



OBSERVE, INTERACT, EXPERIENCE, SIMULATE

2025 NATO Field School and Simulation Program

Undergraduate: POL 484-12 and Graduate: POL 880-6

Alexander Moens, Director

NATO Field School and Simulation Program 2025 Syllabus

OUR AMBITION FOR YOU

The NATO Field School and Simulation Program (NFS) offers an innovative method of student learning by engaging and observing professionals and experts in their working environment and by student immersion in the decision tasks that political, diplomatic, and military personnel face. This program creates a cohort of transatlantic students by admitting students from across the NATO alliance and by preparing students for entry careers in foreign affairs, the defence and security sectors, international organizations, commerce, and careers in the private sector.

Beside academic study, students are educated in practical and professional problem-solving by simulating international crisis resolutions and strategic communications mentored by professional experts. The program begins with a week of online teaching and then continues in person at multiple locations in Europe and includes multiple short modules led by experts, senior officials, and visiting professors. Students will meet with Canadian, European, and NATO diplomatic and military leaders in privileged settings to pursue their analysis and questions. The comprehensive and diverse nature of the program develops a new learning community for students, a non-traditional classroom experience, and innovative internationalization training to prepare the next generation of Canadian, European, and NATO decision makers at home and in the multilateral setting.

The active participation of women in defence and security is a central objective of the NFS. We aim to achieve this objective by ensuring that our program maintains and grows the diversity of student cohorts, ensuring that women are given equitable access to opportunities and networks, and engaging with various experts on women, peace, and security topics. NFS is holistic in how it experiences and discusses security and defence, including socio-economic, cultural, and environmental topics in our curriculum. This strategy also creates a student cohort that has diverse academic knowledge and experience.

As part of NFS, we also strive to foster a professional network tending to students' interests and put them in touch with experts and career opportunities within their chosen field. After the NFS, we continue to engage alumni through our NFS Alumni Club network (NAC), which we use to advertise a variety of academic and career opportunities within security and defence as well as some internships exclusively offered to NFS alumni.

The NATO Field School and Simulation Program offers 12 undergraduate or 6 graduate credits (POL 484 or POL 880). In addition to tuition, students pay a Program fee that includes extra instruction and curriculum costs for expert modules and simulations, accommodation in Italy, Brussels, Germany, and the Baltics, airfare in Europe, ground transportation, breakfast, and some group meals.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Completing the NATO Field School and Simulation Program prepares you with cognitive, evaluative, and experiential skills concerning defence, security, armed forces, NATO, the security and defence domains of the European Union, and the diplomacy of international security and collective defence.

In terms of knowledge concerning Defence, Armed Forces, and NATO, you will learn:

- What NATO is, why it was formed, why the USA and Canada joined European Allies to establish the Alliance, how it matters today, and what its current challenges are. Special attention will be on the catastrophic changes to the alliance pursued by the current US Administration and how this impacts European and Canadian security.
- How the Alliance works, including the role of the political and military organs such as the North Atlantic Council, the Military Committee, SHAPE, and SACEUR.
- Why Allies, including Canada's security and defence policy exist in a multilateral format, including the United Nations, NORAD, NATO, and Canadian security and trade relations with the European Union.
- What determines Allies' security and defence policy, and how it is formulated.

- How democratic constitutional governments connect policy goals, defence planning and international military operations.
- How national objectives, international legal principles and conventions work.
- How recent initiatives promote the role of women in peace and security.
- How to optimize collective defence and cooperation in crisis decision making.
- How legal opinion and interpretation informs the politico-military decision process.
- How defence budgets, capabilities, and operations are linked.
- How training and military readiness with Allies and Partners affects Allies' objectives.
- What personnel and equipment challenges exist within NATO and European Union states' armed forces.
- How allied armed forces prepare, train, and conduct operations together.
- How NATO and the European Union work with likeminded partners that are not NATO members such as the Partners across the Globe (e.g., Japan, South Korea, Australia).
- How the EU, the UN, and other organizations work with NATO.

