The information contained in this course syllabus is correct at the time of publication, but may be subject to change as part of the Department’s policy of continuous improvement and development. Every effort will be made to notify you of any such changes.
**Introduction, Aims and Overview**

An understanding of the history and politics of the Cold War is critical to the study of contemporary international relations and strategic security issues. This course examines the recent history of relations between states after the Second World War and the development of the international system from 1945 to 1991. During this course, students will develop an understanding about the origins, evolution and ending of the Cold War and the key historiographical and theoretical debates surrounding these events.

The course is organized in a broadly chronological order, but the focus is thematic. It examines the relations between the superpowers, including the international and domestic factors that shaped their foreign policies. However, it also investigates the manifestations and impacts of the Cold War in different world regions, and the complex interactions between processes of decolonization, neo-imperialism, globalization and integration in these different contexts. In the process, students will gain a critical grounding in some of the key processes that shaped the contemporary global order.

**Course Structure**

This course is meant to be a discussion and will be run in seminar format. There will be some ‘mini-lectures’ at times to set the stage, but the onus is on the student to help create a stimulating and exciting class. There are six sessions of film viewing, these are a series component of the course and serve to illustrate to you how contemporary culture captured and viewed the Cold War. These films are just as critical to your understanding of the Cold War as all of the required readings.

**TEXTS**

I have attempted to provide as many articles as possible for reading many of which are available through the library, nonetheless a select core texts must be purchased. A wider array of books that are referred to in the syllabus are available in the library and do not need to be purchased but they are all readily available for purchase through the college bookshop or online.

**Required Texts (to be purchased):**


Cold War Overviews:


For the Cold War in Detail:


Vol.1 *The Cold War: the Great Powers and their Allies*

Vol.2 *The Post-Imperial Age: the Great Powers and the Wider World*


**Wider Readings on more specific aspects of the Cold War (in library):**

Chen Jian, Mao’s China and the Cold War (University of North Carolina Press, 2008)


Lawrence Freedman, Kennedy’s Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam (Oxford University Press, 2000)


John Lewis Gaddis, We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997)


Kimie Hara, Cold War Frontiers in the Asia-Pacific (Routledge, 2007)


Melvyn P. Leffler, For the Soul of Mankind: the United States, the Soviet Union and the Cold War (Hill & Wang, 2007)


N. Piers Ludlow, ed., European Integration and the Cold War (Routledge, 2007)

Geoffrey Roberts, Stalin’s Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953 (Yale University Press, 2006)


Avi Shlaim, War and Peace in the Middle East: A Concise History (Penguin, 1995)


Odd Arne Westad, Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times (Cambridge University Press, 2005)

Odd Arne Westad, ed., Brothers in Arms: the Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance (Stanford University Press, 1998)

Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory* (Frank Cass, 2000)


Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Krushchev to Gorbachev* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008)

You should also read and understand before you write your essays:


**Plagiarism** – plagiarism is copying someone else’s work and portraying it as your own without properly referencing it (i.e. not citing it). Plagiarism can be done purposefully or accidentally – either way it is still plagiarism. Plagiarism will be dealt with according to University Regulations. This is a severe offense – not to be taken lightly.

**Assessment (due in class)**
- Film Review 15% - (1,500 words) DUE: December 8
- Minor Essay 20% - (2500-3000 words) DUE: October 20
- Major Essay 50% - (5,500-6,500 words) DUE: November 29
- Participation 15% - seminar discussion and analysis exercises.

**There is no exam for this course.**

All essays must be collected from Dr. Williams’ office during office hours or by appointment so that you can receive feedback.

ESSAYS: This paper should be footnoted and contain a comprehensive bibliography. Papers that are not formatted properly will have marks deducted. The bibliography is NOT optional.

PARTICIPATION: Each week you will be required to write a one to two page paper on the discussion question. These are mini-essays that will help improve your writing. This document should be typed. In class you will exchange papers with classmates who will review them, the papers will then be used as the basis for group discussion.

This weekly essays are not optional. I will not accept late essays. I do not accept essays via email. Essays are collected at the end of class and they must be stapled together. You must also have your name in the upper right hand corner.

Although the essays are mainly formative assessment but if you are not submitting them weekly, points will be deducted from your participation mark.

