

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 361
(Fall 2006)**

(International Mass Violence and Its Control)

Nuclear Weapons in the Contemporary International System

Professor Michael Wallace

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Office Hours: TBA

Required Reading for the Course (All available at the UBC Bookstore):

- Helen Caldicott, The New Nuclear Danger (2nd edition, 2004)
- William Lambers, Nuclear Weapons
- Jonathan Schell, The Unfinished Twentieth Century
- Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, Weapons of Terror
- Reading package

Materials from designated websites are also noted in the syllabus readings, and may be added to, changed or deleted at the instructor's discretion during the term as new web information becomes available and events unfold. Note that all specified web material is also considered "required reading".

Assignment Policy:

Students are required to sit final exam, and, and to submit their essays on or before the due date. I will not make alternative arrangements for the exam, and essays are due on or before the deadline. Credit will not be given for missed exams, and essays submitted after the due date will be penalized at the rate of 5% per day. The only exceptions to these rules are: 1) students who obtain *academic concession* from the Faculty owing to illness, injury, or personal hardship; 2) students requiring accommodation under University policy as quoted below:

"The "University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations."

Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor before the drop date."

Assignments

- 1) A mid-term exam written on **OCTOBER 16**, worth **20%** of your final grade.
- 2) A 15 – page essay due **November 6**, worth **40%** of your final grade. A handout dealing with topics and requirements will be provided as soon as possible. **Note that the Political Science department policy now requires that all students submit electronic copies of their essays to TurnItIn.com.** This is an internet-based service used by UBC that checks textual material for originality. It is increasingly used in universities North America and the UK to deter plagiarism. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, UBC policies about it, or have questions about TurnItIn, see: <http://www.politics.ubc.ca>

Note also that I do not have the facilities to accept faxed or electronic copies for grading, so all students must submit paper copies of their essay to me *in addition* to this electronic submission. There will be a penalty of 5% per day assessed for late essays.

- 3) A scheduled examination in December worth **40%** of the total mark. Note that I have ***no control whatsoever*** over the date of this exam, and **pleas to write at other times than that scheduled by the Registrar will not be received.**

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance and classroom participation are vital components of the course. Students should expect to attend every class and arrive and leave on time. This is particularly important in that much class time will be spent viewing videos, films, and Powerpoint presentations. Everyone is encouraged to ask questions and engage in class discussion; after material is presented (be it in the form of lectures, videos, films, or Powerpoint) there will be time set aside specifically for discussion and the free exchange of ideas. **Note that students are responsible for all material covered in class, whether they attend or not.**

Course Outline & Topic Headings:

In this course we will examine an issue vital to our survival as a civilization and as a species: the control and management of nuclear weapons (and, as a necessary corollary) nuclear power facilities and nuclear waste. This *problématique* is generally poorly reported by the mass media and even more poorly understood by many political leaders, so informing will go hand in hand with “debunking” some popular current myths about nuclear issues, while re – informing ourselves of many truths about nuclear dangers forgotten after the end of the Cold War. Wherever possible we shall avoid technical issues, but it is hoped that students will acquire an “informed layperson’s” understanding nuclear matters by the end of the course.

Week 1: Introduction, History, Myth – Debunking, and the Nuclear Fuel Cycle

To begin with: a brief history of the nuclear age; some common myths about nuclear weapons and nuclear dangers; the basics of the nuclear fuel cycle, i.e., the physical and technical “backbone” to which all policy must adhere. These basic facts will be presented in class, but may also be found at: <http://www.nuclearfiles.org/> and <http://www.newscientist.com/channel/mech-tech/nuclear>

Weeks 2 – 3: Apocalypse Anytime: The Realities of Nuclear War, Global Nuclear Arsenals, and their Environmental Impact

Nuclear weapons as the only real “weapons of mass destruction”; the horrors of nuclear war; past and present global nuclear arsenals. Text Readings: Caldicott, Preface & Chapter 2; Lambers, p. 1 – 12, 75 – 124; Weapons of Terror, ch. 1-3. Reading package: readings by Aldridge; Butcher, ch.5. (There will also be an in – class powerpoint presentation on nuclear weapons effects). For an interactive visual look at the effects of nuclear weapons, go to:

<http://www.fas.org/main/content.jsp?formAction=297&contentId=367> and <http://www.fas.org/main/content.jsp?formAction=297&contentId=409>

For material on nuclear waste, see <http://www.bellona.no/> <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/nuclear/waste> and http://www.nwmo.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.asp?DocID=1224,1026,20,1,Documents&MediaID=2341&Filename=NWMO_DSR_E.pdf

Weeks 4 – 5: How Close We Came (and Keep Coming): The History and Future of Nuclear Crises

The Cuban Missile Crisis and other past nuclear crises; video material. Present dangers: Text Readings: Caldicott, ch.3 – 5; Lambers, ch. 2 – 5; Schell, p. 3 – 95.

Weeks 5 – 6: “Horizontal” Proliferation: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons to other states and terrorist groups

Why everyone wants nuclear weapons, and why current strategies to prevent proliferation may be doomed to failure. Text Readings: Lambers ch. 6 – 8; Package Readings: Butcher, ch. 1, 2; Blair, ch. 2; Web reading:

<http://wmd.ceip.matrixgroup.net/UniversalCompliance.pdf> and Canadian Senator Doug Roche’s excellent analysis of the 2005 NPT review conference at: <http://www.middlepowers.org/2005NPTpoliticalanalysis.pdf>

Week 7: Missile Defense and the Weaponization of Space

Will there be a new arms race in space, or are plans for missile defence and space weapons just science fiction? Weapons of Terror, ch. 6. Web reading:

<http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/usmissiledefense.asp>

http://ucsusa.org/documents/technicalrealities_fullreport.pdf

www.nuclearfiles.org and for greater detail,

http://www.ucsusa.org/global_security/space_weapons/page.cfm?pageID=1770

Weeks 8 – 9: “Vertical” Proliferation: The Development of U.S. Nuclear Policy since 2001

The dangers and temptations of the nuclear “hyperpower”; the bitter arguments for and against a doctrine of U.S. global nuclear domination. Text Reading: Caldicott chs. 6 – 9; Schell, p. 99 – 115. Package Reading: US Congressional Report “Differentiation and Defense”; Bromley, ch. 1 – 3; Butcher, ch. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8. Web update as of June 2005:

<http://www.fas.org/main/content.jsp?formAction=297&contentId=413>

Weeks 10: The Alternatives to Current U.S. Policy: Diplomacy and Disarmament

How we can wake up from the nuclear nightmare and move to eliminate the hideous dangers of the nuclear age. Text Reading: Bromley, ch. 4; Butcher, ch. 9; Blair, ch. 3; Weapons of Terror, ch.7-8. Web reading:

<http://www.lcnp.org/mnwc/convention.htm>

http://cns.miis.edu/research/npt/pdf/annecy_final_report.pdf

<http://www.nuclearfiles.org/menu/key-issues/ethics/index.htm>

Week 11: Summary Class Discussion and Exam Review