



Nuclear Energy: Key Facts and Issues

March 23-26, 2026

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Building 56 (Whitaker), Room 114
 21 Ames Street, Cambridge, MA 02139, US
[Please click here for a campus map.](#)

Registration

To maintain a carefully curated group, this course is invitation-only. Approved participants may follow the link found in their invitation to register. To request an invitation, please contact [Kristi Stone](#). The registration cost is \$150 USD (financial assistance and fee waivers may be requested). Registration will close on February 23, or earlier if spots fill. *Turn to page 4 for additional details on travel and logistics.*

Agenda

**Subject to change.*

Sunday, March 22		
5:00-7:00pm 2hrs	Casual Welcome Reception: an opportunity to meet fellow participants and speakers <i>Residence Inn by Marriott Boston Cambridge, 120 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02142</i>	
Day 1 – Monday, March 23		
<i>Participants may enjoy breakfast at their hotel or preferred outlet. Coffee refreshments will be provided in the meeting room.</i>		
8:30-9:00am 30min	Introductions by all participants facilitated by Jacopo Buongiorno (MIT)	
9:00-9:15am 15min	Setting the Stage: welcome to the course, goals and expectations	Jacopo Buongiorno (MIT) Victor Ibarra (CATF)
9:15-10:45am 1hr 30min	Nuclear and Climate Change Systems: analysis of clean energy sources, including nuclear and renewables; consideration of land use, energy density, and siting challenges	Kasparas Spokas (CATF)
10:45am	BREAK	
11:00am-12:30pm 1hr 30min	Nuclear Power Plant Basics: basic principles; current technologies: PWRs and BWRs; fast vs thermal reactors; power cycles	Jacopo Buongiorno (MIT)
12:30-1:45pm 1hr 15min	NETWORKING LUNCH	
1:45-3:00pm 1hr 15min	Current Global State of Nuclear Energy, “The West and the Rest”: current state of the global debate and evolving policies in U.S., EU, Middle East, Asia	Elina Teplinsky (Pillsbury Law)

3:00-3:15pm 15min	BREAK	
3:15-4:15pm 1hr	The Cost Challenge: the cost challenges of nuclear energy, examining recent cost trends, the factors contributing to high costs, and strategies for cost reduction	Jacopo Buongiorno (MIT)
4:15-5:15pm 1hr	Financing Strategies for Nuclear Projects: financial frameworks and development models of new nuclear deployment; how key stakeholders—governments, investors, and utilities—navigate risk, capital allocation, and policy incentives	John Parsons (MIT)
<i>Participants may make their own dinner arrangements at their leisure.</i>		

Day 2 – Tuesday, March 24		
<i>Participants may enjoy breakfast at their hotel or preferred outlet. Coffee refreshments will be provided in the meeting room.</i>		
9:00-10:00am 1hr	Radiation Health Science: radiation fundamentals, sources, health effects, detection and regulations	Patrick White (CATF)
10:00-11:00am 1hr	Nuclear Safety: nuclear safety basics; understanding events at Three Mile Island / Chernobyl / Fukushima	Jacopo Buongiorno (MIT)
11:00-11:15am 15min	BREAK	
11:15-11:25am 10min	Group Photo in the classroom	
11:25am-12:30pm 1hr	Public Opinion, U.S. and Global Trends: understanding public views on nuclear energy technology; factors in support/opposition; risk perceptions; community-led decision making	Kuhika Gupta (Univ. of Oklahoma)
12:30-1:45pm 1hr 15 min	NETWORKING LUNCH	
1:45-3:30pm 1hr 30 min	Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Mining, conversion, enrichment, fuel fabrication, reprocessing, recycling and waste management	Haruko Wainwright (MIT)
3:15-3:30pm 15min	BREAK	
3:30-4:30pm 1hr	Nuclear Policy: overview of federal and state policies on new nuclear	Victor Ibarra (CATF)
4:30-5:30pm 1hr	Nuclear Regulations: how are nuclear plants licensed and regulated; the roles of the IAEA and national regulatory bodies, incl. NRC	Ian Grant (Ian Grant Consulting)
<i>Participants may make their own dinner arrangements at their leisure.</i>		

