Replication Materials for "Advisers and Aggregation in Foreign Policy Decision-Making"

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This document contains all information regarding the files necessary to replicate all results in the main manuscript and the appendix.

The document is divided into three main sections. In the first, we list and briefly describe the function of every single item in the replication file. In the second, we specify which R file produces a table, figure, or set of results that appears in the main text and appendix. In the third, we describe every covariate in the CSV data files.

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Overview of Files

R Files

File	Description
setup.R	Set working directory and fix stargazer package
loadPackages.R	Installs and loads all necessary packages
getAdmin.R	Determines presidential administration based on date
makeCoefPlots.R	Generates coefficient plots for most key results
descPlotsTables.R	Creates several key descriptive plots and tables in the main text and appendix
deliberationAnalysis.R	Performs analysis regarding counsel-seeking in deliberations (Section 3.1)
dictionaryAnalysis.R	Performs topic-based analysis regarding counsel content and dispositions (Section 3.2)
againstTypeAnalysis.R	Performs calculations regarding against-type recommendations (end of Section 3.2)
meetingAnalysis.R	Performs meeting-level analysis (Section 4.1)
monthlyAnalysis.R	Performs time-unit analysis with monthly data (Section 4.1)
modelMetrics.R	Reports performance metrics from supervised learning model
meetingAnalysisIter.R	Performs meeting-level analysis, but more fully propagating uncertainty from bootstrapped hawkishness measures
monthlyAnalysisIter.R	Performs monthly-level analysis, but more fully propagating uncertainty from bootstrapped hawkishness measures
meetingAnalysisApp.R	Performs multiple robustness checks on meeting-level analysis
existingFindingsAnalysis.R	Performs replications of key findings from Horowitz and Stam (2014) and Carter and Smith (2020)
dictionaryAnalysisApp.R	Performs robustness checks on topic-based analysis
dictionaryAnalysisIter.R	Performs topic-based analysis, but more fully propagating uncertainty from bootstrapped hawkishness measures
keyATMAnalysis.R	Reports results from a keyword-assisted topic model; a “robustness check” for dictionaryAnalysis.R
agendaAnalysis.R	Performs analysis of the relationship between agenda items and speaker hawkishness

RData Files

File	Description
predictHawkMetrics.RData	Data from bootstrapped supervised learning models of actor hawkishness
keyATMData.RData	Data from fitted keyword-assisted topic model applied to speech act data
monthlyDataIter.RData	Data from bootstrapped measures of actor hawkishness, structured for monthly-level analysis

CSV Files

File	Description
fpls1976.csv	Data from respondents of 1976 Foreign Policy Leadership Project survey, used to fit models of hawkishness
actorData.csv	Core data on decision-makers in our data, necessary to produce predicted measures of hawkishness
principalsHawkData.csv	Hawkishness measures for principal actors in the National Security Council
segmentData.csv	Speech act data from all meetings
againstTypeData.csv	Data on recommendations made by decision-makers in a sample of meetings, along with whether decision-makers were high or low in hawkishness
meetingData.csv	Data on meeting-level attributes, used to perform meeting-level analysis
meetingLongData.csv	"Long" version of meetingData.csv, which contains hawkishness measures from all bootstrapped iterations of hawkishness prediction
deliberationData.csv	Qualitatively coded data on dissent and information-seeking in a sample of speech act data
dictionaryData.csv	Data structured at the meeting-adviser level, measuring prevalence of five key topics
keyATMTopicValidation.csv	Data on topics in sample of speech act data, including actual topics and topics as guessed by a research assistant

