

# America and the Cold War

Spring 2022 – Government 312L (U# 37860)  
T/Th 11-12:30 – Mezes Hall 1.306

Instructor: Prof. Z. D. Barany ||| Office: Batts 3.156 ||| Office hours: T/Th: 1:30-3

Teaching Assistants:

Emails:

The Cold War lasted for more than four decades spanning most of the second half of the Twentieth Century and had a major impact on the lives of virtually everyone in that period, including the generations of your parents and grandparents. What were the origins of the Cold War? Who were its main protagonists? What were the most important events and how did they impact upon the final outcome? The main protagonists of the Cold War were the U.S. on the one hand and the Soviet Union along with its East European allies: this course will focus on them.

The objective of this course is to familiarize beginning undergraduate students with the main actors, events, and developments and to stimulate an appreciation of the complexities and nuances of international politics of this important era that continues to have a major impact on contemporary world politics. At the end of the semester you will be able to intelligently discuss the political history of U.S.-Soviet relations and the Cold War in all major world regions. We will begin with a thorough examination of the Cold War's origins and then follow events, mostly through the eyes of American presidents from Franklin Delano Roosevelt to George Bush, Sr. The disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 is the course's end-point.

There is only one book to read but the lectures will not follow the book. There are three non-cumulative midterm exams. The midterm exams will be based on the book, the lectures, the PowerPoint Presentations, and the documentaries we will show. In addition, you will review a book that was cleared with one of the TAs by March 24 and due on April 21. It should be between two or three double-spaced pages and must be a *critical* assessment of the volume not a summary – if you're unsure of what to do, ask the TAs. (Please consider seriously the paragraph on plagiarism below – we will refer all suspected cases to the Dean of Students.)

Grading:

Midterm 1:	25
Midterm 2:	30
Midterm 3:	35
Book review:	10

## Assigned book:

Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (Basic Books, 2019) ISBN-978-1541674097

## Rules

1. I will treat you as adults and I want you to treat this class as adults. I will be in class on time and so should you be. If you do not think you can make it at 11AM or stay until 12:15PM, ***please do not*** register for this class. Just take another class. Also, please do not come in late or leave early: it distracts your fellow students and me.
2. Speaking of treating you as adults: we will not call roll, it is entirely up to you if you choose to attend. The “Reading Schedule” is only a suggestion: if you are comfortable reading the reading assignments the night before an exam, that is your decision. There will be no quizzes to gauge whether you had done the reading for the day. All PowerPoint Presentations will be available on canvas – though they may not cover the entire lecture.
3. All electronic devices – except your laptop, if you need to use one (see about that under “Recommendation”) – must be shut off throughout the entire class period. If this is a deal-breaker, I understand – take another class.
4. There will be **no** extensions for the due date of the book review.

## Recommendation

I would urge you ***not to*** use a laptop in the classroom. If you are interested in why you are actually going to learn more and have a better time doing it this way, read this brief *New York Times* article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html>

## Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

## Academic Integrity

We take plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty very seriously and all assignment will be thoroughly checked with the most recent software. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services Web site:  
<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

Refer to the Dean of Students Student Judicial Services website or call 471-2841 for the official university policies and procedures on scholastic dishonesty. What constitutes plagiarism? See

[http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint\\_plagiarism.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_plagiarism.php) or check out the UT Libraries' plagiarism module:

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>

## Topics and Readings:

### Week 1

- |               |                                      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. January 18 | Introduction to the Course           |
| 2. January 20 | Origins: The Adversary<br>Read: 1-18 |

### Week 2

- |               |                                                                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3. January 25 | Origins: The USSR the U.S. & World War II<br>Read: 19-42                       |
| 4. January 27 | The Onset of the Cold War and the Falling of the “Iron Curtain”<br>Read: 43-70 |

### Week 3

- |               |                                                 |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 5. February 1 | George F. Kennan and Containment<br>Read: 71-98 |
| 6. February 3 | View: “The Marshall Plan”                       |

#### Week 4

7. February 8      Alternatives to Containment: Paul Nitze and NSC-68  
Read: 99-128
8. February 10      Eisenhower and the “New Look”  
Read: 129-158

#### Week 5

9. February 15      Rebellions in Eastern Europe and the Suez Crisis  
Read: 159-182
10. February 17      Two Germanys and the Berlin Crisis  
Read: 183-208

#### Week 6

11. February 22      View: “Vietnam”
12. February 24      **First Midterm**

#### Week 7

13. March 1      JFK, LBJ, and “Flexible Response”  
Read: 209-232
14. March 3      The Cuban Missile Crisis  
Read: 232-260

#### Week 8

15. March 8      The Prague Spring and the Upheavals of 1968  
Read: 261-286
16. March 10      No class

March 14-20: **SPRING BREAK!**

**Week 9**

17. March 22 BBC Documentary
18. March 24 Yugoslavia and the Middle East during the Cold War  
Read: 287-312

**Week 10**

17. March 29 Nixon, Ford, & Kissinger: Détente and Differentiation  
Read: 313-338
18. March 31 Jimmy Carter and the End of Detente  
Read: 339-364

**Week 11**

19. April 5 The Soviet Union under Brezhnev  
Read: 365-394
20. April 7 **Second Midterm**

**Week 12**

21. April 12 The War in Afghanistan  
Read: 395-448
22. April 14 Solidarity in Poland  
Read: 449-500

**Week 13**

25. April 19 The Cold War in Latin America  
Read: 501-526

**BOOK REVIEW DUE TODAY!**

26. April 21 Ronald Reagan's Worldview  
Read: 527-578

**Week 14**

27. April 26 The Holy Alliance  
Read: 579-616
28. April 28 Human Rights and Trade

Read: 617-631

Week 15

29. May 3      Reagan, Gorbachev, and the End of the Cold War  
Read: review/reread

30. May 5      **(In-Class) Third Midterm Examination**