

PO3A1-15 Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation

22/23

Department

Politics & International Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Dominic Kelly

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The election of Donald Trump has proven momentous in world politics. On issues from climate change, through immigration, to trade politics the results of US foreign policy under Trump can be likened to poking a big stick into a hornet's nest: unpredictable and potentially dangerous. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the realm of nuclear diplomacy, where Trump has both threatened and courted the North Korean dictator, Kim Jong-un, over the nuclear weapons programme under way in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Under Trump's leadership, the US has also withdrawn from the Iran nuclear deal of 2016 and questioned the future of NATO.

With questions of nuclear strategy, proliferation, and diplomacy once again at the forefront of world politics, this module considers the dynamics of contemporary nuclear proliferation. At its core, the module poses a deceptively simple question: why do states build (or threaten to build) nuclear weapons?

To answer this question, the module opens with a consideration of the history of nuclear weapons, of nuclear fear, and of theories of proliferation. This historical, cultural and theoretical overview supports a basic understanding of the dynamics of nuclear proliferation as portrayed in the established literature.

The module then turns to the contemporary scene: interrogating the key claims made in the academic literature through detailed examination of contemporary case studies. These case studies examine the policies of the 'Tier 1' nuclear states (the US & Russia), with an emphasis on vertical proliferation; and also the strategic, financial and diplomatic dilemmas faced by the 'Tier 2' nuclear states (China, France, the UK). The module then adopts a regional focus: examining the circumstances shaping the evolution of nuclear proliferation in North East Asia, the Middle East, South Asia and, finally, Africa and South America.

Module aims

This module analyses the dynamics of nuclear proliferation and their governance. It investigates common and competing theories of nuclear proliferation, and applies these to several historical and contemporary case studies. After assessing contemporary developments within the context of multilateral constraints, the module examines the regional politics of nuclear proliferation, paying particular attention to contemporary controversies including: horizontal proliferation (e.g. North Korea, Iran, fears of nuclear terrorism), and vertical proliferation (e.g. US and Russian force modernisation).

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

tbc

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a sound grasp of the main theoretical arguments and substantive issues regarding nuclear proliferation
- Demonstrate understanding of historical and contemporary developments in nuclear proliferation
- Demonstrate knowledge of the key actors in the global and regional politics of nuclear weapons, and the institutions and processes through which they interact
- Present work coherently and to a high academic standard.

Indicative reading list

tbc

Subject specific skills

tbc

Transferable skills

tbc

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

tbc

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
3000 word essay	100%		Yes (extension)

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

tbc

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MM Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 4 of UPOA-M101 Undergraduate Politics (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 3 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 4 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 4 of UPOA-M167 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 3 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 4 of UPOA-M16B Undergraduate Politics and International Studies (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 4 of UPOA-ML14 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- Year 4 of UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 4 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 3 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 4 of UHIA-VM12 Undergraduate History and Politics (with Year Abroad)