In terms of knowledge and experience in Simulations, you will acquire and practice the following skills:

- How to absorb material at strategic, operational, and tactical levels
- How to prepare policy briefs at the strategic level
- How to represent your position, interest, and policy
- How to follow and use organizational procedures as used in NATO
- How to understand complementary and competitive interests
- How to understand multilateral compromise and cooperation
- How to convey and defend positions and interests in strategic communication
- How consensus decision-making, red lines, silence procedures, non/white papers, communiqués, and strategic communication form part of the negotiation process.

In terms of overall skills, you will:

- Enhance the ability to think strategically and analyze core texts on NATO, strategic policymaking, and critical issues on how to secure Europe, Canada and a post-2025 NATO.
- Formulate one's national position in writing and speaking, negotiate respectfully with other national positions represented by peers and learn how to use effective procedure techniques to achieve objectives and obtain consensus.
- Carry out independent, in-depth research using a wide range of sources, appropriate referencing, and bibliographic methods.

- Learn to work effectively in diverse teams and exhibit effective presentation and strategic communication skills.
- Gain experience, and confidence to apply for a variety of Coop and internships and entry-level positions, including with the CANDEL at NATO-HQ, NATO Defense College, the Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, and various other national and international opportunities.

NATO FIELD SCHOOL STAFF



Dr Alexander Moens (moens@sfu.ca)

Founded the NATO Field School and Simulation Program in 2017. He is a former Chair of Political Science at Simon Fraser University and a Senior Fellow at the Macdonald-Laurier Institute. He was the first Eisenhower Fellow at the NATO Defense College in Rome in 2015. In 1992, Dr. Moens served in the Policy Planning Staff of Canada's Foreign Affairs Department and in the spring of 1999 he was a visiting fellow at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C.



Julia Reinhard (julia_reinhard@sfu.ca)

The Program Coordinator of the NATO Field School. She is a 2024 alumna and has recently completed her B.A. in Political Science and Criminology, from Simon Fraser University. In continuing her academic career, she is pursuing an M.A. in Global Security Studies from King's College in London. Julia will be in-field for the entire duration of the 2025 NATO Field School Program.



Sasha Kardos-Machado (nato@sfu.ca)

Is the Communications and Outreach Coordinator for the NATO Field School. A 2024 alum of the program, she recently graduated from Bishop's University with an Honours BA in International Studies and Political Studies. This summer, Sasha will be joining the team in the field to help run the NATO Summit Simulation and will be managing NFS social media and communications throughout the program.



Sarah Dicken (sarah_dicken@sfu.ca)

Completed her Bachelor's degree at the University of British Columbia studying Political Science and International Relations. Sarah has worked as a Parliamentary Page in the House of Commons during her first year of university, and as an administrative clerk for Indigenous Services Canada. Sarah is an alumna of the 2024 NATO Field School and will be in Italy as the NDC Intern.

SHORT-TERM MENTORS WHILE IN-FIELD

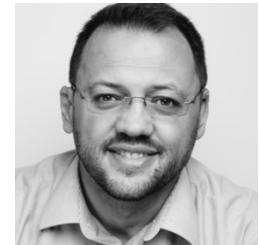
Hannah Christensen

Joined the NATO Field School team in 2020, an opportunity which has given her the opportunity to work and travel to 11 NATO countries, including attending the NATO Communicators Conferences and COE Directors' Conference, and work with 5 cohorts of NFS students. She was the recipient of the 2024 Women in Defence and Security (WiDS) Scholarship and recognised as one of their 'Twenty in their 20s' awardees. Hannah is a member of the Advisory Council on Diversity for the Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific, and is currently completing a Masters degree in Security and Defence Policy at Carleton University.



Dr. Elis Vllasi

Dr. Elis Vllasi is an Associate Professor and Program Director in Applied Cybersecurity and Nuclear Deterrence at the College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies, University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He is an expert in analyzing complex challenges emanating in the grey zone as a result of influence operations and information warfare. A civil and environmental engineer with a Ph.D. in political science from Purdue University, Vllasi bridges social sciences and STEM to tackle problems using tailored approaches combining quantitative and qualitative analyses. His current research interests involve examining Chinese and Russian grey zone (hybrid) warfare strategies and tactics. As a Fulbright Fellow, he conducted a pilot study examining Russia's influence in Kosovo. Dr. Vlassi will be joining the NATO Field School in the Baltics as the Adjunct Field School Director for Hybrid Warfare.



