

PS 1581: Origins and Consequences of Nuclear Proliferation Capstone

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University of Pittsburgh
Spring 2019
Seminar: Wednesdays, 9:00-11:30
Posvar 4801
Office Hours: Tuesdays, Posvar 4446, 1:00-3:00

For more than 70 years, nuclear weapons have had a central role in international relations, beginning with Cold War diplomacy between the United States and Soviet Union to ongoing negotiations with Iran and North Korea today. This class investigates why states develop nuclear weapons and how nuclear weapons affect international politics following proliferation. We will use a seminar method, with students presenting existing research papers and others commenting and criticizing the work. The class culminates in students developing their own papers.

Course Materials

Blackboard is difficult to work with. Thus, I will post all course materials on my website: <https://williamspaniel.com/classes/nuclearpolitics2019/>. Most importantly, this includes links to required readings and PDFs of any materials students develop for the class.

There are no required books for this course.

Country Discussions

For two of the weeks, we will discuss important cases of proliferation and nonproliferation. One person will lead the discussion of each country. That person should prepare a detailed timeline of important events for that country's nuclear program and a cursory narrative of why that state pursued nuclear weapons. For countries that ultimately proliferated, the discussion should include a brief summary of the geopolitical consequences. For countries that ultimately did not proliferate, the discussion should include a brief summary of the deal or circumstances that led the country to reverse its program.

For the week you are not leading a discussion, you must do some light research on at least two of the countries for that week and prepare a discussion question for each. The discussion question could highlight some puzzling facet of the program or a historical clarification that your cursory research did not address.

Article Presentations

Four of our meetings will consist of four students presenting reports on the assigned readings for the week. Each student should plan to spend fifteen minutes in front of the class describing the paper assigned to him or her. These presentations should clearly:

- identify the author's research question and answer to that question
- explain the author's theory (i.e., what is the story that the author is trying to tell?)
- summarize the empirical evidence that supports the author's theory
- highlight any shortcomings of the article's argument

Non-presenting students must keep up with the readings. After each presentation, we will spend fifteen to twenty minutes discussing the theories and empirical observations as they relate to other countries. To effectively participate in these discussions, it will be helpful to think about how the reading relates (or does not relate) to the country you were assigned.

Research Paper

Each student will write an original research paper on either (1) the origins of nuclear proliferation or (2) the consequences of nuclear proliferation. The research methodology is up to the student—both case studies and quantitative papers are acceptable. Note that your research on why countries did *not* develop nuclear weapons is just as viable as research on why countries did.

The paper must be written as though it would be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. That is, it should have (1) an abstract consisting of one paragraph that summarizes the argument and evidence, (2) an introduction, (3) a section explaining the theory the student is either developing or adapting from existing work, (4) empirical evaluation of the theory, and (5) a conclusion.

The final paper should be around 18 double-spaced pages. This total does not include the title page (which should include the abstract). It also does not include any figures or tables—though figures and tables are welcome additions.

The paper should be well-sourced and situated in the broader scholarly research on nuclear weapons. This means that you ought to plan to spend at least a few days in the library going through the nuclear shelves and online looking through Google Scholar. The assigned readings are *not* sufficient for a high quality paper. You are also welcome to use primary source documents and country-level reports from international organizations. However, these again are *not* sufficient for a high quality paper.

Students should look to begin their projects early so as to ensure a quality final product. Before spring break, students must submit an introduction and an outline of the remainder of their paper. After spring break, students will present rough drafts of their research to solicit feedback from their colleagues. The final two weeks of class will consist of another round of presentations, with students handing in their papers during finals week.

Plagiarism in the paper is grounds for failing the class.

Evaluation

I will weigh the above components in following manner:

- Weekly Participation: 10%
- Country Discussion: 5%
- Presentation of Existing Research: 10%
- Outline: 10%
- First Presentation: 5%
- Second Presentation: 10%
- Final Paper: 50%

After calculating the weighted averages, I will assign final grades in the following manner:

93% < x: A
90 ≤ x ≤ 93%: A-
87% < x < 90%: B+
83% < x ≤ 87%: B
80% ≤ x ≤ 83%: B-
77% < x < 80%: C+
73% < x ≤ 77%: C
70% < x ≤ 73%: C-
x < 70%: Non-passing grades

Late Work

Absent any university regulations that provide exceptions, no late work will be accepted.

Disabilities

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both myself and Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union (412-648-7890), as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Disclaimer

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class. You alone are responsible for attending lecture and checking the website to stay up-to-date.

