

IGCC At A Glance



BY THE NUMBERS



65

AFFILIATES

17

FELLOWS

1,405

ALUMNI

10

UC
CAMPUSES

2

NATIONAL
LABS



SINCE 2019



\$2.17 million

PROVIDED BY IGCC TO SUPPORT
UC RESEARCH

As of September 2026



UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC)

Our mission is to use rigorous research, training, and engagement with decisionmakers to improve policies and practices in ways that help reduce conflict and improve global cooperation.

IGCC is a network of researchers from across the University of California and the Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories that conducts policy-relevant research to mitigate conflict and promote a more peaceful world.

Our focus is on challenges that have the potential to lead to wide-scale conflict, and that can benefit from global cooperation to solve. Our portfolio includes both traditional security issues—defense innovation, strategy and deterrence, nuclear weapons policy, and security cooperation—and emerging challenges such as climate change, geoeconomics and great power competition, and threats to democracy. In each of these areas, IGCC builds diverse, multidisciplinary research teams that analyze the causes and consequences of global conflict and help develop practical solutions.

Research Themes



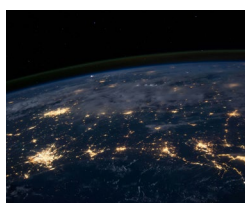
China and the Indo-Pacific: China's rise as an advanced technological, innovation, and industrial powerhouse is one of the most profound developments of the 21st century and promises to reshape the global economic and technological order. IGCC research on China and the Indo-Pacific explores the implications of China's rise and shifting geopolitical dynamics in Asia for the economic competitiveness and national security of the United States and the rest of the world.



Climate Change and Security: The effects of global climate change will challenge global governance systems, force a reimagining of the roles of defense communities, spark migration and border disputes, disrupt global trade, drive conflict, and threaten social cohesion and economic stability. IGCC's initiative on the security implications of climate change supports research that can inform international and national strategies as the world prepares for a fundamentally changed landscape.



Conflict and Peacebuilding: What drives violent conflict between and within countries? What strategies work to reduce violence? How are patterns of peace and conflict changing globally? This research theme explores how to build peace and stability in countries and regions embroiled in or recovering from conflict. IGCC scholars in this domain consider the antecedents to conflict, how conflict impacts development, how and why wars start and end, and how institutions of the state are built to ensure durable peace.



Defense and National Security: IGCC's program on defense and national security includes work on defense transparency and innovation, strategy and deterrence, and security cooperation. In this strand, IGCC combines research and educational activities with real-world action, including the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue, a Track 1.5 forum that regularly convenes scholars and current and former officials from China, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and the United States to reduce the risk of conflict in Northeast Asia and beyond.

History

Early Days

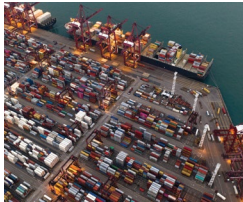
IGCC was established in 1983 out of concern among UC faculty about UC management of the weapons-building nuclear labs. Under the leadership of our first director, renowned physicist Herb York, we focused initially on nonproliferation and arms control.

Expansion

Over the years, we have grown our nuclear security work and expanded into other areas as conceptions of security have evolved and threats have changed. Following 9/11, for example, as attention to transnational threats from terrorism grew, IGCC supported research on counterterrorism and deterrence.



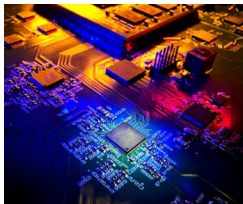
Future of Democracy: Around the world, democracy is being challenged as never before. The Future of Democracy Initiative brings together UC experts to explore patterns of democratic continuity, crisis, adaptation, and resilience. Our work focuses on how the spread of open information technology, economic globalization, and rising authoritarian powers are driving democratic backsliding in some cases, and democratic resilience in others.



Goeconomics and Great Power Competition: IGCC's program on Goeconomics and Great Power Competition consists of academic research, education, and international engagement covering the political economy of security, the reform of the U.S. defense acquisition system, the role of industrial policy on national security issues, and the national security implications of foreign direct investment.



Nuclear Security: IGCC's nuclear security program works to improve international regime governance, engages with states pivotal to nonproliferation efforts, trains new generations of experts, and supports research on nuclear security policy through fellowships and faculty grants.



Science, Technology, and Innovation: The rapid deployment of new technologies plays a large role in the changing strategic environment of the 21st century. IGCC-led projects on science, technology, and innovation bring together faculty in computer science, political science, international relations, economics, public policy, and law with industry and government experts to advance our understanding of the implications of these rapid technological shifts for global and national security.