Dr. Mark Webber

Professor of International Politics at the University of Birmingham, UK, a Non-resident Senior Fellow at the NATO Defence College, Rome, and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. Mark has worked extensively on NATO, European security and transatlantic relations.



Oana Lungescu

Oana Lungescu is Distinguished Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) and Senior Adviser at the European Policy Centre (EPC). The longest serving NATO Spokesperson (2010-2023) and the first woman to hold the post, she directed alliance communications during the most turbulent period in a generation, providing strategic advice to two Secretaries General – Jens Stoltenberg and Anders Fogh Rasmussen.



Teri Schulz

Teri Schulz holds an extensive broadcasting career, taking her all over the world covering the European Union, NATO, Russia and global hotspots such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Middle East, with a special focus on transatlantic relations, security, defense, intelligence and counterterrorism. Currently based in Brussels, Belgium, she is a speaker, moderator and trainer in international affairs.

**Ted Whiteside**

Ted Whiteside took on the role of acting Assistant Secretary General for Public Diplomacy NATO. Before taking on that role, he was Secretary of the North Atlantic Council, and Director of the NATO Ministerial and Summit Task Force in Brussels. He was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal by the Governor General of Canada for the negotiations conducted with the Federal Republic of Germany.

**Ilay Ferrier**

Ilay Ferrier is a leading expert in the field of NATO crisis management, in particular with the NATO Crisis Response System (NCRS), and of NATO's high-level, strategic political/military crisis management exercising (CMX). Ferrier served in the UK Royal Marines (1970-95) and in the latter stages of his career, he was assigned to Exercising & Training (now J7) in Operations Division at SHAPE (1989-92).

**Soren Knudsen**

Soren Knudsen retired as a colonel in the Danish Army in the Autumn of 2021. The first half of his 42 years long career Aide de Camp to the General in Command of the Danish Army; Instructor of War Studies at the Royal Danish Army Officers Academy and Staff Officer in Defence Command Denmark. The latter half of his career included positions as the Deputy Head of Mission at the Danish Embassy and a Faculty Advisor until 2024 in different positions at the NATO Defence College (NDC).

**Patrick Andrews**

Fulfilled 19 years with NATO in the International Staff Operations Division at NATO HQ. Since, he has been asked to lead on the rewrite of the NATO Response System and before in NATO military appointments. He is a versatile senior operations manager with proven high-level crisis management, policy, planning, capacity building, and exercising experience in demanding and complex roles in international environments.



STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The NATO Field School is organized into 4 types of Learning and Skills Development:

1. **Academic:** Lectures, Afternotes and discussions in class or as groupsdiscussions.
2. **Interactive/Experiential:** Briefings, seminars, panels, base and training visits, interactions with Military and Diplomatic personnel and field trips (historical and cultural excursions).
3. **Multilateral Negotiation:** Simulation training in problem solving, consensus formation, and multilateral decision making. The major exercise (NMDX) is a 4-day professional simulation led by NATO Defense College Mentors with SFU as Faculty Advisors. The final simulation is the 4-day NSX NATO Summit Negotiation exercise, assisted by professional NATO staff and mentors, conducted at NATO Headquarters in Brussels.
4. **Professional Communication:** through various activities that involve paper writing, podcasts, discussion moderation, conference engagement, Strategic Communication, and press conference skills.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

May 5 – May 9 (Online via Zoom)

The 2024 NATO Field School will begin May 5 at 9:00 AM Pacific Time in real time via Zoom. Classes are each day from Monday through Friday from 9:00am till 12:00pm (Pacific Time). NFS Staff plus guest speakers and panels will conduct introductory lectures and simulation training.

May 12 – June 21 (In-Field)

Students arrive in Tallinn, Estonia, no later than May 12 (which for North America means a May 11 departure)

The NFS program continues in person in Tallinn on May 13 at 9:00 AM in the conference room of the Ibis Hotel. The program finishes on June 21 in Rome, Italy. During the in-field portion of the program, the NFS will conduct full-time programming based out of Tallinn, Riga, Rome, and Brussels. Students will receive detailed weekly schedules from the NFS Program Manager while in-field.

