Special Combat Aggressive Reactionary Systems or S.C.A.R.S. is a martial arts fighting system/combative created by Jerry L. Peterson, based in part on his background in San Soo kung fu and from his personal experiences in the Vietnam War.

Currently marketed through private seminars and videotape, a version (Course #K-431-0096) was officially taught to prospective U.S. Navy SEALs and those personnel actively serving in Naval Special Warfare. Initial presentation of SCARS to the Department of the Navy in 1988 led to its adoption into military use. From 1989-94 Mr. Peterson personally headed up the development and training of the SCARS programs as part of a BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) candidate course and produced SCARS qualified SEAL instructors.

Though there may appear to be little difference between the military and the publicly available training course, the SEAL instructors were put through a 30-day intensive program while the civilian courses last from 3-5 days. No military approved SCARS instructor can teach the SCARS program outside of the military. While the SCARS Institute of Combat Sciences claims to have instructed the branches of the Army, Airforce as well as foreign governments and various law enforcement agencies, to what extent is unknown at this time.

According to official Naval Special Warfare documents obtained through the FOIA, stated on 03/03/98 that the Advanced NSW Combat Fighting Course (CFC) was recommended for cancellation due to the fact, “that the 30-day Advanced Combat Fighting Course was no longer utilized by the components; it has been 2-years since the course has been run. Generally, the components can’t lose someone for the 30-days that the course runs.”

Cancellation of the SCARS course was approved on April 17, 1998 by the Naval Special Warfare Commander, G.M. Moy, Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations. (FOIA document 1500 Ser N32/0293 17 Apr 98)

Criticisms
Within the martial arts community, Peterson and SCARS have been subject to no small amount of controversy, having been variously accused of being unreliable, unrealistic, a hodgepodge, or simply a stripped-down version of San Soo. Accusations have also been leveled at Peterson about sensationalistic and misleading advertising about SCARS, often involving how widely the system is and has been taught in the Navy. Yet there are many who defend Peterson and his system, such as Navy SEAL LCDR Mark D. Divine, former Navy SEAL Stew Smith, and the combat experienced personnel of NAVSPECWARGRU ONE - CDR Erskine & CWO3 Hayden.