

Gardner-Webb University

Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

5-18-2017

GWU Hosts National Counterterrorism Center Analytical Simulation

Office of University Communications

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

GWU Hosts National Counterterrorism Center Analytical Simulation

 webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/gwu-hosts-national-counterterrorism-center-analytical-simulation/

Office of University
Communications

May 18, 2017

Students Participate in Exercise to Examine Intelligence for Possible Terrorist Threats

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—At the beginning of May, the U.S. Department of State issued a Europe Travel Alert to warn Americans about the probability of a terror attack in

simulation participants

Photo by GWU student Dylan Charles

France, Russia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Analyzing intelligence information to keep Americans safe is the job of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) in Washington, D.C. Students from Gardner-Webb and six other colleges recently met with NCTC analysts in GWU's Tucker Center to participate in an exercise where they learned firsthand how possible terrorist threats are discovered.

“The NCTC analysts explained the operation of the agency and additionally, provided detailed descriptions about the importance of their daily analytical work that impacts national security,” offered Dr. Bobbie Cox, GWU Criminal Justice Coordinator. “The scenarios provided students with intelligence information that was determined during their analytical process. The students were charged with absorbing the information, determining the facts, eliminating possibilities and making a final report to the NCTC analysts regarding their findings and recommendations.”

Also participating in the simulation exercise were students from Wingate University, Queens University, UNC-Charlotte, Davidson College, Belmont Abby and Mars Hill. The participants were divided into two groups to work on determining the details of an imminent terror strike. After completing the simulation exercises, students met individually with a NCTC analyst, who critiqued their resumes.

David Cole, a junior from Clover, S.C., said the event felt like an official briefing. “We all had nametags, information folders, and assigned seats,” described Cole, a double major in political science and public relations. “Everybody was given a copy of select news clippings, from which we as a group had to discern the most relevant information, and try to figure out where and when an attack was to take place.”

GWU students at the simulation

Photo by GWU student Dylan Charles

The students also analyzed the magnitude of certain threats, said Joey Sparks of Conover, N.C., a senior double major in criminal justice and human services. “In the monitoring-

type simulation, the group was given multiple scenarios with potential terrorist threats, and we had to gauge the threat level to the United States and react accordingly,” he explained.

The partnership with NCTC was a first for Gardner-Webb, and the Department of Social Sciences would like to host the event annually. The simulation provides information students can’t get from reading a textbook. “This was a great way for students to gain some practical experience with the counter-terrorism field,” noted Dr. Casey Delehanty, GWU Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science. “The event gave students an opportunity to practice critical thinking and presentation skills, as well as gain information on how to enter counter-terrorism and federal law enforcement work.”

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants in the global community. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb ignites learning and service opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.