July 2 – July 31 (Online, asynchronous): During this period, students will complete NFS assignments and can virtually consult NFS teaching staff for support. All final assignments are due on August 5, and only extensions for exceptional circumstances will be considered.

NATO FIELD SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The NATO Field School Operates with high expectations for our common conduct as we will be working, interacting, and travelling together for weeks.

What you should expect:

- To have variation in every day.
- To be always punctual, prepared, and adaptable, including in virtual mode.
- To follow dress code requirements in all locations.
- To be alert and ready to follow instructions.
- To operate under Chatham House Rule, meaning that you cannot attribute information (ex. quote the name and rank of speaker or contact person or the source of the information) outside the NATO Field School.
- To not post on Social Media any NFS contents without permission from the Director.
- To have limited access to mobile phones or electronics at secure locations, including limited permission to post pictures or material on social media.
- To have your passport with you on all days, except when told to leave it in hotel.

For further logistical information, including the dress code, code of conduct, Chatham House Rule, please consult the **NFS Handbook**.

PROGRAM ASSIGNMENTS (please consult Canvas for detailed assignment descriptions)

1. **Academic and Experiential Participation (30%):** Students are evaluated on engagement and demonstrated understanding of the program materials, including required readings, lectures, and briefings and interaction with stakeholders. Student questions, reflections and comments are all part of this participation. Watch out: This mark is not simply based on how often and

how many questions you ask or how often you comment in class. Rather it is based on a holistic assessment of your overall learning as we interact on a daily basis. Ask questions when you have a real question that engages your learning and feel free to comment about your learning during the program.

2. **Multilateral Negotiation Performance (30%):** During the two major simulations (NSX and NMDX), students will be evaluated on the following criteria:
 - a. Showing strong familiarity with the simulation documents
 - b. Constructive engagement with the simulation
 - c. Effectively representing their assigned role
 - d. Display skills in multilateral decision-making processes and outcomes.

Assignments during simulation training may be graded and will be part of this.

3. **Analytic and Evaluative individual Final Report composed of max. 3000 words (20%).** The plan is that you write this Report in July, after the in-field portion. In this reflective and analytical essay you will discuss in your own thoughts and words what central themes and/or critical issues were most important to you in the NFS experience. As you discuss these themes you will explain what new cognitive knowledge and understanding you gained on them. Secondly, how this experience influenced your thinking and assessment of these themes. It is strongly recommended that you keep a weekly diary of key themes, issues, events and learning points that will help you write the essay.

4. **Group Assignments (20%):**

NFS students will be placed in Undergraduate and Graduate Working Groups (WG) for the duration of the program. These WG's will take their name from a letter of the NATO phonetic alphabet (Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, etc.).

Undergraduate students will complete a Podcast per WG. Graduate students will complete a Conference Paper per WG.

- a. **UNDERGRADUATE: Podcast:** Each Committee will select a topic in security, defence, foreign policy, or a related theme related to their experience in the NATO Field School. Each Committee will decide on its topic, how to structure its podcast episode, and how to divide the tasks required to make the podcast amongst themselves. For more detailed instructions on how to produce their podcast assignments in the Podcast, see the Assignment Description document on Canvas.
- b. **GRADUATE: Rome Student-Engagement Conference:** Each graduate student WG's will produce a Policy Brief of 4000 words max. The various topics are determined by Expert Presentors who present their topic during our one-day Rome Student Engagement Conference, being held in Rome in the week of June 16. By May 31, each Presentor

will forward a one-page summary of their topic for distribution to the WGs by May 31. WGs will be expected to research the topic prior to the Conference. They will also have priority asking questions to their presenter at the RomeSEC conference. Each WG is encouraged to seek further advice on the Policy Brief from their Presenter. The Presenter in turn may decide to join in final publication of the Policy Brief post-NFS. The 4000-word Policy Brief is due by July 31. The NFS Director and the Expert Mentor for the RomeSEC portion will grade the papers. Subsequent to the course requirement, The two best RomeSEC papers will be nominated by the NFS staff for publication in the [Canadian Military Journal](#) or the [Journal of Military and Strategic Studies](#). More publication venues are welcome. More detailed instructions on the Rome Student Engagement Conference assignments will be provided in time. Sarah Dicken will be the key staff assistant on the RomeSEC.

