The James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) is the premier education and training organization in the field of nonproliferation studies. The Center strives to combat the spread of weapons of mass destruction by training the next generation of nonproliferation specialists and disseminating timely information and analysis.

Founded by Dr. William Potter in 1989 with a handful of students at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, CNS is today the largest nongovernmental organization in the world devoted exclusively to research and training on nonproliferation issues, with offices in Monterey, CA, Washington, D.C., and Vienna, Austria.

Current and former CNS staff members are active in promoting prudent nonproliferation policies around the world. They serve on expert and international commissions, testify before Congress, work for and advise national governments and international organizations, publish numerous books and articles, lecture to civic groups, and mentor students and young professionals with an interest in the field.

“By the end, my two years at the Monterey Institute had given me a powerful combination of knowledge of nonproliferation issues and the skills to use that knowledge in the policy world. A degree from Monterey prepared me extraordinarily well for my current job with the U.S. Department of State, where I work on arms control and nonproliferation issues.”

Charles Mahaffey (MAIPS ’04)

A key component of CNS’s mission is to train the next generation of nonproliferation specialists. The Monterey Institute’s Graduate School of International Policy and Management offers the country’s only Master of Arts degree in Nonproliferation and Terrorism Studies. The Institute also offers a shorter Certificate in Nonproliferation Studies, with courses, seminars, and workshops taught by MIIS faculty and CNS experts. In addition, CNS offers unique internship opportunities for its students at international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations that expand career possibilities for our students.

“CNS has done absolutely pioneering work ...in trying to promote the very concept of disarmament and nonproliferation education. ...I think CNS has triumphed. It has not only shown its own capabilities in this field, but helped to stake out a new academic discipline that is more vital than ever, given the challenges we face in the world today.”

Dr. Randy Rydell, Senior Political Affairs Officer in the Office of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, UN

Our students are also engaged in ground-breaking work that employs 21st century tools to address long-standing security challenges. In addition to using social media techniques to address questions of arms control verification, nuclear security and illicit trafficking, students have developed innovative ways to integrate Google Earth maps and 3D modeling to analyze and depict sites of proliferation interest in North Korea, China, Syria, Pakistan, and elsewhere.
CNS Experts

CNS staff members, including former senior government officials, are an unparalleled resource for Monterey Institute students. CNS experts are quoted frequently on pressing international security issues such as Iran’s nuclear ambitions, arms control and global nuclear weapon developments, North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, the Fukushima reactor meltdown in Japan, and Syria’s chemical weapons capabilities. These quotes have appeared in global media outlets including:

- Associated Press
- Bloomberg News
- Boston Globe
- Foreign Policy
- Foreign Affairs
- Haaretz
- International Herald Tribune
- Japan Times
- Los Angeles Times
- National Public Radio
- New York Times
- PBS NewsHour
- Reuters
- TIME magazine
- Wall Street Journal
- Washington Post

Publications

Three times a year, CNS publishes the peer-reviewed journal The Nonproliferation Review, which has built a reputation as an indispensable source of information and expert commentary for policymakers and researchers.

CNS maintains the Inventory of International Nonproliferation Organizations & Regimes, a regularly-updated public reference document covering all international organizations, treaties, and agreements relevant to WMD disarmament and nonproliferation.

CNS also produces an Occasional Paper series, timely Feature Stories, as well as other publications on its website, and maintains comprehensive databases on WMD developments and nonproliferation regimes on the website of the Nuclear Threat Initiative.

"...The professors who work at the center are very well plugged in, in their own communities, whether back in the former Soviet Union [or] here in the United States, and so I can always count on them to be particularly knowledgeable... it's been extremely valuable for me to be able to use those materials. They're high quality."

The Honorable Rose Gottemoeller, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security

Vienna Center (vcdnp.org)

In October 2010, the Austrian Foreign Ministry for European and International Affairs announced the selection of CNS/MIIS as its sole partner institution in the establishment of the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The new center opened in February 2011 and serves as an international hub for discussions among representatives of civil society, governments, and international organizations of the most pressing nuclear disarmament and proliferation challenges. A particular focus for the Vienna Center is devising creative but practical means to address these challenges and educate the public—especially young people—about nonproliferation issues.

Washington, D.C. Office

CNS has maintained a strong presence in Washington, D.C. for over a decade. The Washington office provides state of the art facilities and hosts domestic and international experts as well as government officials, visiting dignitaries and other personalities. The D.C. office will also be linked by modern telecommunication facilities to Middlebury, Monterey, and Vienna, providing for real-time international communications.

"The Arms Control Simulation was by far the most valuable educational and professional experience of my life. The non-stop intensity of having all my words and actions scrutinized by not only distinguished and admired faculty, but also senior-level diplomatic practitioners and highly skilled and knowledgeable classmates was a profound, inspiring and humbling intellectual and social experience."

Elena Hushbeck, MIIS Alumna, 2008

Special Educational Programs

As part of its educational mission, CNS sponsors a number of special programs and learning opportunities. A few highlights include:

- The annual Critical Issues Forum (CIF) program has two major components. In the fall, an international group of high school teachers comes to Monterey for training in a curriculum that they then employ with their students for the rest of the year. Typically, in April teachers return to Monterey with their students for a series of student presentations representing the culmination of their learning experience. In 2012, the spring meeting of the CIF was held in Vienna, Austria and featured a discussion with IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano.
- The Visiting Fellows Program assists young and mid-career professionals in various foreign ministries and national export control departments, as well as researchers, academics, and journalists, to have a positive impact on arms control and nonproliferation policy in their respective countries. As of 2014, the program has trained more than 200 fellows from former Soviet states, China, and recently, from Argentina, Burkina Faso, Chile, Egypt, Mexico, Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa, and Sri Lanka.
- An interactive website dedicated to delivering up-to-the-minute news and updates on major global developments and major international meetings such as the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the sessions of the Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conferences.
- The arms control negotiation simulation, an annual Monterey Institute course offering in which students take on roles for an entire semester as members of different delegations attempting to negotiate an international arms control agreement. Recent courses have featured guest lectures numerous past and present U.S.-Russian arms control negotiators and other diplomats.

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