Files to Produce Tables, Figures, and Results

Main manuscript

Item in Manuscript	Relevant File
Figure 3: Predicted Hawkishness Measures for Senior US Decision-Makers	descPlotsTables.R
Figure 4: Average Speaker Hawkishness for US Foreign Policy Meetings	descPlotsTables.R
Figure 5: Leader Search for Counsel during Meetings	deliberationAnalysis.R
Figure 6: Effect of Adviser Hawkishness on Topic Proportions During Meetings	dictionaryAnalysis.R
3.2: Against-type analysis	againstTypeAnalysis.R
Table 2: Decisions Against Adversaries by Administration	descPlotsTables.R
Table 3: Effect of Participant Hawkishness on Foreign Policy Decisions	meetingAnalysis.R
Figure 7: Summary of Three Models of Trait Aggregation	meetingAnalysis.R
Table 4: Predicted Number of Conflictual Decisions Towards Adversaries	meetingAnalysis.R
4.1.3: Information on intra-class correlation	meetingAnalysis.R
Table 5: Effect of NSC Principals' Hawkishness on MIDs, Using Monthly Data	monthlyAnalysis.R

Appendix

Appendix Section	Relevant File
1.3: Meeting Statistics	descPlotsTables.R
3.3: Distribution of the Outcome Variable	descPlotsTables.R
4.3: Predictive Model Descriptive Statistics	modelMetrics.R
4.4: Comparison to OLS Model	modelMetrics.R
4.5: Comparison of Decision-Makers and FPLP Respondents	modelMetrics.R
5.1: Full Results	meetingAnalysis.R
5.2: Disaggregating Results by Meeting Type	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.3: Propagating Uncertainty of Hawkishness Measures	meetingAnalysisIter.R
5.4: Using an OLS Predictive Model	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.5: Removing Bureaucratic Affiliations	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.6: Removing the Soviet Union	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.7: Negative Binomial	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.8: Time-Unit Replication Analysis	monthlyAnalysis.R
5.8.1: Propagating Uncertainty of Hawkishness Measures in Time-Unit Analysis	monthlyAnalysisIter.R
5.9: Statutory Members Only	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.10: Crisis Period Analysis	meetingAnalysisApp.R
5.11: Adviser Experience and Dispositional Distance Analysis	meetingAnalysisApp.R
6.1: Expert Survey Results	meetingAnalysisApp.R
6.2: Consistency with Existing Findings on US Presidential Hawkishness	existingFindingsAnalysis.R
7.1: Seeking Counsel and Expressing Dissent	deliberationAnalysis.R
7.2: Dictionary Approach to Speaker Topics	dictionaryAnalysis.R
7.3: President's Hawkishness and Topic Prevalence	dictionaryAnalysisApp.R
7.4: Propagating Uncertainty of Hawkishness Measures in Topic Analysis	dictionaryAnalysisIter.R
7.5: Topic Model Approach to Speaker Topics	keyATMAnalysis.R
8: Agenda Items and Hawkishness	agendaAnalysis.R

Variables in CSV Files

fpls1976.csv

All variables represent measures of attributes for respondents to the 1976 Foreign Policy Leadership Survey.

- *male*: Whether respondent is male (0=no, 1=yes).
- *birthDecade*: The decade in which the respondent is born.
    - 0: Born before 1910
    - 1: Born between 1910 and 1919
    - 2: Born between 1920 and 1929
    - 3: Born between 1930 and 1939
    - 4: Born on or after 1940
- *CollegeGrad*: Whether respondent graduated college (0=no, 1=yes).
- *MA*: Whether respondent obtained an MA degree (0=no, 1=yes).
- *MBA*: Whether respondent obtained an MBA degree (0=no, 1=yes).
- *MD*: Whether respondent obtained an MD degree (0=no, 1=yes).
- *PhD*: Whether respondent obtained a PhD degree (0=no, 1=yes).
- *LLBJD*: Whether respondent obtained an LLB or JD degree (0=no, 1=yes).
- *FSO*: Whether respondent is a Foreign Service Officer (0=no, 1=yes).
- *MilOfficer*: Whether respondent is a military officer (0=no, 1=yes).
- *MilService*: Whether respondent had any prior military service (0=no, 1=yes).
- *wwii*: Whether respondent served in World War II (0=no, 1=yes).
- *vietnam*: Whether respondent served in Vietnam War (0=no, 1=yes).
- *Rep*: Whether respondent is Republican (0=no, 1=yes).
- *Dem*: Whether respondent is Democratic (0=no, 1=yes).
- *Ind*: Whether respondent is independent (0=no, 1=yes). Any individual who does not list themselves as Republican or Democratic is treated as independent.
- *MI1*: Measure of hawkishness constructed using 15 questions from the FPLP (see Appendix 4.2). Values range from 0 (completely dovish) to 1 (completely hawkish).

