

The Nuclear Age in World Politics
Wesleyan University
Government 386, Fall 2018
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:20 - 11:40am

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This course examines the role of nuclear weapons in international relations. The course will address the following questions: What are the potential effects of nuclear weapon use? Why do states attempt to acquire them? Are counter-proliferation measures optimal or effective? Did the creation of nuclear weapons represent a fundamental shift in the nature of warfare? If so, how? How has thinking about nuclear weapons changed over time? What is the strategic and political utility of nuclear weapons? Finally, is the proliferation of nuclear weapons good or bad? We will address these questions through the analytical approaches of political scientists as well as through historical literature.

The course will take the form of a seminar. There will be between 50 and 100 pages of reading per class. All readings will be on the course moodle. The syllabus may be altered as we go along. Please check the course website for the most recent syllabus and readings. Students will be expected to show up having read all required texts and to be ready to talk about them.

In addition to class participation, there will be an in-class midterm exam, a take-home final exam covering all material from the semester, and two analytical papers, described below. Unexcused absences for exams will result in an exam grade of "0". Exams will be comprised of short and long essay questions.

Grades and Requirements:

Two exams: 25% each
Two analytical writing assignments: 15% each
Participation in class discussion: 15%
Moodle Posts: 5%

Exams

There will be an in-class midterm exam consisting of short and long essay questions in the 7th week of class. The final exam for the course will be a take-home assignment conducted during the assigned final exam period.

Two Analytical Papers

All students will write an analytical paper on the readings for October 9th, due at the beginning of class. The paper will argue in support of either Sagan or Waltz as presented in the readings for that class on the benefits and costs of nuclear proliferation.

In addition to this paper, each student will write a 2-page policy brief due on November 13th, the topic of which will be described later in the semester.

Participation

Participation during class is important for a number of reasons. First, it allows you to demonstrate that you are engaged with the course and are processing its contents. Second, it helps you develop the important skill of feeling comfortable offering your opinion in front of many others. Third, it provides you practice at making verbal arguments in constructive and respectful ways. Class participation will be evaluated not solely on the amount that you talk but also on the quality of your comments and on the degree to which you respond to the comments of others.

Participation will also take the form of comments posted on the Moodle prior to class. These posts can include a brief summary of the readings, but should mainly focus on questions you had about the reading and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments presented by the authors. I will assign one Participation grade for the semester. If you are interested in how you are doing in in class, please stop by my office hours. I will be happy to discuss it with you.

Class Conduct:

A few guidelines to ensure that class time will run smoothly and will adhere to basic notions of respect for others.

- Arrive on time so as not to disturb others and to ensure you don't miss the comments of others.
- No eating.
- No laptops. No texting, surfing, making or answering calls, or any other form of electronic disturbance during class. Turn off all cell phones. I am not kidding.

Course Outline

I. Introduction, History and Technology

1. Tuesday, September 4th: Course Introduction and The News

- Review of Syllabus
- What questions will we be asking? How will we go about answering them?
- Lynn Eden, "City on Fire," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, pp. 32 - 43.
- "What's the Difference Between a Hydrogen Bomb and a Regular Atomic Bomb?" *New York Times*, Sept. 3, 2017.

2. Thursday, September 6th: The Effects of Nuclear Weapons & Hiroshima

- Barton Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," *Foreign Affairs*, 74 (1), 1995: pp. 135 - 152.
- Gar Alperovitz, "Hiroshima: Historians Reassess," *Foreign Policy*, 1995: pp. 15 - 34.
- Ward Wilson, "The Winning Weapon? Rethinking Nuclear Weapons in Light of Hiroshima," *International Security*, 2007: pp. 162 - 179.

II. What Are They Good For?

3. Tuesday, September 11th: Uses of Force: Strategic Utility

Can nuclear weapons be used for offensive purposes? And other concepts: Security Dilemma, Credibility

- Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 1 - 10, 15 - 24, 35 - 59.

4. Thursday, September 13th: Extended Deterrence, Compellence

- Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 69 - 91.
- Todd Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann, "Crisis Bargaining and Nuclear Black-mail," *International Organization*, (2014), pp. 7 - 51.

5. Tuesday, September 18th: Nuclear Superiority and Bargaining

- Marc Trachtenberg, "The Influence of Nuclear Weapons in the Cuban Missile Crisis," *International Security*, 1985, pp. 137 - 163.

- Matthew Kroenig, “Nuclear Superiority and the Balance of Resolve: Explaining Nuclear Crisis Outcomes,” *International Organization*, 2013, pp. 141 - 171.
- Richard Betts, “Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance,” Read ONLY pp. 82 - 109.

6. Thursday, September 20th: Simulation: Cuban Missile Crisis

7. Tuesday, September 25th: Discussion of Cuban Missile Crisis
Simulation versus Reality

III. Why Do States Pursue Nuclear Weapons?

8. Thursday, September 27th: Demand Side Theories

- Scott Sagan, “Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons,” *International Security*, pp. 54 - 86.
- Jacques Hymans, *The Psychology of Nuclear Proliferation*, 2006, pp. 16 - 40.
- Christopher Way and Jessica Weeks, “Making It Personal: Regime Type and Nuclear Proliferation,” *American Journal of Political Science*, July 2014, pp. 705 - 710.