Readings and Schedule

The readings and schedule are subject to change, pending international crises and how fast we move through the material. Please see the website for links to the readings and an up-to-date schedule.

January 9: Introduction

Stephen Schwartz: [Atomic Audit](#) (just introduction)

We will divide the readings for the rest of the semester.

January 16: No Class (Whistleblowing Conference)

January 23: Basic Theories of Nuclear Proliferation

February 6: Proliferator Country Discussions

United States, Soviet Union (KG), United Kingdom (CT), France, China (SB), Israel (BB), India, Pakistan (PS)

February 13: Non-Proliferated Country Discussions

Argentina/Brazil (MH), Belarus/Kazakhstan/Ukraine (KC), Iran (DS), Iraq (MP), Japan (HS), Libya (JF), South Africa (CW), South Korea (AR)

February 20: Nuclear Optimists and Nuclear Pessimists

Paper Outlines Due

Kyle Beardsley and Victor Asal: [Winning with the Bomb](#) (SB)

Matthew Kroenig: [Nuclear Superiority and the Balance of Resolve: Explaining Nuclear Crisis Outcomes](#) (MP)

Todd Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann: [Crisis Bargaining and Nuclear Blackmail](#) (CT)

John Mueller: [The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World](#) (BB)

Additional Readings

Scott Sagan: [The Problem of Redundancy Problem: Why More Nuclear Security Forces May Produce Less Nuclear Security](#)

Erik Gartzke and Dong-Joon Jo: [Bargaining, Nuclear Proliferation, and Interstate Disputes](#)

Scott Sagan: [The Perils of Proliferation: Organization Theory, Deterrence Theory, and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons](#)

Mark Bell and Nicholas Miller: [Questioning the Effect of Nuclear Weapons on Conflict](#)

February 27: Security and Economics

Scott Sagan: [Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons? Three Models in Search of a Bomb](#) (PS)

Nuno Monteiro and Alexandre Debs: [The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation](#) (KC)

Sonali Singh and Christopher Way: [The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test](#) (HS)

Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke: [Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation](#) (CW)

Additional Readings

Philipp Bleek and Eric Lorber: [Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation](#)

Matthew Fuhrmann and Todd Sechser: [Nuclear Strategy, Nonproliferation, and the Causes of Foreign Nuclear Deployments](#)

Christopher Way and Jessica Weeks: [Making It Personal: Regime Type and Nuclear Proliferation](#)

Nicholas Miller: [The Secret Success of Nonproliferation Sanctions](#)

March 6: Rough Research Presentations

March 13: No Class (Spring Break)

March 20: Nuclear Capacity

Matthew Fuhrmann: [Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements](#)

Matthew Kroenig: [Importing the Bomb: Sensitive Nuclear Assistance and Nuclear Proliferation](#) (MH)

Nicholas Miller: [Why Nuclear Energy Programs Rarely Lead to Proliferation](#) (AR)

William Spaniel: Bargaining over the Bomb, Chapter 4

Additional Readings

William Spaniel: [Why Give Nuclear Assistance to Would-Be Proliferators?](#)

Matthew Fuhrmann and Benjamin Tkach: [Almost Nuclear: Introducing the Nuclear Latency Dataset](#)

Bradley Smith and William Spaniel: [Introducing v-CLEAR: A Latent Variable Approach to Measuring Nuclear Proficiency](#)

Rupal Mehta and Rachel Elizabeth Whitlark: [The Benefits and Burdens of Nuclear Latency](#)

March 27: No Class (International Studies Association Conference)

April 3: Bargaining and Preventive War

James Fearon: [Rationalist Explanations for War](#) (KG)

Sarah Kreps and Matthew Fuhrmann: [Attacking the Atom: Does Bombing Nuclear Facilities Affect Proliferation?](#) (JF)

Thomas Chadeaux: [Bargaining over Power: When Do Shifts in Power Lead to War?](#) (DS)

William Spaniel: [Arms Negotiation, War Exhaustion, and the Credibility of Preventive War](#)

Additional Readings

Muhammet Bas and Andrew Coe: [Arms Diffusion and War](#)

Alexandre Debs and Nuno Monteiro: [Known Unknowns: Power Shifts, Uncertainty, and War](#)

William Spaniel: [You Get What You Give: A Model of Nuclear Reversal](#)

Andrew Coe: [Containing Rogues: A Theory of Asymmetric Arming](#)

April 10: Final Research Presentations, Part I

April 17: Final Research Presentations, Part II

April 24: Papers Due

Place them under my door by 3 pm.