The written and oral assessment in this course is based on your ability to apply theories and cases to advance an argument in a cogent, logical manner befitting a superior university education. Simply regurgitating facts onto the paper does not satisfy this requirement. You are expected to
develop your own argument to support it with theories and evidence, was well as to critique others for their shortcomings. The best examples of this type of writing can be found in a variety of academic journals such as International Affairs, International Security, International Organization, or International Studies Quarterly.

Lecture Topics and Seminar Subjects

Sept 6
Introductory Class

Sept 8
The End of World War II and the Making of the Post-War Order

1. Compare and contrast Kennan’s analysis of the sources of Soviet conduct with Novikov’s analysis of the sources of American conduct. How do they help us to understand the deterioration of Soviet-American relations in the aftermath of World War II?

Required reading


Telegram from N. Novikov, Soviet Ambassador to the US, to the Soviet Leadership, 27 September 1946, translation of transcript in Cold War International History Project Virtual Archive
[Document link:


Further reading

Sept 13
The Origins of the Cold War: The Blame Game

1. Which level of analysis best explains the origins of the Cold War?

2. Did the Cold War superpower conflict originate in ideological or geopolitical competition?

Required reading


Ilya Gaiduk, ‘Stalin: Three Approaches to One Phenomenon’, *Diplomatic History* 23(1), Winter 1999, pp. 115-125

Nigel Gould-Davies, ‘Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War’, *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1(1), Winter 1999, pp. 90-109


Further reading


Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: the United States, the Soviet Union and the Cold War* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007), Chapter 1

Sept 15
U.S. Cold War Strategy I: ‘Containment’

1. How does Gaddis conceive of American Cold War strategy?

2. What is Gaddis’ independent variable?

3. Identify two problems with Strategies of Containment.

Required reading


Further reading

David Campbell, Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998)

Sept 20
U.S. Cold War Strategy II: ‘Imperium’

1. Assess Ikenberry’s argument about the constitutional bargain at the heart of U.S. post-war strategy in Europe. To what extent did the U.S. behave unusually as a victorious power?

2. ‘If the United States behaved imperialistically during the Cold War, it was at least a reluctant, liberal imperialism.’ Discuss.

Required reading

Andrew Bacevich, American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), Chapter 1


Further reading

Robert Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy (Princeton University Press, 1984), Chapter 8


Emily Rosenberg, Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945 (New York: Hill & Wang, 1982)

Sept 22
Soviet Cold War Strategy: Ideology and Realpolitik

1. To what extent did Soviet strategy in the early Cold War period result from the perceived threat posed by the United States?

2. Compare and contrast the Soviet exercise of power in Eastern Europe with that of the U.S. in Western Europe.

Required reading


Vojtech Mastny, The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), Chapter 1, Conclusion

William C. Wohlforth, The Elusive Balance: Power and Perceptions during the Cold War (Cornell University Press, 1993), Chapters 4, 5

Further reading

Odd Arne Westad, Sven Holtsmark and Iver B. Neumann, eds., The Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, 1945-89 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), especially Chapters by Hausleitner, Roberts, and Wettig

Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996)
Sept 27
‘Eyeball to Eyeball’: The Cuban Missile Crisis

1. Why was so much at stake in Cuba in 1962?

2. What does Allison want to explain about the Cuban Missile Crisis? How successful do you think his explanation is?

Required reading

Graham Allison, ‘Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis’, *American Political Science Review* 63(3), September 1969, pp. 689-718


Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: the United States, the Soviet Union and the Cold War* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007), Chapter 3, ‘Retreat from Armageddon’

Mark J. White, ‘Revisiting the Cuban Missile Crisis’, *Diplomatic History* 23(3), Summer 1999, pp. 565-570

Further reading


Stephen Krasner, ‘Are Bureaucracies Important? Or Allison Wonderland’, *Foreign Policy* 7, 1972, pp. 159-79

Ernest May and Philip Zelikow, eds., *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997)

Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Krushchev to Gorbachev* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008), Chapter 5 (‘The Nuclear education of Krushchev’)

**Sept 29**

**Due BEFORE we start the film – your two-page essay on:**

Advocates of deterrence argue that ‘the bomb’ and nuclear proliferation made the world more safe and led to an avoidance of direct conflict between the superpowers – do you believe that the bomb made the world more or less safe?

**The Cold War in Film**

*Dr. Strangelove (Or How I Learned to Love the Bomb)* – Part One

**Oct 4**

**The Cold War in Film**

*Dr. Strangelove (Or How I Learned to Love the Bomb)* – Part Two

What does the relationship between Dr. Strangelove, President Muffley and Majo T. J. Kong tell us about the nuclear politics of the 1960s?

