

Course Syllabus: Seminar in the History of the Cold War

History 5310:001 American Foreign Policy and the Cold War

Spring 2015/Dr. Mark Saad Saka/Sul Ross State University

Course Objectives:

This course is designed as a Graduate level web seminar in the History of the Cold War that existed between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China from the years 1945-1991. At the end of this course, the student should be familiar with the major contours, issues, events, people, and ideas that created the Cold War, maintained it for four decades, and the historical forces which brought it to an end.

Course Required Readings:

There are five books required for this course.

Gaddis, John Lewis. The Cold War: A New History. Penguin Press, ISBN # 978-0-14-303827-6, 2005.

Glover, Jonathan. Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century, Yale University Press, ISBN # 0-300-08715-2. 1999.

Jian, Chen. Mao's China & the Cold War, University of North Carolina Press, ISBN # 978-0-8078-4932-3. 2001.

Priestland, David. The Red Flag: A History of Communism, Grover Press, ISBN # 978-0-8021-1924-7, 2009.

Westad, Odd Arne. The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making Of Our Times, Cambridge University Press, ISBN # 978-0-521-70314-7, 2007.

Course Requirements:

The Following Requirements must be met for the successful completion of this course.

1. This course is based upon weekly meetings of three hours. Each class meeting will consist of a lecture and open discussion. The discussions and lecture will be based on weekly readings as listed in the course outline. You are expected to read the weekly assignments and be able to discuss the readings. Your grade will in part be based on your classroom participation. Your classroom participation will count as 10% of your final grade.
2. There will be four exams in this course. The exams will be in the form of take home essays. The exams will be due on the date assigned in the course outline. Each exam will count as 15% of you final grade.

3. At the end of the course you will present a paper on a topic of your choice covering the history of the Cold War. The paper must be from 10 to fifteen pages. I must approve the topic before you write it. The final paper will consist of 30% of your final grade.

Primary Learning Objectives

The graduating student in history will be able to:

1. The student will be able to develop an informed, critical, and articulate approach to the study of history.
2. The student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of historical events, movements, major turning points and personalities of the past.
3. The student will be able to demonstrate an ability to identify and relate the role that historical interpretation plays in the assessments of the past.
4. The student will be able to write effectively, logically, and persuasively about topics in history.

The Primary Learning Objectives (PLO) shall be measured by the administration of five exams and extensive classroom discussion. Each will consist of four essays and will measure PLO objectives one through four.

The Americans with Disabilities Act:

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine Texas 79832. The telephone number is 432-837-8203.

Course Outline

Questions to think about when you prepare your book review.

1. John Gaddis "The Cold War"

John Gaddis is one of the premier scholars of American History in regards to the Cold War. How does Gaddis interpret the dynamics of the Cold War-how politics and ideology interacted with one another, how societal changes were as important as changes in government? How did leaders at the top of the political hierarchy shape the outcome of the war and how did people at the grassroots level shape the outcome of the Cold War? Also, how did the peripheral powers (Yugoslavia, Israel, Cuba, France, etc.) also shape the Cold War?

2. Jonathan Glover “Humanity”

This is one of the most important books that I have read. How and why was the twentieth Century drenched in blood and atrocities that shake our understanding of human morality? Why? What was the psychology and history of the horrors of the Twentieth Century? Have we learned?

3. David Priestland “The Red Flag”

What was the idea of Communism? How did it develop? Why did it appeal to many of the world’s people? What were its strengths? What were its weaknesses? Why did it rise and why did it fall?

4. Chen Jian “Maos’China”

What was the crucial role that China played in shaping the orientation of the Cold War and the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. Why has China been the unacknowledged pivot of the Cold War?

5. Odd Westland “The Global Cold War”

How did the Cold War shape the foundations for much of the conflicts we see in the world today? Was the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union simply a continuation of the Colonial Empires of France, Great Britain, the Dutch, and Portugal or was it something historically different? How did the globalization of the Cold War shape Asia, the Middle East, and Africa?

Course Outline

Aug. 25-introduction to course/books/syllabus; - introduction to capitalism and Marxism (Priestland: Chapter One)

Sept. 01 World War One and the Bolshevik Revolution (Priestland: Chapter Two)

Sept. 08 The Interwar Years 1922-1940 (Priestland: Chapters Three and Four)

Sept. 15 The Second World War and its Immediate Aftermath: 1940-1949 (Priestland: Chapter five and Gaddis: Chapter One) (Exam # 1 Due)

Sept. 22 The Cold War: 1945-1960 (Gaddis Chapter Two and Three; Priestland Chapters Seven and Eight)

Sept. 29- - The Chinese Revolution and Asian Communism (Priestland: Chapter Six and Jian Chapters one through seven)

Oct. 06 The Korean War (Priestland: Chapter Six and Jian Chapters One through Six)

Oct. 13 The Cold War in the “Third World” 1945-1960 (Westad Chapters One through Four) **(Exam # 2 Due)**

Oct. 20- The Cuban Revolution and the Cuban Missile Crisis (Westad Chapter Five; Priestland Chapter Nine)

Oct. 27- The Vietnam War (Gaddis Chapter Four; Westad Chapter Five; Jian chapter 8)

Nov. 03-The Cold War in the Age of Salt/Détente/and Helsinki; 1960-1980 (Gaddis Chapter five; Priestland Chapter 10 and Eleven) **(Exam # 3 Due)**

Nov. 10- R=The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet-American Alliances; 1960-1992 (Jian chapter nine and ten)

Nov. 17-The Cold War in the Middle East and Africa; 1960-1989 (Priestland Chapter 11; Westad Chapters Six through Eight)

Nov. 24-The 1980s and the End of the Cold War (Gaddis: Chapters Six and Seven; Priestland: Chapter twelve; Westad: Chapters Nine and Ten)

Dec. 01-So what have we learned? Read Jonathan Glover’s Humanity

Dec. 08 **(Exam # 4 due)**