

Autumn 2010-11
Announcing an Autumn Quarter Seminar
STS152: Nuclear Weapons, Risk and Hope
[Prof. Martin E. Hellman](#)

Basic Information

Mondays, 4:15-5:05

1 unit, S/NC basis

No prerequisites.

Accessible to non-majors, including those in the Humanities.

Building 90, Room 92Q

That's inside the Main Quad, between Math and Geology Corners.

Course Description

This seminar explores the level of risk inherent in relying on nuclear weapons, why society ignores that risk, and what can be done to change that.

Attending at least nine of the ten class meetings will earn you a Satisfactory (Pass) grade. If you need to miss more than one meeting, make-up work can be arranged.

Assigned readings will be approximately one hour a week. Required reading and class discussions will be kept at a non-technical level.

Registering

Register under STS (Science, Technology and Society) 152. The course is 1 unit on an S/NC basis only.

Background and Questions

To get an idea of some of the seminar's content, you can read my article "[Soaring, Cryptography and Nuclear Weapons,](#)" in only 10 or 15 minutes. If possible, it would be good to have done so before the first class meeting.

While participation in my related project, Defusing the Nuclear Threat, is optional, its [home page](#) provides a good introduction to the subject matter of this seminar. There is also a page called [Creating Pockets of Nuclear Awareness](#) that, after some background material, details campus activities planned for the coming year. [Seven prominent members](#) of the Stanford community are encouraging students to become involved in the project.