

Course Syllabus: History 3312: W01/MC1: American Foreign Policy and the Cold War

Fall 2019/Sul Ross State University/Dr. Mark Saad Saka

Course Objectives:

The objective of this course is to examine the history of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union/Communist China during the period of time 1917 (The Bolshevik Revolution) through 1991 (the formal collapse of the Soviet Union). The Cold War shaped much of the twentieth-century and its reverberations continues today with U.S.-Russian tensions; U.S.-Chinese tensions; U.S.-North Korean tensions; as well as fundamental questions as to America's continuing relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), former Eastern-European-bloc nations, U.S.-Latin America; etc. The sheer potential of a global thermonuclear destruction of civilization and human societies in a potential nuclear conflict during the Cold War testifies to the importance of the Cold War in twentieth and twenty-first century history. The sheer human and economic costs of the Cold War has still yet to be calculated. It is for these and many more reasons that any student of modern American or world history must have a firm grasp as to the origins, development, course, and eventual decline and ending of the Cold War.

Course Requirements:

There are a number of requirements for the successful completion of this course.

1. Obtain the required books, this can be done through libraries, online sellers, or local friendly bookstores-I do not use the Sul Ross bookstore.
2. On the first day of class—or before—send me an email through the Sul Ross email server and let me know that you have read the syllabus and that you understand the requirements for the course and have obtained the books or are in the process of obtaining the books. You will also agree to maintain semi-regular contact with me, when I do not hear for a student in a number of weeks I cannot be expected to figure out what the problem is, it is up to you to maintain contact with me, I can meet you half-way.
3. You are required to read the books, and write weekly summaries of the readings and submit those reviews through Blackboard. The reviews should be five pages per assignment, and provide a summary of the readings as well as an analysis of why it is important to the history of the Cold War and American history.
4. Each assignment is worth 100 points; therefore, your total grades for the written weekly assignments is potentially 1,400 points. For each assignment; 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 0-59=F.
5. At the end of the course, you will be required to write a twelve to fifteen page research paper on a topic of the Cold war (a topic that I must approve). The paper must be formatted according to the MLA handbook, properly cited (I prefer footnotes but endnotes are acceptable) and a proper bibliography. Potential topics could include a wide range of subjects—the origins of the Cold War, the Cuban Revolution, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the nuclear arms race, the space race, American-Sino (Chinese) relations; the causes of the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of Communism in China under Deng Xia Peng; the Cold war in Latin America, the Central American Revolutions of the 1980s, the Chilean coup of 1973, the Cold war in the Middle East, the coup in Iran in 1953, the coup in Iraq in 1963, etc.

The total number of points for the paper will be 600 points. 540-600=A; 480-539=B; 420-479=C; 360-419=D; 0-359=F.

At the end of the course, you will have a potential of 2000 points; 1,800-2000=A; 1,600-1799=B; 1,400-1,599=C; 1,200-1,399=D; 0-1,999=F.

Course Readings:

Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia and the Cold War, 1945-2006*. McGraw-Hill Press, ISBN 978-0-07-353466-4

Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War*, Cambridge University Press, ISBN # 978-0-521-70314-7

Course Outline: The following dates are assigned for your assign

Aug. 26-first day of class-email me to confirm that you have read and understand the syllabus and have obtained the books or are in the serious process of obtaining the books.

Aug. 30 (Westad chapters one and two)

Sept. 06 (Lafeber chapters one and two)

Sept. 13 (Lafeber chapters three and four)

Sept. 20 (Lafeber chapters five and six)

Sept. 27 (Westad chapters three and four)

Oct. 04 (Lafeber chapters seven and eight)

Oct. 11 (Lafeber chapter nine)

Oct. 18 (Westad chapter five and Lafeber chapter 10)

Oct. 25 (Lafeber chapters eleven)

Nov. 01 (Westad chapters six and seven)

Nov. 08 (Lafeber chapters eleven)

Nov. 15 (Lafeber chapters twelve and Westad chapters eight and nine) (also—note*this is the last date to drop the course with a grade of a W—also note* your research paper topic needs to be approved by me by this time).

Nov. 22 (Westad chapter ten and Lafeber chapter 13)

Nov. 26 (Lafeber chapters fourteen and fifteen and Westad conclusion)

Dec. 10-final paper due. 10:00 p.m.

Distance Education Statement

Distance Education Resources • Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Communicating with the Professor: • The best way to contact me is through email at dwatson@sulross.edu. I will try to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please resend your email or call my office at 432.837-8742.