9. Tuesday, October 2nd: Supply Side Theories

- Matthew Kroenig, “Exporting the Bomb: Why States Provide Sensitive Nuclear Assistance,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, pp. 161 - 180.
- Matthew Fuhrmann, “Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements,” 2009, *International Security*, pp. 7 - 41.
- William Langewiesche, “The Wrath of Khan,” *The Atlantic*, November 2005.

10. Thursday, October 4th: Why Renounce Them?

- Etel Solingen, *Nuclear Logics*, pp. 23 - 53, 82 - 99, 164 - 186.
- Ariel Levite, “Never Say Never Again: Nuclear Reversal Revisited,” *International Security*, (2002), pp. 59 - 98.

IV. Can and Should We Stop Them?

11. Tuesday, October 9th: Is Proliferation Good or Bad?

DUE: Analytical Paper emailed to me before the beginning of class.

- Scott Sagan and Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons*, pp. 1 - 88.
- Kenneth Waltz, "Why Iran Should Get the Bomb," *Foreign Affairs*, July 2012.

12. Thursday, October 11th: Counterproliferation

- Nicholas Miller, "The Secret Success of Nonproliferation Sanctions," *International Organization*, 68, No. 4 (2014), pp. 1 - 9.
- Sarah Kreps and Matthew Fuhrmann, "Attacking the Atom: Does Bombing Nuclear Facilities Affect Proliferation," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, pp. 1 - 12.
- Jon Lindsay, "Stuxnet and the Limits of Cyber Warfare," *Security Studies*.
- Nicholas Miller and Or Raboniwitz, "Keeping the Bombs in the Basement: US Non-proliferation Policy...," *International Security*.

13. Tuesday, October 16th: In-Class Midterm

14. Thursday, October 18th: Movie: Failsafe

V. The History of Nuclear Strategy: How Has Strategy Changed?

15. Thursday, October 25th: Truman and Eisenhower

- National Security Council Report - NSC - 68
- Keefer, "Eisenhower and the End of the Korean War," *Diplomatic History*.
- Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, pp. 72 - 88.

16. Tuesday, October 30th: Kennedy and Nixon

- Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp. 197 - 234. 272 - 306.
- Francis Gavin, *Nuclear Statecraft: History and Strategy in America's Atomic Age*, 2012, pp. 30 - 56, 104-119.

17. Thursday, November 1st: The Nuclear Revolution or the Nuclear Taboo

- John Mueller, 1988, "The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World," *International Security*, pp. 55 - 79.
- Nina Tannenwald, "The Nuclear Taboo: The US and the Normative Basis for Non-Use," *International Organization*, 1999, pp. 433 - 468.
- Daryl Press, Sagan and Valentino, 2013, "Atomic Aversion: Experimental Evidence on Taboos, Traditions and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons," *American Political Science Review*, pp. 188 - 206.

18. Tuesday, November 6th: The Theory and History of Missile Defense / Arms Control in History - Russia and the US

- Keith Payne, "The Case for National Missile Defense," *Orbis*, (Spring 2000).
- Powell, Robert, "Nuclear Deterrence Theory, Nuclear Proliferation and National Missile Defense," *International Security*, (Spring 2003).

19. Thursday, November 8th: Arms Control - Theory and Challenges

20. Tuesday, November 13th: Policy Briefs Due Before Class.

Topic: Imagine you are asked to provide policy recommendations on national missile defense for the upcoming Nuclear Posture Review. Write a 2 - 3 page brief that advocates for a particular policy.

V. The Nuclear Future:

21. Thursday, November 15th: Simulation: North Korea

22. Tuesday, November 20th: Deterring "Crazy" States

- Barry Posen, "US Security Policy in a Nuclear-Armed World, Or What if Iraq had had Nuclear Weapons?," *Security Studies*, pp. 1 - 31.
- Kenneth Pollack, "The Dangers of Deterrence," in *The Threatening Storm*, pp. 243 - 280.

23. Tuesday, November 27th: No Class

24. Thursday, November 29th: Nuclear Terrorism

- Matthew s and Anthony Weir, “Terrorist Nuclear Weapon Construction: How Difficult?”
- John E Mueller, *Atomic Obsession*, pp. 161 - 215.
- Peter Zimmerman and Jeffrey G. Lewis, “The Bomb in the Backyard,” *Foreign Policy*, (2009).
- William C. Potter, et al. “The Four Faces of Nuclear Terror and the Need for a Prioritized Response,” *Foreign Affairs*. (2004), pp. 130 - 132.
- Graham Allison, “How To Stop Nuclear Terror,” *Foreign Affairs*, January 2004, pp. 64 - 74.
- Matthew Bunn, “Reducing the Greatest Risks of Nuclear Theft and Terrorism,” *Daedalus*, (2009).

25. Tuesday, December 5th: The Future of Nuclear Policy and Global Zero

- “The President and the Bomb,” *Foreign Affairs*, March / April 2018.
- Shultz, Perry, Kissinger and Nunn, “A World Free of Nuclear Weapons” in WSJ.
- Zachary Roth, “Global Zero: Obama’s Distant Goal of a Nuclear Free World,” *The Atlantic*, (2011).

26. Thursday, December 7th: Conclusions and Review