

News, announcements, research, events, and more from the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland

# CISSMUpdate



SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

## Kathleen Hicks, MPM '93, confirmed as Deputy Secretary of Defense



The Senate confirmed Kathleen Hicks MPM '93 as deputy defense secretary, the second-highest in the Pentagon. Hicks is the first woman confirmed by the Senate to hold the position. During her confirmation hearing, Hicks acknowledged the achievement saying "I [am] proud to put another crack in the glass ceiling of the department I've spent most of my adult life serving." Hicks will have several challenges ahead as she settles into her new position such as addressing China as a pacing challenge for the Department of Defense. The School of Public Policy has been home to many trailblazing women in the field, starting with Dr. Catherine Kelleher, founding faculty member of the School, founding director of CISSM, and founder of Women in International Security (WIIS). SPP and CISSM continue to champion the Catherine Kelleher Fellowship for International Security Studies to support future generations of leaders in the security field.

[Learn more »](#)

## New CISSM Report highlights Iranian attitudes on prospects for cooperation with Biden administration



The Iranian people are feeling the pain of the novel coronavirus but demonstrate surprising resilience in the face of uncertainty, according to a new CISSM **report**. The new data collected by CISSM and IranPoll examines how Iranians are faring during the Covid-19 pandemic, what they thought about the parliamentary election in Iran and the presidential election in the United States, and how the inauguration of President Joe Biden impacted Iranian attitudes toward nuclear diplomacy and regional security. President Biden's inauguration represents another potential crossroads in the US relationship with Iran, but the history of disappointment with the JCPOA tempers Iranian expectations.

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## Climate change and its connection to the Indian farmers' protest



The Indian farmers' mass protest continues in response to Narendra Modi's efforts to privatize the agricultural sector by loosening regulations that protect small farmers from corporate contract farming competition. Agricultural disruption traceable to climate change has made farming in India uncompetitive and has pushed the Modi government to pass controversial market-friendly laws. CISSM Research Associate, Zafar Imran, explains the climate trends and events that led to this current situation and whether this has the potential to escalate from protest movement to political instability in his **op-ed** for *Le Monde diplomatique*.

[Learn more »](#)

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## CISSM director contributes chapter to edited volume on China's strategic arsenal



China's Strategic Arsenal, edited by James M. Smith and Paul J. Bolt, is now available in paperback, hard cover, and ebook formats. The volume brings together an international group of distinguished scholars, including CISSM Director Nancy Gallagher, to provide a

fresh assessment of China's strategic military capabilities, doctrines, and political perceptions. Dr. Gallagher's contribution to the volume focuses on Chinese attitudes toward security cooperation and argues that because China's strategy rests on different assumptions about security and nuclear deterrence than U.S. strategy does, its ideas about arms control are different, too. Coercive competition between China and the United States will only grow until both sides recognize that the costs and risks of power maximization and freedom of action outweigh its benefits. You can order China's Strategic Arsenal online [here](#) and use code TGUF at checkout for a 30% discount

[Learn more »](#)

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## The cooperation challenges facing US and Japan on North Korean denuclearization



The United States and Japan need better coordination with one another and South Korea to get the diplomatic process addressing North Korean denuclearization back on track. However, challenges to diplomatic coordination remain. The Biden administration has a difficult decision ahead on the fate of joint military exercises with South Korea and strained relations between Japan and South Korea persist. To ensure stability in the region, the United States, Japan, and South Korea need to address existing diplomatic tensions while carrying out closer consultations on the format of negotiations with North Korea and on concessions that may impact them in any future diplomacy, argues CISSM Research Associate, Naoko Aoki, in a pair of op-eds for the East Asia Forum,

"Japan's North Korea Challenge in 2020" and  
"Biden's North Korea Challenge."