China's Rise and Emerging Tech

The rise of China prompted our strand on great power competition, exploring a broad array of issues, including goeconomics, defense innovation, and supply chains. We have woven the role of emerging technologies into many of our initiatives, since these technologies promise to reshape the global landscape in unprecedented ways.

A New Focus on Democracy and Climate

The accelerating phenomenon of democratic backsliding and the rise of authoritarian powers drove a major new IGCC initiative on the Future of Democracy, which includes work exploring how and whether democracies are equipped to address the challenges associated with climate change. Our work on the security implications of climate change builds on historic IGCC work on the environment and explores a vital gap in social science research.

Programs

Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue

The Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue, a Track 1.5 forum of academics, policy experts, and military and foreign ministry officials from China, Japan, North Korea, Russia, South Korea, and the United States, has been meeting annually since 1993 with the aim of reducing the risk of conflict in the region and beyond.

Public Policy and Nuclear Threats

The Public Policy and Nuclear Threats (PPNT) program provides graduate students and young professionals the knowledge and analytic tools they need to contribute to the future of U.S. nuclear policy. Established in 2003, the summer training program covers the technical, political, strategic, and ethical aspects of nuclear weapons. A competitive paid internship for PPNT graduates is also held at a National Nuclear Security Administration nuclear laboratory over the subsequent summer.



The Public Policy and Nuclear Threats Boot Camp gathers at the UC San Diego campus in La Jolla, California.

Chinese Defense and Strategic Innovation

Training Programs

IGCC offers specialized education and training programs designed to provide participants with the knowledge, analytical tools, and expert perspectives needed to navigate China's growing influence on international security, technology, and geopolitics. Programs cover China's military modernization, defense strategy, emerging technologies, and science and technology policy. IGCC offers both standard courses and customized training tailored to the needs of participating organizations.

University of California Conference on International Cooperation (UCCIC)

The annual University of California Conference on International Cooperation (UCCIC) brings together international relations scholars from across UC campuses to discuss research in progress, share ideas, and provide mentorship for junior scholars at UC institutions. Founded in 2016, UCCIC has been funded by and organized in cooperation with the IGCC since 2019.

UCDC Presidential Faculty Fellows Program (PFFP)

The University of California Presidential Faculty Fellows Program, an initiative of the UC Washington Center, provides training to UC faculty on how to engage with decisionmakers and communicate their research effectively to audiences outside the academy. IGCC supports the program by providing sessions with IGCC scholars that grapple with the promises and pitfalls of policy engagement.

Fellowships

Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

Since 1984, each year, IGCC provides funding for graduate students selected from across all ten UC campuses, including one specially designated Herb York Fellow, which honors our founding director. IGCC's dissertation fellowship supports diverse cohorts of UC graduate students pursuing degrees in political science, sociology, anthropology, economics, and history, among other disciplines. IGCC funds and mentorship support the fellows with their writing, fieldwork, translation, network building, and training in policy engagement. IGCC has supported nearly 600 fellows since 1991 with more than \$6.6 million in funding, many of whom go on to prestigious careers in academia, government, and policy.

Postdoctoral Fellowship in Technology and International Security

Jointly supported by the University of California Office of the President and the Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, IGCC's postdoctoral fellowship in technology and security supports junior scholars whose research generates new theoretical and empirical insights into the relationship between technology, national security, and the global security environment. Based out of IGCC's Washington, D.C. office at the UC Washington Center, fellows come from a mix of public and private universities; are trained in the social sciences and STEM fields; use a variety of qualitative, quantitative, and descriptive methods; and have career ambitions ranging from university-based professorships, federal government employment, and non-academic careers.



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Our nation needs people who can think critically and objectively, who can think through three, four, or five positions at a time. IGCC is important because it brings together diverse minds and diverse experiences, and helps smart people get beyond their individually limited experiences.”

—HUBAN GOWADIA, PPNT ALUMNA 2007



“

IGCC allows its researchers to find a sweet spot between developing academic expertise and engaging in cutting-edge scientific debates, while also providing a platform—and incentives—for public engagement. IGCC is also able to draw on the incredible intellectual horsepower of the UC system.”

—CULLEN HENDRIX, DISSERTATION FELLOW
2004-05

Public Engagement

IGCC's mission is to help shape policy and practice in ways that reduce conflict and build peace and cooperation. To do this, we invest in ensuring our research makes a difference outside the academy. We place a premium on making sure that the issues we cover and ideas we generate are visible and accessible among the media and the engaged public.

