

Nuclear Structures and Political Leaders

POSC 230

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Class Location: SCCE E108
Class Time: Th 1:00–3:30 PM
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Course Description

Following the tense foreign policy exchanges between North Korea and the United States in the fall of 2017, experts disagreed on how to interpret the two leaders' choices of actions and words. Some of them pointed to their personal experiences and traits, such as their lack of prior exposure to foreign policy or their propensity for risky behavior. Other experts emphasized the role of structural factors, such as China's interests and the US position in the counterproliferation context. These disagreements highlight questions on the interplay between leaders and structural conditions that are both crucial and enduring in the field of nuclear and international security: under what conditions do leaders' personal inclinations and experiences become pivotal in explaining nuclear policies and strategies? When instead do structural factors such as the balance of power, the spread of nuclear technology, the salience of nuclear concerns among the public, play a key role?

Course Objective

This course will explore these puzzles by analyzing key facts and salient debates in nuclear security. The course will familiarize students with the multiple techniques of analysis that are used in the social sciences to elaborate and test theories of events as they unfold in the international political arena.

Course Structure

we will employ traditional teaching techniques, such as lecture and discussion, to explore archival documents and cutting-edge research on this topic. We will also have experts guest-lecture for us. Finally, we will listen in class to students' projects and discuss their original research.

Intellectual Responsibility

Students should consult the Statement of Intellectual Responsibility and the Amherst College Honor Code, both available on the Amherst College website, for an outline of the appropriate and productive behavior that is expected from participants in the class.

Logistics

Readings are available on Moodle. The following book should be purchased:

Ferguson, Charles D. *Nuclear energy: What everyone needs to know*. OUP USA, 2011, Chapter 2 and 4.

Reiter, Dan, *Understanding War and Peace*, Online Book. Chapters can be purchased individually. YOU WILL ONLY NEED TO PURCHASE CHAPTERS 3 AND 4. AVAILABLE HERE: <https://www.understandingwarandpeace.com/>

On average, each class meeting entails 100–150 pages to read. We meet once a week.

Students are expected to read the chapters or papers assigned for a specific day *before* coming to class, so that they can participate in our class discussion.

Papers and other assignments will be turned in on Moodle.

Evaluation

Activities in class (which I explain more in detail below) will contribute to your final grade in the following way:

Attendance	5%
Participation	15%
Midterm Project	20%
Final Project	30%
Leadership Strategy	5%
Feedback	10%
Questions	15%

Attendance

I expect everyone to attend class. If you must miss class one day, please send me an email beforehand with an explanation of why you are missing class. I take attendance both at the beginning of class and at random moments in class. To score your attendance point, you have to be there in both circumstances. PLEASE NOTICE: Missing class will lower your grade—both directly, via your attendance grade, and indirectly, via your participation grade (see table above). So, systematically missing class might impact 20% of your final grade.

Participation

Attendance is important, but it is not the same as participation: you will have to be an engaged and engaging participant in the class! Please do bring questions that you had on the material covered in class, and try to provide answers to your classmates' questions.

Calendar

Please see a comprehensive calendar, with the relevant due dates, on Moodle.

Leadership Strategy

See updated description and due dates on Moodle.

Questions

See updated description and due dates on Moodle.

Projects

LENGTH: Varying. See details on Moodle.

DUE: Varying. See details on Moodle.

MEDIUM: Upload the relevant material on Moodle.

CONTENT: see link above.

PURPOSE: See link above

INSTRUCTIONS: See description on Moodle.

EVALUATION: See description on Moodle.

Feedback

INSTRUCTIONS: See description on Moodle.

Topics

Meeting 1: Introductions and Syllabus

DATE: January 31.

Sagan, Scott D. "Why do states build nuclear weapons? Three models in search of a bomb." *International Security* 21.3 (1997): 54-86. [PLEASE READ THIS FIRST]

Singh, Sonali, and Christopher R. Way. "The correlates of nuclear proliferation: A Quantitative Test." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48.6 (2004): 859-885.

Hong, Lu, and Scott E. Page. "Groups of diverse problem solvers can outperform groups of high-ability problem solvers." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 101.46 (2004): 16385-16389.

Stone, Douglas, and Sheila Heen. *Thanks for the feedback: the science and art of receiving feedback well*. Penguin, 2015. ONLY CHAPTERS 1 AND 12.

Recommended (but not required) readings:

Page, Scott E. *Diversity and complexity*. Princeton University Press, 2010.

Jo, Dong-Joon, and Erik Gartzke. "Determinants of nuclear weapons proliferation." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51.1 (2007): 167-194.

Mattiacci, Eleonora, and Benjamin T. Jones. "(Nuclear) change of plans: what explains nuclear reversals?" *International Interactions* 42.3 (2016): 530-558.

Horowitz, Michael C., and Matthew Fuhrmann. "Studying Leaders and Military Conflict: Conceptual Framework and Research Agenda." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62.10 (2018): 2072-2086.