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## New CISSM Working Paper finds higher levels of youth well-being in MENA region than common narrative suggests



2019 CISSM seed grant competition winners, Sergio Pinto and Carol Graham, examine well-being across employment groups, education, age, and gender in the MENA region in their **new CISSM Working Paper**. The authors find that while the unemployed across all groups demonstrate the lowest levels of well-being, male unemployed youth display higher levels of well-being as compared to other age groups. This runs counter to the common narrative that youth frustration catalyzed the 2011 uprisings. Pinto and Graham argue that what particularly stands out is the complexity and at times unexpected manner with which people of different ages, gender, and education navigate labor markets in this complex and at times troubled region.

[Learn more »](#)

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## Contrasting approaches to information-age dilemmas strain US-

# Russiarelations



The governments and societies in Russia and the United States base political and economic decisions about the development and use of information technology on different principles; in a globalized, interconnected world Russia's collectivistic approach clashes with the American individualistic approach. Alternative approaches to information-age dilemmas make Russia and the United States particularly sensitive to different ways of using information technology to impact electoral processes and domestic politics, with little understanding of each other's narratives and national priorities, writes Pavel Sharikov, in his new CISSM Working Paper, **"Alternative Approaches to Information-Age Dilemmas Drive U.S. and Russian Arguments about Interference in Domestic Political Affairs"** .

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Assessing the evidence on North Korea and biological weapons



North Korea's announcement that it is developing a vaccine for Covid-19 has focused renewed media attention on Pyongyang's purported biological weapons program. This report reviews the US and South Korea's public assessments on North Korea's biological weapons program and corresponding policy responses. While North Korea may once have had and may still be pursuing a biological weapon capability, official US and South Korean public records do not indicate North Korea possesses an advanced biological weapons program, finds CISSM Senior Research Associate, Elisa Harris, in her new **Stimson Center special report, "North Korea and Biological Weapons: Assessing the Evidence."** [Learn more »](#)

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## New CISSM Report examines national models of military innovation and their implications for non-proliferation efforts



How do varying national models of innovation affect or predict a state's ability to innovate and compete in the dual-use space? In her new **CISSM Report**, Amy Nelson addresses this question by exploring variations

in national models of innovation in the hope of beginning to shed light on the pathways or levers those models afford in controlling innovation's end product. It considers the "lifecycle" of dual-use innovation and resulting technologies in the United States and Germany by evaluating how these countries are adapting (or not) their national approaches to investment, development, and integration of dual-use innovation.

[Learn more »](#)

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## Ambassador Susan Schwab named Woman Pioneer by the WTO for her extensive contributions to international trade



As a part of its 25th anniversary celebration, the WTO **recognized** SPP professor emerita and CISSM senior fellow, Ambassador Susan Schwab for her past work shaping trade policy. Ambassador Schwab served as the U.S. Trade Representative and was the only female USTR to participate in the WTO's Doha Round, which helped to shape international trade policy. Ambassador Schwab also counts launching the initial Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations as one of her many accomplishments.

[Learn more »](#)

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## Steve Fetter receives 2021 Leo Szilard



## Lectureship Award for his career work on minimizing nuclear threats



The American Physical Society (APS) recognized SPP professor, CISSM senior fellow, and dean of the Graduate School, Steve Fetter, with its 2021 Leo Szilard Lectureship Award. The award recognizes Fetter's contributions to two US administration's efforts to minimize the threat of nuclear war, his work on nuclear archaeology as a method for supporting arms control and counter-proliferation efforts, and for his work on the 1996 Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

[Learn more »](#)

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## Call for proposals: 2021 CISSM Seed Grant competition open through April 16th

CISSM's 2021 Seed Grant competition is now open with a call for proposals. The CISSM Seed Grant competition has supported several SPP faculty and student research projects on a range of security and governance-related challenges. 2017 inaugural Seed Grant competition winner Davin O'Regan's proposal focused on the relationship between civil society and civil war onset. O'Regan used the award to learn more about newly available cross-national datasets that measure variation in the civil society landscape. While presenting his **working paper** to a CISSM audience, O'Regan received valuable feedback on alternative interpretations to the paper's findings, all of which were integrated into and strengthened his later dissertation

work. 2018 Seed Grant competition winners, Catherine Worsnop and Poorti Sapatnekar, **explored the factors** that enable and motivate non-state actors to participate in the design and implementation of international agreements with a particular focus on climate governance. 2019 winners SergioPinto and Carol Graham produced **two papers** focused on well-being indicators in the MENAregion. 2020 Seed Grant winners, Catherine Worsnop and Alec Worsnop, are currently workingon understanding **the divergent reactions of armed groups to health assistance.**