Day 3 – Wednesday, March 25

7:30am-2:30pm 7hrs	<p>Optional field trip to NextEra Seabrook Station, offering a fascinating chance to learn about how New England’s largest nuclear power plants safely generates reliable, low-carbon electricity to meet regional energy needs.</p> <p><i>*Bus transportation and lunch provided. Capacity is limited. Those not attending the field trip may use this period as free time. All course participants are welcome to rejoin the group for the evening dinner program.</i></p>
6:30-8:30pm 2hrs	<p>Dinner Program with Featured Speaker: Marcio Paes-Barreto (3Flux) – U.S. states’ and regional perspective on nuclear energy <i>Catalyst Restaurant, 300 Technology Square, Cambridge, MA 02139</i></p>

Day 4 – Thursday, March 26

<i>Participants may enjoy breakfast at their hotel or preferred outlet. Coffee refreshments will be provided in the meeting room.</i>		
9:00-10:00am 1hr	Nonproliferation Issues: what is nonproliferation; history of weapons; NPT; current vision; IAEA’s role; ongoing challenges	Scott Roecker (Nuclear Threat Initiative)
10:00-10:15am 15min	BREAK	
10:15-11:15am 1hr	Advanced Reactors and Advanced Fuels: what are advanced reactors; how do they differ; why does that matter	Staffan Qvist (Quantified Carbon)
11:15-12:15pm 1hr	Fusion Energy: what is fusion energy; what are its advantages; creating a model for commercialization	Ethan Peterson (MIT)
12:15-1:30pm 1hr 15min	NETWORKING LUNCH	
1:30-2:30pm 1hr	Applications of Nuclear Energy Beyond Electricity: value of nuclear energy in decarbonizing hard-to-abate sectors beyond electricity generation	Staffan Qvist (Quantified Carbon)
2:30-2:45pm 15min	BREAK	
2:45-3:45pm 1hr	Nuclear Energy – the Finnish Example: nuclear energy in Finland, including energy security, waste management, public acceptance & political atmosphere	Atte Harjanne (Parliament of Finland)
3:45-4:30pm 45min	Group Discussion: questions, comments, what additional information would be useful?	Armond Cohen (CATF)
4:30pm	ADJOURN	

Please continue for helpful travel and logistical details.

Lodging Accommodations

There are several suitable hotels located near MIT Campus. The three within closest walking distance (5-10 minutes) are [Kendall Hotel](#), [Residence Inn by Marriott Boston Cambridge](#), or [Boston Marriott Cambridge](#). Please note, a discounted rate is available at the Residence Inn for \$289/night. Booking information will be shared in your registration confirmation.

Travel and Transportation

Cambridge is about 6 miles (10 km) from Boston Logan International Airport (BOS), with a typical 20–30 minute taxi or ride-app trip depending on traffic. Public transit is convenient via the MBTA Silver Line to South Station, connecting to the Red Line into Cambridge, which is also well served by buses and commuter rail. Ride-apps like Uber and Lyft are widely available. Parking on campus is limited, with more [details found here](#).

Passport and Visa Requirements

The United States has specific entry requirements depending on your nationality. Please [review U.S. government visa and entry guidance](#) to determine what applies to you based on your country of citizenship. If you require a visa and need a letter of invitation, please contact [Kristi Stone](#). We strongly recommend applying well in advance, as processing times can vary and may be lengthy. ***For international attendees, please be aware a version of this course is taking place in [Brussels, Belgium](#), May 4-7, 2026, which may be a more accessible option for you.***

Weather and Recommended Dress

We encourage your comfort with a recommendation of “*business casual*”. Late March in Cambridge typically brings cool early spring weather, with daytime temperatures ranging from approximately 45-55°F (7-13°C) and cooler mornings and evenings around 35-40°F (1-5°C). Conditions can be variable, with the possibility of rain or late-season snow. We recommend warm layers, a weather-resistant jacket, and comfortable walking shoes suitable for cooler and potentially wet conditions.

General Questions, Fee Waivers or Financial Assistance Requests

Please contact [Kristi Stone](#) at kristi@mit.edu.