**Oct 6**

‘**Brothers in Arms**’? The Sino-Soviet Relationship

1. How did ideology matter in the Sino-Soviet split?

2. What role did the U.S. play in the Sino-Soviet relationship between 1949 and 1969?

**Required reading**

Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), pp. 6-10; Chapter 3


- Introduction, Westad
- Chapter 4, Goncharenko, ‘Sino-Soviet Military Cooperation’
- Chapter 5, Westad, ‘The Sino-Soviet Alliance and the United States’
- Chapter 6, Zhang, ‘Sino-Soviet Economic Cooperation’

**Further reading**

Rosemary Foot, *The Practice of Power: US Relations with China since 1949* (Oxford University Press, 1995), Chapter 5 (‘Balancing against threats: the rise and fall of the Sino-Soviet alliance’)


*For primary documents on Sino-Soviet relations, see the Cold War International History Project Bulletin no. 6-7, 12, 16, among others, available at: [http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=topics.publications&group_id=11900](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=topics.publications&group_id=11900)

**Oct 11**

**Decolonization and Cold War Conflicts**

1. What were the key factors that determined the degree and type of superpower intervention in post-colonial conflicts during the Cold War?

2. Was non-alignment a viable option for post-colonial states during the Cold War?

**Required reading**


- Chapter 3: The Revolutionaries: Anticolonial Politics and Transformations
- Chapter 4: Creating the Third World: The United States Confronts Revolution
- Chapter 2: The Empire of Justice: Soviet Ideology and Foreign Interventions
- Chapter 8: The Islamist Defiance: Iran and Afghanistan


**Further reading**


**Oct 13**

**The Lessons of Vietnam**

1. “In order to do good, you may have to engage in evil.” Could this be the lesson of Vietnam for American policy-makers?

2. ‘The Vietnam War was a classic example of small, peripheral states successfully exploiting great power conflict for their own ends during the Cold War.’ Discuss.

**Required reading**


Robert McNamara et al, *Argument without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy* (New York: Public Affairs, 1999), Chapter 8

**Further reading**


Peter Lowe, ed., *The Vietnam War* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), Chapters 2, 3, 6, 7

Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, 7 August 1964: [http://www.luminet.net/~tgort/tonkin.htm](http://www.luminet.net/~tgort/tonkin.htm)

**Oct 18**  
*Due BEFORE we start the film – your two-page essay on:*  
The Vietnam War was sold to the American public as a necessary conflict to stop innocent people from being forced into communism and to defend democracy? In your opinion, was this an accurate portrayal of the rationale for the war?

**Cold War in Film**  
Apolcalypse Now - Part One

**Oct 20**  
*Cold War in Film*  
Apolcalypse Now – Part Two

How is Apocalpyse Now indicative of the ‘heart of immense darkness’ of humankind? What does Apocalpyse now reveal to us about US involvement in Vietnam?

**Oct 25**  
*Superpower Détente and East-West Détente*

1. Did the two superpowers and their allies pursue détente for the same reasons?

2. What were the most substantial achievements of détente?

**Required reading**


Chapter 1: Differing Interpretations of Détente  
Chapter 3: Superpower Interests in Détente  
Chapter 4: The Substance of Détente  
Chapter 7: American Domestic Politics and Détente  
Chapter 8: Soviet Domestic Politics and Détente  
Chapter 9: Arms Control, the Strategic Balance, and the Demise of Détente


**Further reading**

William Burr, ed., *The Kissinger Transcripts: The Top Secret Talks with Beijing and Moscow* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), especially Chapters 5 and 7


Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Krushchev to Gorbachev* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008), Chapters 7 & 8

Oct 27

The U.S.-China Rapprochement and the U.S.-USSR Détente

1. How was the Sino-American rapprochement related to the Soviet-American détente in concept and practice?

2. Why did Mao opt for rapprochement with the U.S.?

Required reading


Further reading


Nov 1

**The United Nations and the Cold War**

1. ‘A tool of superpower influence stymied by superpower conflict.’ How accurate is this characterization of the UN during the Cold War?

2. To what extent did UNCTAD demonstrate the limits of international cooperation in the UN?

**Required reading**


**Further reading**


**Nov 3**

**International Financial Institutions and the Cold War**

1. “The Bretton Woods monetary system collapsed in the 1970s because the United States decided that it no longer functioned to American advantage.” Is this an accurate explanation for why the international monetary institutions changed during the Cold War?

