Overview

The first Russian nuclear test in 1949 ushered the modern era of nuclear deterrence. While the technology of nuclear weapons and their associated delivery systems has evolved considerably, the cornerstones of nuclear doctrine and deterrence logic have changed only incrementally over time. Currently, the US is undertaking a comprehensive reevaluation of the role of nuclear weapons in American foreign policy. Most significantly, the foreign policy portfolio for nuclear weapons is expanding. This has important implications for how nuclear deterrence will evolve and, more broadly, affects how we think about deterrence across domains.

Learning Outcomes:

This class is designed primarily for students in the Master of International Policy (MIP) program. There are four components learning outcomes related to this class. By the end of the semester students will have a firm grasp of:

- **Deterrence Foundations**: Understand the foundational concepts of (mostly nuclear) deterrence theory since end of WWII.

- **Policy Implementation**: Understand the evolution of US deterrence policy.

- **Deterrence Decision Making**: Be prepared to critically evaluate of the assumptions in deterrence theory and policy with respect to human decision making, including how these have evolved over time, the role of misperception, and cognitive factors.

- **Empirically-Driven Policy Change**: Develop a framework to identify the issues in deterrence that we still don’t fully understand empirically, but that are necessary for improving deterrence policy and practice.

Assignments:

There are five graded components for the course. Details for each assignment will be distributed in class.

Research Design:

*Individual*: Construct policy-focused empirical research design on deterrence. Identify an empirical question that, if answered probably, would help improve deterrence stability...
Policy Review:

Team: Policy teams will present a review and analysis of national nuclear policies and doctrine 2,500-3,000 words. 150 points (100 for written analysis, 50 points for class presentation)

Critical Essays¹:

Individual: Weekly essays on reading assigned readings. 4 (four) in total (1,000 word maximum). Due week readings are discussed in class. 75 points per essay. 300 points total. (note: two weeks are mandatory for all students)

Participation:

Individual: Average weekly assessment of your engagement with the class including level of preparation, participation level, quality of comments. 150 points

Weekly Reading Presentation:

Individual: Present summary weekly readings to class and offer framework for discussion and critical analysis. (note: each individual will meet with me on Monday or Tuesday prior to your assigned presentation date class to prepare. You may not write a critical essay on the week you present. 75 points. Presentation Sign-Up Sheet: [LINK]

[Note: there are fewer presentation slots than students in the class. If you do not do a presentation, then you much write an additional critical essay]

Grading Scale (percent basis)

100-93 A, 92-90 A-, 89-88 B+, 87-83 B, 82-80 B-, 79-78 C+, 78-73 C, 72-70 C-, 69-60 D

Policies and Procedures:

- Please observe the UGA academic honesty policy at all times:

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at [www.uga.edu/ovpi].

- The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. So, we may make changes to the readings and assignment deadlines. If this occurs, we will announce the changes in class, and they will

be reflected in an updated syllabus available through my teaching website: www.berejikian.net

- There is no attendance policy for this class. However, unexcused absences will be recorded as a “0” for the purposes of weekly class discussion.
- Please come to class having completed and carefully considered the readings.

Readings Schedule:

Required sections from the following books are available at no cost, online through the UGA library web portal.


Week 1 August 24: Introduction

Introduction to deterrence concepts, and make collective decisions about course design, assignments, and readings.

SECTION I: CORE DETERRENCE CONCEPTS

Week 2 August 31: The Cold-War Version of Nuclear Deterrence


Deep Dive:

Week 3 September 7: Nuclear Warfighting as a Deterrence Policy

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2 Note: “deep dive” readings are not required, but strongly recommended for both class preparation and weekly essays.


Deep Dive:


**Week 4 September 14: Deterrence Stability and Nuclear Taboo**


Deep Dive:


**Week 5 September 21: Alliance Management**


Deep Dive:


SECTION II: CURRENT NUCLEAR DOCTRINES

Week 6 September 28: Policy Review Presentations
- United States
- Russia
- NATO

Background Readings: (TBD)

Week 7 October 5: Policy Review Presentations
- China
- India & Pakistan

Background Readings: (TBD)

SECTION III: THREATS TO DETERRENCE STABILITY

Week 8 October 12: New Technologies and Nuclear Stability

Wong, et. al (2020) “Deterrence in the Age of Thinking Machines.” Rand Corporation
https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/AD1090316.pdf

Deep Dive:


**Week 9 October 19 Deterrence and (Mis)perception**


{Note: read *very* carefully}


Deep Dive:


**March 11: No Spring break (no classes)**

**Week 10 October 26: Cognitive Bias**


Week 11 November 2: (election day!)
- Research Proposal Workshop. Students informally present summary of their research proposal ideas for feedback.

Reading Assignment:
All summaries will be posted on shared Google Doc, by Thursday October 28. Please review each summary and offer constructive comments and suggestions. Please post your name above each comment to receive credit for participation

SECTION IV: BEYOND NUCLEAR DETERRENCE - INTRACTIBLE DETERRENCE CHALLENGES
[Note: These topics are suggestions. We will confirm/decide as a class on the topics]

Week 12 November 9: “Rogue States” and Non-State Actors


Week 13 November 16: Deterrence in Cyber


Week 14 November 23
  - Research Proposal Presentations

Week 15 November 30
  - Research Proposal Presentations

Revise proposals in light of feedback. Submit paper copy December 7, before 12:00 pm. [Note: Last day of classes is Tuesday December 7, the university will be operating on a Friday class schedule]