**Assignment 3: Working Group Presentations**

In policy circles, a briefing is a short, informative oral presentation. If you get the chance to brief a President or a general, for example, they might give you 3-5 minutes of their time—or less! They meet with you because you have information. Nevertheless, they have limited time and therefore expect that you will (i) have researched the topic thoroughly in preparation for the briefing, (ii) cut through that research to give them the most important information for them *in the current moment* (i.e., on the same topic, the most important information may change, depending on the context), and (iii) be able to answer follow-up questions (assuming you are the appropriate person to ask).

In your next assignment, you will brief the NSC on your White Paper. Each working group will first circulate its White Paper in advance of the presentations. Then, when the NSC convenes, each group will orally present the White Paper’s main conclusions to the entire NSC in 3-5 minutes. Be concise and direct. The NSC Acting Chair will cut each presentation off at the five minute mark.

*Format:*

The NSC will meet under the leadership of its Acting Chairperson. The Chairperson will determine the presentation order and, consistent with the NSC culture of animated discussion and debate, moderate questions (if time permits). Given the urgency of the issue, the Chairperson will limit discussion to two questions per presentation.

*Essential components*:

* Those briefing:
  + Provide the NSC with the most important information for the coming debate;
  + Convince the NSC that your analysis and recommendations are well-researched, soundly reasoned, and worth supporting (i.e., merit inclusion in the final NSS); and
  + Answer questions from NSC members.
* Those listening to briefings:
  + Press for greater detail or clarification; and
  + Critique.
  + Note: This is *not* a time for questioners to advance their preferred policy position explicitly.

*Preparation:*

Review the circulated White Papers before the NSC meets. If you have a pressing question on one of these Papers, draft the question and submit it to the Chairperson in advance of the meeting. This does not *guarantee* that the Chairperson will let you ask the question, but better researched—and pertinent—questions may receive priority over those constructed on the fly.

*Research:*

* Mickolus, Edward (2015) *Briefing for the Board Room and the Situation Room: A Brief Guidebook.* Washington, DC: Daniel Morgan Academy Press.