# San José State University Political Science Department POLS 190, Senior Seminar: Nuclear Weapons, Fall 2017

# 4 units

## Course and Contact Information

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| Instructor: | Karthika Sasikumar |
| Office Location: | Clark Hall 451 |
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| Email: | karthika.sasikumar@sjsu.edu |
| Office Hours: | Mondays 10 am-1:30 pm, Thursdays 12-1:30 pm, Fridays 9-10 am |
| Class Days/Time: | Fridays 10 am to 12:45 pm |
| Classroom: | Clark 303 |
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## Course Format

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. are available on [Canvas Leaning Management System course login website](http://sjsu.instructure.com) at http://sjsu.instructure.com. You are responsible for regularly checking messages on Canvas to learn of any updates.

## Course Description

## This course is the integrating capstone course that will be the culmination of your experience with the study of political science. The topic of this course is nuclear weapons. After an introduction to the science behind their creation, the course will survey the history of the introduction of nuclear weapons into global strategy, the dominance of deterrence, the attempts at nonproliferation, and the current dilemmas surrounding disarmament.

## Course Goals

The Political Science Program Learning Outcomes are

* **Breadth**  
  Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
* **Application**  
  Students should be able to apply a variety of techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.
* **Disciplinary methods**  
  Student should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, have competence in systematic data gathering using library sources, government documents, and data available through electronic sources, should be able to evaluate research studies, and should be able to critically analyze and interpret influential political texts.
* **Communication Skills**  
  Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.
* **Citizenship**  
  Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

### Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1. Demonstrate knowledge of key facts about the politics and technology of nuclear weapons

CLO2. Locate and evaluate primary documents and scholarly arguments

CLO3. Apply course concepts to real-world problems

CLO4. Discuss major social issues in a civil and collaborative manner

## Required Texts/Readings

There is no textbook for this course. All texts can be accessed using links on the Canvas site. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if there are any hindrances to access. Full citations for the texts and videos on the syllabus are provided in a separate document on Canvas.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Your participation in the simulation is mandatory. You will be given roles to play before class, and assessed both on your participation as well as your reflection papers.

### Final Examination or Evaluation

The final examination will be held in class on December 13. It will consist of 20 short answer questions and one short essay.

## Grading Information

All grades, including extra credit points, will be available on Canvas. Each assignment, including class participation, will have a specific rubric indicating the criteria that will be used in grading. Please make sure to read this before submitting your assignment. As per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, I cannot discuss your grades via email. You must visit me during office hours, or make an appointment to discuss grades.

The major assignment for this course is the term paper which is approximately 4000 words (20 double-spaced pages). Students who are writing an Honors thesis will turn in a paper of approximately 6000 words. You will be submitting three preliminary versions of this paper, so that you may incorporate feedback and revise your work to produce a final paper that represents a solid piece of research. You will also present the argument of your paper to your classmates in the last week of class.

### Determination of Grades

* Extra credit opportunities will be announced throughout the semester via Canvas Announcements. Extra credit points are added to your total score and have the same weight as other scores. There is no limit on how many extra credit points you can earn in this course.
* If you miss the deadline for submission for an assignment, you will lose 5 percent of your score for that assignment per 5 hours of lateness (pro-rated). For example, if you submit the term paper 6 hours after the deadline, and your score would have been 15 points, you will lose one point. Most assignments require submission on Canvas. If you wish to request an extension on your submission, be prepared to provide a reason and documentation.

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| **CLO** | **Assignment** | **Points** | **Due date** |
| 1 | Midterm exam | 15 | October 20 |
| 4 | Class participation | 10 | Various |
| 2 | Term paper abstract and literature review | 5 | October 6 |
| 2 | Term paper first draft | 5 | November 3 |
| 2 | Term paper second draft | 5 | November 17 |
| 4 | Research presentation | 10 | December 8 |
| 2 & 4 | Discussion questions | 18 | Per week |
| 3 | Simulation | 7 | October 13 |
| 2 | Term paper final submission | 10 | December 15 |
| 1 | Final exam | 15 | December 13 |

Final letter grades are based on this scale

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| --- | --- |
| A only | 95-100 |
| A minus | 90-94 |
| B plus | 85-89 |
| B only | 80-84 |
| B minus | 75-79 |
| C plus | 70-74 |
| C only | 65-69 |
| C minus | 60-64 |
| D plus | 55-59 |
| F | <55 |

## Classroom Protocol

## This is a seminar, and your success in the course will depend to a great degree on your completing the required readings and submitting discussion questions on Canvas based on the readings. Please be prepared to be called upon by name in class. This class does not allow for use of any electronic devices, including smartphones and laptops for note-taking, except in cases of documented medical need.

## University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/”

# POLS 190 / Senior Seminar: Nuclear Weapons, Fall 2017, Course Schedule

*The schedule is subject to change with fair notice on the Canvas messaging system.*

## Course Schedule

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading | Other material |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | August 25 | A. Introduction  B. Overview of arsenals  C. Nuclear technology | Syllabus; Kristensen & Norris various |  |
| 2 | September 1 | A.The decision to drop the bomb  B. Nuclear ethics | Wilson; Fussell  Walzer | *Hiroshima* |
| 3 | September 8 | Deterrence | Jervis 1989 (5-45); 2002 National Security Strategy on deterrence; Green and Long (606-20) | “Russians” by Sting |
| 4 | September 15 | A. Financial and social costs  B. Governance | Wellerstein; Gusterson (2 articles); Radiolab podcast; CBO [report](https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/115th-congress-2017-2018/reports/52401-nuclearcosts.pdf) | *Dr. Strangelove* |
| 5 | September 22 | Accidents and C3I | Schlosser, pages TBA | *Command and Control* |
| 6 | September 29 | Disarmament and arms control | Schelling  Sagan and Waltz 2010  Kroenig 2013  Tannenwald 2017 |  |
| 7 | October 6 | A. Nonproliferation  B. Renunciation of nuclear weapons: South Korea | Gavin  Choi & Hwang  Scott Snyder | *Tom Lehrer: Who’s Next?* |
| 8 | October 13 | Simulation | In-class activity |  |
| 9 | October 20 | Midterm exam; consultations on term paper |  |  |
| 10 | October 27 | A. Why do states want nuclear weapons?  B. What determines if they acquire them? | Sagan 2011; Braut- Hegghammer |  |
| 11 | November 3 | Nuclear programs of China, India, and Pakistan | Narang; Lewis | *Hoodbhoy Kashmir conflict* |
| 12 | November 17 | Nuclear programs of Israel, Iran, and North Korea | Senate testimony TBA |  |
| 13 | December 1 | Nuclear terrorism  Counter-proliferation | Eaves 2016; Bunn and Sagan 2014; Mueller 2010 | *Last Best Chance* |
| 14 | December 8 | Research presentations by students |  |  |
|  | December 13 | Final exam, in class 8 AM-9:30 AM |  |  |