ASSIGNED READINGS

During the May 5–June 21 segment of the NFS, the readings will be paced so that they match the program in the field. After June 21, the pace and volume of readings is determined by the final assignment you need to finish.

Most readings can be found as e-copies on SFU Online Library (SFUOL), SFU Canvas (Canvas), Google Scholar, internet search, or simply by clicking on the reading link [where available].

Pre-reading: Students should have read the following book in advance of May 5. Students must have access to this book during the NFS as your main reference.

Sten Rynning, *NATO: From Cold War to Ukraine, a History of the World's Most Powerful Alliance*. Yale University Press, 2024.

Week 1: May 5-9 (Online Week)

Sten Rynning, *NATO: From Cold War to Ukraine, a History of the World's Most Powerful Alliance*. Yale University Press, 2024.

Mark Webber, “NATO 101: A Guide to the Alliance’s Purpose, Structure and History,” Section 1: Introduction to NATO (2024 edition) on Canvas.

Text of the [Washington Treaty](#), NATO Online.

Baltic Amber Simulation Training Documents (Canvas)

Moens, Alexander. [How NATO's Values and Functions Influence its Actions](#). NDC Fellowship Monograph 7. May 2016. [Ch. 1, 2.1].

Part 1 in Jochen Rehr (ed.), "[Handbook on CSDP: The common security and defence policy of the European Union](#)." 4th Edition. Federal Ministry of Defence, Republic of Austria. (2021) (Canvas or Online).

Week 2: May 12-16 Estonia

Seth G. Jones, "[Russia's Shadow War Against the West](#)," CSIS Briefs, March 18, 2025, Online, about 20 pages.

Fiona Hill and Angela Stent, "The Kremlin's Grand Delusions," *Foreign Affairs*, February 15, 2023. (Canvas).

Must Read before May 13: "Ämari Air Base: Information Package for Visiting Units" (Canvas, NFS-Only Confidential)

Week 3: May 19-23 Latvia

Maris Andzans, "[Six years down, many more to come](#)," MLI Commentary, December 20, 2023.

Stephen Flanagan and Anna Dowd, "[Alliance Assignments: Defense Priorities for Key NATO States](#)," *War on the Rocks*, October 4, 2023.

Pamment, James, and Anneli Lindvall Kimber. "[Fact-checking and debunking: a best practice guide to dealing with disinformation](#)." (2021). Pages 5-40.

Week 4: May 26-May 30 Brussels

Moens, Alexander. [How NATO's Values and Functions Influence its Actions](#). NDC Fellowship Monograph 7. May 2016. [Ch. 1, 2.1].

Must Read before May 27: Mark Webber, "NATO 101: A Guide to the Alliance's Purpose, Structure and History," Section 2: NATO Structure and Committees Introduction to NATO (2024 edition) on Canvas.

Must Read before May 27: "NATO: Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries" (2014-2024) (on Canvas), 16 pages.

Must Read before May 27: Alexander Sorg, "[Force de L'Europe: How Realistic is a French Nuclear Umbrella?](#)" Commentary, War on the Rocks, March 24, 2025.

Must Read before May 27, "NSX Instructions, Scenario and Lead-in (Canvas, NFS-Only Confidential) and MDX Lead-in and Scenario Readings (to be posted on Canvas).

European Commission, Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030, March 19, 2025. Online, 23 pages.

Week 5: June 2-June 6 Belgium, Netherlands, Germany (SHAPE, JFC-Brunssum, NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, European External Action Service.

Part 2 of "[Handbook on CSDP: The common security and defence policy of the European Union](#)." 4th Edition. Federal Ministry of Defence, Republic of Austria. (2021).

Read-in documents for the NMDX simulation.