**Learn more »**

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#### Recent CISSM News

##### **Naoko AokiQuoted in South China Morning Post**

March 21, 2021

##### **Charles Harry to Participate at CyCon**

March 10, 2021

##### **Nancy Gallagher Speaks on the Iran Podcast**

March 4, 2021

##### **Mussington Elected as Life Member of Council on Foreign Relations**

March 2, 2021

##### **Program on Public Consultation Report Cited in New York Times Article**

February 25, 2021

##### **Mussington Announced as CISA Senior Advisor**

February 16, 2021

##### **Steve Fetter Quoted in: 'Covid Wake-Up Call': Doomsday Clock Remains Closer To Apocalypse Than Ever Before**

January 27, 2021

##### **Survey Shows Iranian Pessimism on Economy, Pride in Healthcare Response**

School Authors:Nancy Gallagher, Clay Ramsay, Ebrahim Mohseni

December 16, 2020

##### **Fetter co-founds Physicists Coalition for Nuclear Threat Reduction**

September 28, 2020

**Congress must listen to the people**

School Authors: Stephen Kull  
Other Authors: Jillian Youngblood  
January 8, 2021

**The Question of COVID-19 Mortality in China**

School Authors: Milton Leitenberg  
January 4, 2021

**Calling SolarWinds Hack 'Act Of War' Just Makes It Worse**

School Authors: Theresa Hitchens  
Other Authors: Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.  
December 21, 2020

**Iranian Public Opinion during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

School Authors: Nancy Gallagher, Clay Ramsay, Ebrahim Mohseni  
December 11, 2020

**The Rise of the Futurists: The Perils of Predicting with Futurethink**

School Authors: Amy J. Nelson  
Other Authors: Alexander H. Montgomery  
November 2020

**Cybersecurity Expert: What the Media Miss on America's Election Risks**

School Authors: David Mussington  
October 23, 2020

**Emerging Technologies and Trade Controls: A Sectoral Composition Approach**

School Authors: Lindsay Rand and Andrea Viski  
Other Authors: Tucker Boyce  
October 13, 2020

**Review of *The Nuclear Spies* by Vince Houghton**

School Authors: Nancy Gallagher  
Other Authors: Timothy P. McDonnell and Joshua Rovner  
August 24, 2020

**The Common Ground of the American People: Policy Positions Supported by Both Democrats and Republicans**

School Authors: Steven Kull  
Other Authors: Program for Public Consultation  
August 7, 2020

**Double or Nothing? The Effects of the Diffusion of Dual-Use Enabling Technologies on Strategic Stability**

## **Governance, Risk, and Artificial Intelligence**

School Authors: Aaron Mannes  
April 13, 2020

### ABOUT CISSM

CISSM conducts research, outreach and education focused on multiple, overlapping types of international security challenges. The challenges include those posed by dual-use technologies (e.g., information, nuclear and space), political dynamics that threaten human security, and those that require national governments (including the United States, China, Russia, and Iran) to develop innovative forms of international cooperation and governance.

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### **Support CISSM**

CISSM's **Target of Opportunity Fund** supports exploratory research, education, and outreach efforts on security policy problems for which CISSM does not currently have dedicated grant funding.

The **Steinbruner Student Support Fund** provides financial support for research and professional development activities by School of Public Policy students working on any policy problem related to cooperative security.

The **Kelleher Fellowship for International Security Studies** supports School of Public Policy students focused on international security policy.

 **Contact CISSM**

