

Gov391: Politics of Nuclear Weapons – Proliferation Case Study

- What is this?** You will write a 5–7 page case study in which you examine the factors that drove your assigned country to seek nuclear weapons, and decide whether your case lends support to the theories of nuclear proliferation discussed in the course.
- Why do it?** The case study gives you a chance to conduct original research on nuclear proliferation and to subject the theories we learn in the class to some empirical testing. Knowing the details of a specific case will come in handy during class discussions about the drivers of proliferation.
- What is it worth?** This assignment is worth 25% of your course grade.
- When is it due?** The case study is due before class on February 27.

For the case study, you will:

1. **Conduct research on your assigned case.** See the resources section below for some ideas on where to start your research. Everyone should use at least three sources for their case study, but some may use many more. Wikipedia and unsourced websites are not appropriate sources for this assignment.

Your research should look at *what* the state did to pursue weapons (if anything), but pay particular attention to *why* states decided to explore the nuclear weapons. For states that gave up nuclear pursuit, try to understand why that happened as well. What changed in the country or the world that caused the state to change its mind about nuclear weapons pursuit?

2. **Provide a short explanation of what, if anything, your state did to pursue nuclear weapons.** Here you will lay out the facts of the case—what the state did when. You might explain when and how the decision was made to explore nuclear weapons, whether domestic facilities were built, whether materials were sought from other countries, etc. This section of your case study should be no more than a page or two.
3. **Explain whether your case provides support for theories of nuclear proliferation.** For the rest of the case, provide your analysis of why the state sought weapons. Does your case provide support for, or evidence against, the theories of proliferation we will examine in class and in the readings? While many cases will provide some support for more than one theory, I would like to see your analysis of which factors were most important in causing the state to seek weapons. At a minimum, you should consider supply-side factors (state capacity, wealth, foreign assistance), demand-side factors (the risk of conflict, alliances, proliferation by other states), and international institutions (the nonproliferation regime), although you are welcome to examine whether your case supports other theories of proliferation.

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Your case study should be 5–7 pages of double-spaced text (not including your references or bibliography), using a standard 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Please number your pages. You can use whatever citation style you prefer, but you must cite your sources correctly. Ask for help if you're not sure how or whether to cite material. For guidance on appropriate sourcing, see the following resources:

<http://guides.swem.wm.edu/writingandciting>

<http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism>

Please submit your case study via Blackboard before class on February 27.

Need help?

- Check out some of the resources below.
- Consult a research librarian.
- Email me, visit me in office hours, or contact me to set up another time to meet.

Resources on your country

Start with [Philipp C. Bleek. 2017. *When Did \(and Didn't\) States Proliferate*](#). This document will provide the approximate dates of your state's interest in nuclear weapons, and some sources that back up those dates. Your research should go beyond the sources listed in this document, but it is a good place to start.

The Nuclear Threats Initiative has sourced [country profiles](#) that explain a state's history of nuclear proliferation.

The Wilson Center's Nuclear Proliferation History Project has [documents](#) and [publications](#) that address state proliferation. I'd suggest searching their [digital archive](#).

The [National Security Archive](#) at George Washington University also has many primary source documents on nuclear proliferation. There's also the [US National Archives](#), although searching those files can be a bit more difficult. The College subscribes to a [searchable database of declassified US documents](#), which may be worth a look.

Several books address the nuclear proliferation decisions of various states. The Nuclear Tipping Point, Power Versus Prudence, Nuclear Logics, Nonproliferation Norms, Atomic Assistance, and Exporting the Bomb are available online from the W&M library website. There are many others—try searching the catalog.

Try searching [Google Scholar](#) for your country and “nuclear weapons.” Be wary of working papers and other unpublished work.

Resources on theories of proliferation

Check out the readings for January 30.

A good summary article is [Scott D. Sagan. 2011. “The Causes of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 14: 224–244.](#)

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Other good sources for theories of proliferation include:

[Sonali Singh and Christopher Way. 2004. "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48\(6\): 859–885.](#)

[Christopher Way and Jessica L.P. Weeks. 2014. "Making It Personal: Regime Type and Nuclear Proliferation." *American Journal of Political Science* 58\(3\): 705–719.](#)

[Robert Brown and Jeffrey M. Kaplow. 2014. "Talking Peace, Making Weapons: IAEA Technical Cooperation and Nuclear Proliferation." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58\(3\): 402–428.](#)

[Philipp C. Bleek and Eric B. Lorber. 2014. "Security Guarantees and Allied Nuclear Proliferation." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 58\(3\): 429–454.](#)

[Matthew Kroenig. 2009. "Importing the Bomb: Sensitive Nuclear Assistance and Nuclear Proliferation." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53\(2\): 161–180.](#)

[Matthew Fuhrmann. 2009. "Spreading Temptation: Proliferation and Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation Agreements." *International Security* 34\(1\): 7–41.](#)