Meeting 2: Leadership Style and Nuclear Weapons

DATE: February 7.

Guest lecturer: Professor Sarah Kreps.

Kreps, Sarah E., Elizabeth N. Saunders, and Kenneth A. Schultz. "The Ratification Premium: Hawks, Doves, and Arms Control." *World Politics* 70.4 (2018): 479-514.

Mattes, Michaela, and Jessica LP Weeks. "Hawks, Doves, and Peace: An Experimental Approach." *American Journal of Political Science* (2019).

"No, Trump can't count on a hawk's advantage in making peace with North Korea." Monkey Cage, *The Washington Post*.

"The U.S.-North Korea summit could be Trump's 'Nixon-to-China' moment." Monkey Cage, *The Washington Post*.

How to make a podcast. Reading 1: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/how-to-make-a-podcast>

How to make a podcast. Reading 2: <https://lifelifehacker.com/how-to-start-your-own-podcast-1709>

How to make a podcast. Reading 3: <https://live365.com/blog/how-to-write-a-podcast-script/>

How to make a podcast. Reading 4: <https://tools.cdc.gov/medialibrary/docs/AudioScriptWriting.pdf>

How to make a podcast. Reading 5: <https://castos.com/podcast-script/>

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

The Nuclear Fuel Cycle (revised 2017), World Nuclear Association.

Meeting 3: Introducing Nuclear Weapons and Political Leadership

DATE: February 14.

Ferguson, Charles D. *Nuclear Energy: What Everyone Needs to Know*. OUP USA, 2011, Chapters 2 and 4.

Reiter, Dan, *Understanding War and Peace*, Online Book. Chapters can be purchased individually. YOU WILL ONLY NEED TO PURCHASE (and read) CHAPTERS 3 AND 4. AVAILABLE HERE: <https://www.understandingwarandpeace.com/>

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

The Nuclear Fuel Cycle (revised 2017), World Nuclear Association.

Horowitz, Michael C., Allan C. Stam, and Cali M. Ellis. *Why leaders fight*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Barceló, Joan. "Are Western-Educated Leaders Less Prone to Initiate Militarized Disputes?" *British Journal of Political Science* (2018): 1-32.

Cirincione, Joseph. *Bomb scare: the history and future of nuclear weapons*. Columbia University Press, 2007.

Meeting 4: Nuclear Weapons and Conflict

DATE: February 21.

Fuhrmann, Matthew, and Michael C. Horowitz. "When leaders matter: Rebel experience and nuclear proliferation." *The Journal of Politics* 77.1 (2014): 72-87.

Schelling, Thomas C. *Arms and influence: With a new preface and afterword*. Yale University Press, 2008. Chapters 1,2,3.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Kyle Beardsley and Victor Asal (2009) Winning with the Bomb. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 53(2), 278–301.

Erik Gartzke and Dong-Joon Jo (2009) Bargaining, Nuclear Proliferation, and Interstate Disputes. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 53(2), 209–233.

Michael Horowitz (2009) The Spread of Nuclear Weapons and International Conflict: Does Experience Matter?, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 53(2), 234–257

David Sobek, Dennis M. Foster, and Samuel B. Robison (2012) Conventional Wisdom? The Effect of Nuclear Proliferation on Armed Conflict, 1945?2001. *International Studies Quarterly*. 56(1)March, 149?162.

Mark S. Bell and Nicholas L. Miller (2013) Questioning the Effect of Nuclear Weapons on Conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. August, 1552–8766.

Meeting 5: Political Leadership and Counterproliferation

DATE: February 28.

Whitlark, Rachel Elizabeth. "Nuclear beliefs: a leader-focused theory of counter-proliferation." *Security Studies* 26.4 (2017): 545–574.

Montgomery, Alexander H., and Adam Mount. "Misestimation: Explaining US failures to predict nuclear weapons programs." *Intelligence and National Security* 29.3 (2014): 357–386.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Miller, Nicholas L. *Stopping the Bomb: The Sources and Effectiveness of US Nonproliferation Policy*. Cornell University Press, 2018.

Knopf, Jeffrey W., ed. *Security assurances and nuclear nonproliferation*. Stanford University Press, 2012.

Meeting 6: Nuclear Strategy

DATE: March 7.

Narang, Vipin. "Nuclear Strategies of Emerging Nuclear Powers: North Korea and Iran." *The Washington Quarterly* 38.1 (2015): 73-91.

Fravel, M. Taylor, and Evan S. Medeiros. "China's search for assured retaliation: the evolution of Chinese nuclear strategy and force structure." *International Security* 35.2 (2010): 48-87.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Gartzke, Erik, Jeffrey M. Kaplow, and Rupal N. Mehta. "The determinants of nuclear force structure." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58.3 (2014): 481-508.

Narang, Vipin. "What does it take to deter? Regional power nuclear postures and international conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57.3 (2013): 478-508.

Whang, Taehee, Michael Lammbräu, and Hyungmin Joo. "Talking to Whom? The Changing Audience of North Korean Nuclear Tests." *Social Science Quarterly* 98.3 (2017): 976-992.

