunity.

- Electronic Communications Protection Act (ECPA) issues have been covered in the course National Security Investigations and Litigation, and Information Privacy Law (Prof. Rotenberg), in part of its discussion of surveillance law.

Another growing area of private sector practice is related to employment law – whistleblower, security clearance, pre-publication and other administrative processes often intersect with national security agencies and organizations, but require a legal foundation in employment law and litigation, both at the trial and appellate levels. A course foundation in employment law, therefore, will be useful. There are also periodic seminars, often hosted by local bar associations, that are open to law students and provide an introduction to these growing practice areas.

For J.D. students, clinics offer an additional opportunity to develop practice skills related to national security law. Clinics involving litigation – whether criminal or civil – will be helpful. Existing Georgetown clinics that are substantively related to the field of national security law include the Federal Legislative and Administrative Clinic, the Appellate Litigation Program, the Center for Applied Legal Studies, or the International Women’s Human Rights Clinic.

Externships are also a valuable complement to students’ academic program, and provide both practical training as well as opportunities to develop references and contacts in the community. In the 2011-2012 academic year, students focusing in national security completed externships with relevant government agencies as well as Congressional oversight committees. Information regarding externship availability is communicated from career advising staff periodically, but students should also seek out externship opportunities in the field. Deadlines for formalized externship programs are often early in the fall.
For additional information and contact information regarding externships coordinated by the Office of Graduate Programs, see: http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate-programs/externships/index.cfm.

Beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year, both J.D. and LL.M. students will have the opportunity to apply to join the Journal of National Security Law & Policy which will be co-sponsored by Georgetown and the Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism at Syracuse University’s College of Law and Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. Highly regarded for its scholarship, policy analysis and recommendations, the Journal of National Security Law & Policy is the world’s only peer-reviewed journal devoted exclusively to national security law and policy. Journal membership will be open to J.D. and LL.M. Law Center students who will work with the journal’s board of editors to design a yearly symposium, contribute to peer-reviewed articles, publish their work and more.

Students interested in pursuing careers in national security law should also take advantage of the various academic and networking events, such as those presented by Georgetown’s Center on National Security and the Law (http://www.law.georgetown.edu/cnsll/), as well as national security law listservs and other resources available in Washington D.C. and online. Students may contact Nadia Asancheyev, Director, Center on National Security and the Law, at na76@law.georgetown.edu, to be placed on the Center’s email contact list which periodically distributes news, events, symposia and career information related to national security law. Student groups that also host professional, networking and mentoring opportunities on campus include the National Security Law Society, the Military Law Society and the International Law Society.

For further information regarding national security law course selection, JD/LL.M. and LL.M. degree candidates should contact their academic advisor, Tina Drake Zimmerman, Program Director, National Security Law LL.M. and U.S.-Trained Students, at draket@law.georgetown.edu. For further consultation regarding developing a national security course program as it relates to a career path in national security law, LL.M. and J.D. students may also consult Carrie Cordero, Director of National Security Studies, at cfc34@law.georgetown.edu.

July 2012
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