

IRAN'S NUCLEAR AMBITIONS LEARNING DECISION MAKING SKILLS

Mr. Goodhue

This week you have been studying the US/Iranian impasse over the latter's efforts to obtain nuclear weapons. Background research has been conducted and policy options have been considered. Now it is time to decide on the correct course of action from the US Government's perspective. As members of the President's National Security Staff you will discuss the possible courses of action and advise the President on the most appropriate one to take.

Here are some suggested steps for this activity:

ORGANIZATION:

- Ask yourself and your group members what is it that we are required to do. What is the final product of our work?
- What are the resources available to us? (Human, material, data)
- How much time is available for us to reach a recommendation?
- How should we define our responsibilities within the NSC group so that everyone contributes?

AS YOU BEGIN THE WORK:

- How is the data that you have useful for answering your questions?
- Where can you get additional data if needed?
- Should the options be discussed one at a time or taken up all together?

DECISION MAKING:

- In talking with your colleagues suggest possible solutions at any time. Don't rush a decision, though.
- Consider all options, as far fetched as they may seem. Don't dismiss any solution out of hand until you have had a chance to discuss it.
- Use compromise and consensus to arrive at a recommendation, but don't give in to the group if you feel a decision violates one of your core values or the law.
- Think of both intended and unintended consequences of your decision.

PRESENTATION:

- Once you arrive at a recommendation for the President be prepared to back it up with reasoning and evidence.
- It will be the President's responsibility to make the final decision. At that point, if the process has worked well, you should be able to support whatever decision is made since you have been a full participant.