Bell, Mark S. "Nuclear opportunism: A theory of how states use nuclear weapons in international politics." *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2017): 1-26.

Narang, Vipin. *Nuclear strategy in the modern era: Regional powers and international conflict*. Princeton University Press, 2014.

Narang, Neil, and Rupal N. Mehta. "The unforeseen consequences of extended deterrence: Moral hazard in a nuclear client state." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2017): .

Meeting 7: Beyond the Dichotomy: Nuclear Latency

DATE: March 21.

Mehta, Rupal N., and Rachel Elizabeth Whitlark. "Unpacking the Iranian Nuclear Deal: Nuclear Latency and US Foreign Policy." *The Washington Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (2016): 45-61.

Levite, Ariel E. "Never say never again: nuclear reversal revisited." *International Security* Vol. 27 No. 3 (Winter 2002 / 2003): 59-88.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Solingen, Etel. *Nuclear logics: contrasting paths in East Asia and the Middle East*. Princeton University Press, 2009. Chapters 3,2,8.

Kroenig, Matthew. 2009. Importing the Bomb: Security Threats, Sensitive Nuclear Assistance, and Nuclear Proliferation. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53 (2):161-180.

Meeting 8: The Strategic Logic of Nuclear Proliferation

DATE: April 4.

Guest lecturer: Professor Nuno Monteiro.

Monteiro, Nuno P., and Alexandre Debs. "The strategic logic of nuclear proliferation." *International Security* 39.2 (2014): 7-51.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Debs, Alexandre, and Nuno P. Monteiro. *Nuclear Politics*. Vol. 142. Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Yarhi-Milo, Keren, Alexander Lanoszka, and Zack Cooper. "To arm or to ally? The patron's dilemma and the strategic logic of arms transfers and alliances." *International Security* 41.2 (2016): 90-139.

Meeting 9, Professor Valentino: Nuclear Weapons and Taboos?

DATE: April 11.

Nina Tannenwald (1999) *The Nuclear Taboo: The United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use*. *International Organization*. 53(3)Summer, 433–468.

Daryl G. Press, Scott D. Sagan, and Benjamin A. Valentino (2013) *Atomic Aversion: Experimental Evidence on Taboos, Traditions, and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons*. *American Political Science Review*. 107(1), 188–206.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Rublee, Maria Rost. *Nonproliferation norms: Why states choose nuclear restraint*. University of Georgia Press, 2009.

Avey, Paul C. "Who's Afraid of the Bomb? The Role of Nuclear Non-Use Norms in Confrontations between Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Opponents." *Security Studies* 24.4 (2015): 563-596.

Carranza, Mario E. "Deterrence or taboo? Explaining the non-use of nuclear weapons during the Indo-Pakistani post-tests nuclear crises." *Contemporary Security Policy* 39.3 (2018): 441-463.

Meeting 10, Professor Erickson: Social Reputation, Public Opinion, and US Nuclear Non-Use in the Cold War

DATE: April 18.

Sagan, Scott D. and Benjamin A. Valentino. 2017. Revisiting Hiroshima in Iran: What Americans Really Think about Using Nuclear Weapons and Killing Non-Combatants. *International Security* 42 (1):41-79.

Crane, Conrad C. 2000. To Avert Impending Disaster: American Military Plans to Use Atomic Weapons During the Korean War. *Journal of Strategic Studies* 23 (2):72-88.

Recommended (but not required) Readings:

Ruble, Maria Rost. *Nonproliferation norms: Why states choose nuclear restraint*. University of Georgia Press, 2009.

Avey, Paul C. "Who's Afraid of the Bomb? The Role of Nuclear Non-Use Norms in Confrontations between Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Opponents." *Security Studies* 24.4 (2015): 563-596.

Carranza, Mario E. "Deterrence or taboo? Explaining the non-use of nuclear weapons during the Indo-Pakistani post-tests nuclear crises." *Contemporary Security Policy* 39.3 (2018): 441-463.

Meeting 11, Professor Pauly

DATE: April 25.

Pauly, Reid BC. "Would US Leaders Push the Button? Wargames and the Sources of Nuclear Restraint." *International Security* 43.2 (2018): 151-192.

Meeting 12: Deterrence, the Mad Man Way

DATE: May 1.

Sechser, Todd S., and Matthew Fuhrmann. "The madman myth: Trump and the bomb." *The International Security Studies Forum*. Vol. 22. 2017.

Sagan, Scott D., and Jeremi Suri. "The madman nuclear alert: Secrecy, signaling, and safety in October 1969." *International Security* 27.4 (2003): 150–183.

Burr, William, and Jeffrey Kimball. "Nixon's Secret Nuclear Alert: Vietnam War Diplomacy and the Joint Chiefs of Staff Readiness Test, October 1969." *Cold War History* 3.2 (2003): 113–156.

Meeting 13: Conclusions:
DATE: May 2. No Readings Assigned.