

San José State University
Political Science Department
POLS 190, Senior Seminar: Nuclear Weapons, Spring 2018

4 units

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Karthika Sasikumar
Office Location:	Clark Hall 451
Telephone:	(408) 924-1361
Email:	karthika.sasikumar@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Mondays 9:30 am-1:30 pm, Thursdays and Fridays 12:15-1:30 pm, and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Fridays 9.30 am to 12:15 pm
Classroom:	Clark 302

Course Format

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. are available on [Canvas Learning 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 strategy of deterrence, nuclear terrorism, 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. Each student will be asked to lead class discussion once. If you wish to change your assigned date, you can do so but you will be responsible for finding another student to replace you in your role.

Final Examination or Evaluation

The final examination will be held in class on May 17. 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. This will be linked to

the assignment on Canvas. 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.

CLO	Assignment	Points	Due date
2 & 4	Leadership of class discussion	8	Various
4	Class participation	10	Various
3	Popular culture review	10	Feb 23
2	Term paper abstract	3	March 2
2	Term paper literature review	5	March 16
3	Simulation	7	March 23
1	Midterm exam	15	April 6
2	Term paper draft	8	April 13
4	Research presentation	7	May 4 and 11
2	Term paper final submission	12	May 15
1	Final exam	15	May 17

Final letter grades are based on this scale

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 participating in class discussions. Please be prepared to be called upon, by name, in each 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.

As per University Policy F15-12, students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein, and active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit to all class members. In some cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives; for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class. Attendance is the responsibility of the student.

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, Spring 2018, Course Schedule

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

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings (please read before class)	Other (to be shared in class)	Student leader	Prompt
Jan 26	A. Introduction B. Overview of arsenals C. Nuclear technology	Syllabus; various articles from the <i>Nuclear Notebook</i>		None	
Feb 2	A. The decision to drop the bomb B. Nuclear ethics	Wilson; Fussell	<i>Hiroshima</i>	Analco Bullock	If you were in Truman's place, what would your decision be? Justify your decision.
Feb 9	Deterrence	Morgan; 2002 National Security Strategy on deterrence or Nuclear Posture Review if it is released in time	"Russians" by Sting	Bharwad Huang	Describe the requirements for stable deterrence between two adversary nations.
Feb 16	Governance	Wellerstein; Gusterson (2 articles); Radiolab podcast; House Bill 669 (Lieu-Markey Bill)	<i>Dr. Strangelove</i>	Chavez Leonard	Is the US President able to order a nuclear strike? Should he be able to do so?

Date	Topic	Readings (please read before class)	Other (to be shared in class)	Student leader	Prompt
Feb 23	Accidents and C3I	Schlosser, pages TBA	<i>Command and Control</i>	Madarang Lor	What are the causes of nuclear accidents? How are they linked to deterrence?
Mar 2	Disarmament and arms control	Schelling Sagan and Waltz 2010 Kroenig 2013 Tannenwald 2017		Garcia Jauregui Manalastas Nekzai	Would a world without n-weapons be safer? Why?
Mar 16	A. Nonproliferation B. Renunciation of nuclear weapons: South Korea	Gavin Choi & Hwang		Mendoza Rodriguez	Why do countries give up n-weapons, and how can the US persuade them to?
Mar 23	Simulation	In-class activity, reading provided separately to each team			
Apr 6	Midterm exam				
Apr 13	Nuclear programs of China, India, and Pakistan	Fravel and Medeiros (48-72); Narang (38-59)	<i>Hoodbhoy Kashmir conflict</i>	Nguyen Salmeron Sands	Why did China, India and Pakistan choose the postures they did?
Apr 20	Nuclear programs of Israel, Iran, and North Korea	Cohen (Chs. 1 & 2); Waltz; Braut-Hegghammer		Selesia Seyedi	How did/should the US react to the nuclear ambitions of Iran, Israel and N. Korea?
Apr 27	A. Nuclear terrorism B. Counter-proliferation	Eaves 2016; Bunn and Sagan 2014; Mueller 2010	<i>Last Best Chance</i>	Singh Valerio	What is the real threat from n-terrorism, and how can we combat it?
May 4 & 11	Research presentations by students				
May 17	Final exam, in class 8 AM-9:30 AM				