2. To what extent did the Cold War exacerbate the divide between the economic ‘haves’ and ‘haves-not’ in the international system?

**Required reading**


**Further reading**


Harold James, *International Monetary Cooperation since Bretton Woods* (IMF, 1996)

Robert Mortimer, *The Third World Coalition in International Politics* (Westview, 1984, 2nd edition)


November 8 – NO CLASS

**Nov 10**

**The Middle East: Decolonization and Superpower Conflict**

1. ‘The Middle East provided some of the best examples of local agents as the “tails” wagging the superpower “dogs”.’ Does this statement accurately reflect the nature of the conflicts in the Middle East during the Cold War?

2. Why was the Arab-Israeli problem so intractable during the Cold War?

**Required reading**

Richard Ned Lebow & Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War* (Princeton University Press, 1994), Part Two (‘The Crisis in the Middle East, October 1973)

Yezid Sayigh & Shlaim, Avi, eds., *The Cold War and the Middle East* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), Introduction & Conclusion, Chapters 1, 2 (Egypt) & 9 (Iran)

Peter Sluglett, ‘The Cold War in the Middle East’ in Louise Fawcett, ed., *The International Relations of the Middle East* (Oxford University Press, 2005)


Further reading


**Nov 15**

**Western Europe: Reconciliation and Integration**

1. Why was Germany so crucial to the superpower conflict?

2. To what extent was the success or failure of the European project dependent upon: (1) Germany; (2) France; (3) Britain; and (4) the United States?

Required reading

N. Piers Ludlow, ed., *European Integration and the Cold War* (London: Routledge, 2007)

Introduction: Ludlow


Chapter 3: Loth, ‘Détente and European integration in the policies of Willy Brandt and Georges Pompidou’

Chapter 6: Ellison, ‘Stabilising the West and looking to the East: Anglo-American relations, Europe, and détente, 1965 to 1967’

John W. Young, *Cold War Europe 1945-91: a Political History* (London: Arnold, 1996), Chapters 1 (‘Cold war and détente’) & 2 (‘Western European unity’)

Further reading

Nov 17

Eastern Europe: The Soviet Sphere of Influence

1. Which countries in the Eastern bloc enjoyed a greater degree of independence from Moscow than others? Why?

2. ‘The Soviet empire began to crumble after Moscow’s failure to intervene seriously in Poland in 1981.’ Discuss.

Required reading


Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Krushchev to Gorbachev* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008), Chapter 6 (‘The Soviet Home Front’)

Further reading


Joseph Rothschild, Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe since World War II (Oxford University Press, 2008, 4th edition)

Odd Arne Westad, Sven Holtsmark and Iver B. Neumann, eds., The Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, 1945-89 (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), especially Chapters by Hausleitner, Roberts, and Wettig

November 22-25 THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Nov 29

Due BEFORE we start the film – your two-page essay on:
Your impressions of life in East Germany? What would growing up in East Germany have been like based on the knowledge you’ve accumulated thus far?

The Cold War in Film
Good-Bye Lenin – Part One

Dec 1
The Cold War in Film
Good-Bye Lenin – Part Two

What does ‘Good-Bye Lenin’ tell a western audience about the DDR?

Dec 6
Debating the End of the Cold War

1. When did the Cold War end?

2. ‘The Cold War ended when Washington managed to bankrupt Moscow.’ Discuss.

3. What role did ideas and ‘new thinking’ play in ending the Cold War?

4. ‘The Cold War ended because of the collapse of ideology in Moscow; in contrast, American Cold War ideology was still going strong by 1989.’ Discuss.

Required reading
Richard K. Herrmann & Ned Lebow, eds., *Ending the Cold War: Interpretations, Causation and the Study of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), especially Chapters 1 (‘What was the Cold War? When and why did it end?’) and 8 (‘Understanding the end of the Cold War as a non-linear confluence’)


Nina Tannnenwald & William Wohlforth, eds., ‘Ideas and the end of the Cold War’, special issue of *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7(2), Spring 2005, especially articles by English and Bennett


**Further reading**


For primary documents related to the end of the Cold War, see CIWHP virtual archive collection: [http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=va2.browse&sort=Collection&item=End%20of%20the%20Cold%20War](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=va2.browse&sort=Collection&item=End%20of%20the%20Cold%20War)