actorData.csv

All variables represent measures of attributes for actors in our decision-maker dataset. All variables in this dataset are identical to those in the “fpls1976.csv,” except this file does not include the MI1 variable (which is what we are using this present dataset to attempt to predict). Refer to the list of variables and their descriptions for “fpls1976.csv” for more information.

principalsHawkData.csv

This dataset contains the information necessary to produce Figure 3 in the main text.

- *pos_name*: Name of the actor's position.
- *firstlast*: First and last name of the actor.
- *hawkMean*: Average hawkishness measure, calculated from 1,000 bootstrapped iterations.
- *hawkLower*: 2.5th percentile hawkishness measure, calculated from 1,000 bootstrapped iterations.
- *hawkUpper*: 97.5th percentile hawkishness measure, calculated from 1,000 bootstrapped iterations.
- *pos_start*: Starting date for the actor's position.

segmentData.csv

This file contains all speech acts from all 2,685 meetings in the paper's analysis.

- *segID*: A unique ID for the speech act, created using the meeting number, part number, and speech act number.
- *meetNum*: Meeting number.
- *partNum*: Part number. In a couple NSC meeting records, the records explicitly list there being multiple parts to a meeting.
- *segNum*: Speech act number, assigned in increasing numerical order. If the speech act data skips numbers, this is because the "missing" rows contained notes, titles, or other materials that were not speech acts and thus omitted from the final dataset.
- *date*: Date of the meeting.
- *admin*: The administration during which the meeting took place.
- *formal*: Whether the meeting was a formal gathering of the National Security Council or not (0=no, 1=yes).
- *doctype*: The format of the original meeting record.
- *firstlast*: The first and last name of the actor responsible for the row's speech act.
- *pos_name*: Name of the position occupied by the actor responsible for the row's speech act.
- *president*: Whether the speaker is the president (0=no, 1=yes).
- *actorYear*: An ID that concatenates the actor's first and last name with the year.
- *segTopic1*: The primary agenda item associated with the speech act. Research assistants qualitatively coded this variable, assigning each speech act to one of twenty agenda items. See Appendix 9 for a full listing of all twenty agenda item categories.
- *segTopic2*: If applicable, the second agenda item associated with the speech act.
- *segText*: The text of the speech act.

againstTypeData.csv

This file contains the core data necessary to run the against-type analysis briefly discussed in Section 3.2 of the main text.

- *meetNum*: Meeting number.
- *fightCoerce*: Whether a recommendation involving fighting and/or using coercive force was made in the speech act (0=no, 1=yes).
- *hawkcat*: A three-tier variable indicating the actor's relative hawkishness compared to all other actors.
    - Low: At or below the 20th percentile.
    - Between the 20th and 80th percentile.
    - High: At or above the 80th percentile.

meetingData.csv

This file contains the data necessary to run meeting-level analysis in Section 4.1 of the main text.

- *meetNum*: Meeting number.
- *partNum*: Part number. In a couple NSC meeting records, the records explicitly list there being multiple parts to a meeting.
- *meetID*: Unique identifier for a meeting using the meeting number and part number.
- *date*: Date of the meeting.
- *formal*: Whether the meeting was a formal gathering of the National Security Council (1) or not (0).
- *admin*: The administration during which the meeting took place.
- *presAttend*: Whether the president attended the meeting (0=no, 1=yes).
- *nAttend*: Total number of individuals who spoke at least once in the meeting.
- *nSegs*: Total number of speech acts in the meeting.
- *numDef*: Number of actors in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to the Department of Defense.
- *numInt*: Number of actors in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to intelligence.
- *numMil*: Number of actors in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to the military.
- *numState*: Number of actors in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to the Department of State.
- *numDefK*: Number of NSC statutory members in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to the Department of Defense.
- *numIntK*: Number of NSC statutory members in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to intelligence.