Week 6: June 9-13 Rome

NMDX documents

Week 7: June 16-20 Italy

Read before June 17 ESRIN Briefing:

João Reis, "European union defense and security strategy for space and ground-based systems against hybrid threats," *Acta Astronautica*, Volume 225, 2024 (Online or Canvas)

RomeSEC Preparation readings, (Arctic, TBC)

Huebert, Rob, "Understanding Arctic Security: A Defence of Traditional Security Analysis," in W. Greaves and Lackenbauer *Breaking Through*, 2021. (SFUOL)

July: Selected Resource Readings for both Podcast and RomeSEC Papers

Stanley R. Sloan, *Defense of the West: Transatlantic Security from Truman to Trump*. Manchester University Press, 2nd edition, 2020.

Guillaume Lasconjarias and Jeffrey Larsen (Eds), *NATO's Response to Hybrid Threats*, 2015.

Alexander Lanoszka, *Military Alliances in the Twenty-First Century*, 2022

Timothy Andrews Sayle, *Enduring Alliance*, 2019

Thomas Juneau et al., (Eds.) *Canadian Defence Policy in Theory and Practice*, 2020, especially chapters 5, 6, 10 and 18.

Mark Webber et al., *What's Wrong with NATO and How to Fix it*, 2021.

Joseph Jockel and Joel Sokolsky, *Canada in NATO 1949-2019*, 2021.

Rehrl, Jochen, "[*Handbook on CSDP: The common security and defence policy of the European Union*](#)." Volume I, 4th Edition. Federal Ministry of Defence, Republic of Austria. (2021).

Peter Apps, *Deterring Armageddon: A Biography of Nato*. Wildfire. June 2024.

Alexander Lanoszka, Alexander, Christian Leuprecht, and Alexander Moens (eds). [*Lessons from the Enhanced Forward Presence, 2017-2020*](#). NDC Research Paper No.14. NATO Defense College – Rome, November 2020.

COURSE POLICIES

Grading

This course will use the SFU Political Science grading scale [[click here](#)].

Formatting Written Assignments

All written work turned in for this class **must be**: single-space, 1-inch (2.54 cm) margins on all sides, typed in 12-point Times New Roman, black font, pages numbered, word count noted, in Chicago Style citation format, turned in on time and via Canvas. Word count excludes the bibliography and footnotes. All files must be submitted in MS Word (.doc) format only, using file name scheme, "POL484_Assignment Name,_Committee (e.g., POL484_Integrated Committee Paper_Alpha). If you are a graduate student, use POL880 instead of POL484.

All due dates for this course use Pacific Standard Time (PST). If you are in a different time zone, be sure to submit on time in PST time.

Late Policy for Assignments

All coursework is expected to be submitted on time. Penalties for late work will apply. In case of medical emergency or other extenuating reason contact Teaching Staff at earliest opportunity.

Plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence such as ChatGPT

The bottom line is pretty simple. Your thinking, analysis, writing and sourcing should be your own. Copying and pasting or taking other people's or AI's work and making it look like your own is what you need to avoid at all times for that is, essentially the equivalent of lying and stealing. Therefore, when you do research, it should be you doing the research and not another human agent or AI program. When you use a source in your own words, you still need to reference that source by means of an endnote. And when you quote a literal piece or small passage (for example because it is very good, very funny, or very controversial) you put it into proper quotation marks and reference it. Do not use ChatGPT at all until the intellectual world figures out how to deal with it. Traditional Google searches and search engines are ok.

Plagiarism: "What is it and How to Avoid it"

Plagiarism involves using another author's words without attribution or otherwise presenting another person's work as one's own. It is a fraudulent and serious academic offence that will result in a severe academic penalty. Also, close paraphrasing of another author's work & self-plagiarism, including submitting the same, or substantively the same, work for academic evaluation more than once, are unacceptable practices that will result in a severe academic penalty.

The university policies on academic honesty are available [[click here](#)]. The Political Science Department's interpretation of this policy can be found [[click here](#)]. All students are responsible for familiarising themselves with these policies. A helpful SFU Library tutorial on plagiarism is available [[click here](#)]. On how to avoid plagiarism click [here](#).

Academic Freedom, Respect, and Inclusiveness

Simon Fraser University and the NATO Field School promote the values of academic freedom, openness to diverse views, professional courtesy, respect and sensitivity to all informed and civil conversation and points of view. We commit to fostering a program that is welcoming, respectful, and inclusive.