Engagement in Our Nation's Capital

From our offices at the University of California Washington Center in Washington, D.C., IGCC supports UC scholars in their engagement with decisionmakers, think tanks, and universities. Many UC social science faculty aspire to be policy engaged but do not know how to grow their visibility among policy audiences. IGCC serves as a central hub for UC peace and security experts to access policymakers, facilitate collaborations and partnerships, and to raise the visibility of UC overall in the Washington, D.C. policy environment. The office also hosts six Postdoctoral Fellows in Technology and International Security, a program supported jointly by IGCC and the Center for Global Security Research at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the Center for National Security and International Studies at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Current History

In 2025, IGCC partnered with the University of California Press to assume editorial management of *Current History*, a leading magazine of global affairs that documents, contextualizes, debates, and bears witness to the social, political, and economic shifts shaping our world. Begun as a supplement to *The New York Times* in 1914, *Current History* has published a thrillingly diverse range of writers, world leaders, and scholars, from W. E. B. Du Bois, Susan Strange, and George Bernard Shaw, to Sheila Jasanoff, Anirudh Krishna, Joseph Stiglitz, Francis Fukuyama, Javier Auyero, and Mlada Bukovansky, among others. Currently published every other month, *Current History* is a space for fresh, courageous thinking on the weightiest issues of our era.



Talking Policy Podcast

A Sea of Uncertainty: Reflections from the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue

Featuring Da Wei, Sheena Chestnut Greitens, Kazuto Suzuki, Chung-In Moon, and Vasily Kashin

Africa in the Shifting Global Order

Featuring Folashadé Soulé

Nuclear Security in the 21st Century

Featuring Thom Mason

The Trump Revolution—One Year Later

Featuring Tai Ming Cheung, Neil Narang, Caroline Freund, Matto Mildenberger, and Lauren Prather

The India-Pakistan Crisis Reveals Shifting Geopolitical Realities

Featuring Amit Ahuja and Josh White



Policy Briefs

Implications of Trump's Arms

Sales Strategy

Chi Fang

Legitimacy in Peacekeeping: Civilian

Support Hinges on Peacekeeper

Behavior, Not Outcomes

Prabin Khadka and Linnéa Gelot

China's Hidden Quest to Win in Pulsed

Power Fusion

Jimmy Goodrich

Back to the Future: The Rise of Militarization in China in the 2020s

Tai Ming Cheung



Working Papers

Labor Unions Are Not the “Bulwark of Democracy”

John Ahlquist and Theodoros Ntounias

How Populism Reshapes Migration Policy

Jesús Rojas Venzor

Information Control in Autocracies: A Review Essay

Malika Talgatova

Timing Is Everything: A New Way to Estimate Strategic Behavior

Danny Klinenberg, Eli Berman, et al.

A Realist Reassessment of China’s Rise in East Asia

Yuji Idomoto

Backsliding and Democratic Resilience: Prevention, Resistance, and Recovery

Robert Kaufman

What Online Surveys Can Tell Us About Violence, Unrest, and Human Rights

Andrew Shaver, Claudia Loomis, Eliot Jobe, et al.



Essays and Reports

Nuclear Power: Rebuilding Trust in an Audit Agenda

Dominic Brennan

How to Write an Academic Article in Political Science

David Lake

China’s Competitive Model for Strategic Science, Technology, and Innovation Development

Tai Ming Cheung

The Rational World of Defense Intellectuals—Revisited

Colleen Larkin

Trump’s Trade War: A Primer

David Lake

Using Distributional Politics to Understand Global Progress on Ecosystem Conservation

Luke Sanford and Cesar Martinez-Alvarez

The Defense of Judicial Independence: A Global Imperative

Mónica Castillejos-Aragón

Alumni Confidential



Francesca Giovannini

Project on Managing the Atom, Harvard University Belfer Center
PPNT alumna 2013



Rupal Mehta

Center for Global Security Research, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
PPNT alumna 2012-13



Kim Budil

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
PPNT alumna 2007



Cullen Hendrix

Peterson Institute for International Economics
Dissertation Fellow 2004-05

Leadership



Tai Ming Cheung

Co-Director
UC San Diego



Neil Narang

Co-Director
UC Santa Barbara



Lindsay Shingler

Associate Director
UC San Diego



Emilie M. Hafner-Burton

Research Director
for Democracy Studies
UC San Diego



Stephan Haggard

Research Director for
Democracy and Global
Governance
UC San Diego



Eli Berman

Research Director for
International Security Studies
UC San Diego



Alia Matanock

Research Director for Violence,
Intervention, and Order
UC San Diego



Christina Schneider

Steering Committee Chair
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Susan Shirk

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UC Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation

UC San Diego Headquarters

9500 Gilman Drive, #0518

La Jolla, CA 92093-0518

Washington, D.C. Office

1608 Rhode Island Ave NW, Ste. 211

Washington, DC 20036

+1 858 534 6106

info@ucigcc.org

ucigcc.org