- *numMilK*: Number of NSC statutory members in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to the military.
- *numStateK*: Number of NSC statutory members in the meeting with a bureaucratic affiliation to the Department of State.
- *totDip*: Total years of diplomatic experience shared by all actors in the meeting.
- *totInt*: Total years of intelligence experience shared by all actors in the meeting.
- *totMil*: Total years of military experience shared by all actors in the meeting.
- *totDipK*: Total years of diplomatic experience shared by all NSC statutory members in the meeting.
- *totIntK*: Total years of intelligence experience shared by all NSC statutory members in the meeting.
- *totMilK*: Total years of military experience shared by all NSC statutory members in the meeting.
- *usmidschallenge5*: Number of MIDs challenges the US faced in the previous five years.
- *cinc*: Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) score for the United States in the present year.
- *incrisis*: Whether or not the United States was in the midst of a crisis during the time of the meeting, according to the International Crisis Behavior dataset (0=no, 1=yes).
- *nConfAdv*: Number of conflictual decisions made toward an adversary during the meeting.
- *nCoopAdv*: Number of cooperative decisions made toward an adversary during the meeting.
- *nConfAdv_NoUSSR*: Number of conflictual decisions made toward an adversary that is not the Soviet Union during the meeting.
- nCoopAdv_NoUSSR: Number of cooperative decisions made toward an adversary that is not the Soviet Union during the meeting.
- *presHawk*: President's hawkishness.
- *meanHawk*: Average hawkishness across all actors in the meeting.
- *advHawk*: Weighted average of hawkishness for all advisers in the meeting (weighted by number of speech acts).
- *presHawkOLS*: President's hawkishness, using hawkishness measures from a supervised OLS model.
- *meanHawkOLS*: Average hawkishness across all actors in the meeting, using hawkishness measures from a supervised OLS model.
- *advHawkOLS*: Weighted average of hawkishness for all advisers in the meeting (weighted by number of speech acts), using hawkishness measures from a supervised OLS model.
- *presHawkNoBureau*: President's hawkishness, using hawkishness measures from a boosted linear model that omits bureaucratic affiliations as predictors.

- *meanHawkNoBureau*: Average hawkishness across all actors in the meeting, using hawkishness measures from a boosted linear model that omits bureaucratic affiliations as predictors.
- *advHawkNoBureau*: Weighted average of hawkishness for all advisers in the meeting (weighted by number of speech acts), using hawkishness measures from a boosted linear model that omits bureaucratic affiliations as predictors.
- *presHawkKey*: President's hawkishness, using only NSC principals. (This measure is identical to *presHawk* but is included to ensure consistency of variables.)
- *meanHawkKey*: Average hawkishness across all NSC principals in the meeting.
- *advHawkKey*: Weighted average of hawkishness for all advisers who are NSC principals in the meeting (weighted by number of speech acts).
- *leadAdvDiffExp*: Difference in years between the president's experience in government and the average level of experience across all advisers in the meeting. Positive values indicate that the president has more years of experience than the average adviser; negative values indicate the average adviser has more experience.
- *presHawkExpert*: Average hawkishness score for presidents across responses provided by 14 experts. Numbers can theoretically range from 1 (least hawkish) to 4 (most hawkish). See Appendix 7.1 for more details.
- *mention.[ITEM]*: A binary variable indicating whether at least one speech act during the meeting involved the agenda item at hand.

meetingLongData.csv

This file is similar to "meetingData.csv" but contains hawkishness measures from all 1,000 bootstrapped iterations of the supervised learning model. (Recall that hawkishness measures in "meetingData.csv" are based on actor's hawkishness measures which were created by calculating the average hawkishness measure for the actor across all 1,000 iterations.) The vast majority of variables listed and described for "meetingData.csv" also appear here. Below, we only list the additional variables included in this extended file.

- *hawkMeasure*: The specific measure of hawkishness reflected by the row. The possible values in this column directly mirror some of the different measures of hawkishness in "meetingData.csv."
    - *presHawk*: President's hawkishness.
    - *meanHawk*: Average hawkishness across all actors in the meeting.
    - *advHawk*: Weighted average of hawkishness for all advisers in the meeting (weighted by number of speech acts).
    - *presHawkKey*: President's hawkishness, using only NSC principals. (This measure is identical to presHawk but is included to ensure consistency of variables.)
    - *meanHawkKey*: Average hawkishness across all NSC principals in the meeting.
    - *advHawkKey*: Weighted average of hawkishness for all advisers who are NSC principals in the meeting (weighted by number of speech acts).
- *hawkBoot[N]*: Hawkishness measure from bootstrapped iteration N, where N ranges from 1 to 1,000.

deliberationData.csv

This dataset contains all the information necessary to analyze when and how leaders seek counsel during deliberations, as reflected in Section 3.1 of the main text. Recall that this dataset reflects a sample of randomly selected meetings for which research assistants qualitatively coded whether speech acts reflected dissent and/or information search.

- *segID*: A unique ID for the speech act, created using the meeting number, part number, and speech act number.
- *meetNum*: Meeting number.
- *admin*: The administration during which the meeting took place.
- *firstlast*: The first and last name of the actor responsible for the row's speech act.
- *dissent*: Whether the speech act expresses dissent (0=no, 1=yes).
- *infosearch*: Whether the speech act indicates any form of information search (0=no, 1=yes).

dictionaryData.csv

This dataset contains all information necessary to analyze how an actor's hawkishness relates to their propensity to discuss specific conceptual topics, as discussed in Section 3.1 of the main text. (More information is also available in Appendix 8.2.) Recall that this data is organized at the meeting-adviser level.

- *meetNum*: Meeting number.
- *admin*: The administration during which the meeting took place.
- *formal*: Whether the meeting was a formal gathering of the National Security Council or not (0=no, 1=yes).
- *doctype*: The format of the original meeting record.
- *president*: Whether the speaker is the president (0=no, 1=yes).
- *hawkMean*: Average hawkishness measure, calculated from 1,000 bootstrapped iterations.
- *propThreat*: Proportion of words in the adviser's speech acts during the meeting that are in our dictionary of terms relating to international threats (see Table A40 in Appendix 8.2).
- *propBalance*: Proportion of words in the adviser's speech acts during the meeting that are in our dictionary of terms relating to military balance (see Table A40 in Appendix 8.2).
- *propDiplo*: Proportion of words in the adviser's speech acts during the meeting that are in our dictionary of terms relating to diplomacy (see Table A40 in Appendix 8.2).
- *propViolence*: Proportion of words in the adviser's speech acts during the meeting that are in our dictionary of terms relating to military violence (see Table A40 in Appendix 8.2).
- *propAdv*: Proportion of words in the adviser's speech acts during the meeting that are in our dictionary of terms relating to adversary interests (see Table A40 in Appendix 8.2).
- *hawkBoot[N]*: Hawkishness measure from bootstrapped iteration N, where N ranges from 1 to 1,000.

keyATMTopicValidation.csv

This dataset contains information necessary to assess the validity of our five primary topics (military violence, international threats, military balance, diplomacy, and adversary interests) in the keyword-assisted topic model analysis (see “keyATMData.RData” and “keyATManalysis.R”).

- *meetAdv*: A unique identifier for the meeting-adviser observation, created by combining the meeting number with the actor’s first and last name.
- *topicActual*: The most prevalent topic associated with the meeting-adviser’s speech acts according to the keyword-assisted topic model.
- *topicGuess*: The most prevalent topic associated with the meeting-adviser’s speech acts according to a research assistant.