



**History 5393—EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC HISTORY—THE COLD WAR FROM A
SOVIET PERSPECTIVE**

Spring Semester 2018– 3 Units Credit

Section 01--CID 21240: Online Graduate Seminar

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This web seminar will study one of the most complex and convoluted problems in contemporary world history--The Cold War. The Cold War emerged as a problem in World history in the 1940's following the defeat of the Axis in the Second World War. By the late 1940's, two rival super powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, and their alliances began a prolonged conflict, which lasted nearly fifty years. Unlike previous conflicts, there were no direct military confrontations between the super powers. Instead it was a prolonged struggle that pitted the ideologies, economies, societies and cultures of the two blocs in contest over which political/economic system would prevail--the single party socialist system of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc or the pluralistic capitalist (mixed) system of the United States and Western bloc. The development of nuclear weapons and the arms race made direct confrontation virtually unthinkable. Instead, the conflict was fought with diplomacy, propaganda, espionage, and irregular warfare in the former colonial world. There were, however, diplomatic crises that came close to world war (Berlin blockade crisis of 1948-1949, the Cuban Missile Crises of 1962, etc.), as well as bloody indirect conflicts in Asia (Korea, Vietnam Afghanistan), Africa (Angola, Ethiopia, and Somalia) and the Americas (Nicaragua, San Salvador). The Cold War directly or indirectly affected all of humankind until its end with the breakup of the Soviet Union and its bloc in the early 1990's. Its aftereffects are still being gauged and assessed. This course will investigate the Cold War from a different perspective than most diplomatic history seminars and American works on the Cold war—that is, from the perspective of the Soviet Union. Before making our foray into this look at Soviet point of view, we will read an overview of the cold war by one of the noted American scholars in the field. We will then assess the Soviets and the Cold War through two western studies written by scholars of Russian and East European backgrounds, as well as through the memoirs of one of two Soviet diplomats. These are Andrei Gromyko, who served successively as Soviet ambassador to the U.S., the U.N. and the U.K. between from 1943 to 1953, then as deputy foreign minister from 1953 to 1957, and finally foreign minister from 1957 to 1985. The second is Anatoly Dobrynin, who served as Soviet ambassador to the U.S. from 1962 to 1986. Most of the discussion questions will come from the books, and the main writing assignments will come from reviews of these books.

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

- 1) The seminar will acquaint students with the origins and course of the Cold War from Soviet, Russian

and East European perspectives.

2) It will also sharpen the students' skills in: (a) online discourse and discussion; (b) historical interpretation and historiography; (d) basic secondary source research; and (e) writing.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURE:

1) The class schedule will consist of one session or assignment about every week. The format of each session will consist of: (a) reading of general book-length studies for review; (b) reading of web secondary and primary web sources on specific problems and issues relating to assignments' discussion topics.

2) Lists of readings, discussion questions, and other supplementary materials will be available to students on BLACKBOARD. Do not attempt to read all of the web readings. Peruse through them and read enough to answer the discussion forums on Blackboard.

3) Discussion forums are open for seven-day periods. Book reviews are due about every three to four weeks. Try to keep up as best as possible. However, I do understand that you can fall behind and will be understanding as long as you keep me posted as to when you can get assignments in. Email me or use the course issues discussion board to do this. I am tolerant of students that need bit more time to complete the course. All I ask of you is that you keep me apprised of your progress. You should be able to complete the course work and receive a final grade by the end of fall semester.

STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

1) **Reading assignments:** Students will read text assignments and enough web assignments to answer discussion questions effectively. Readings from the text and supplementary sources are mostly available the web. Each student needs to read general assignments for book reviews and specific assignments of primary and secondary sources on particular discussion topics. Students should discuss assigned text readings in the discussion forums.

2) **Discussion Forums:** Students will participate in a discussion forum every week. In each discussion forum, the instructor will present two or more questions based upon the web and text readings. Within the first couple of days, students are to address these questions in the discussion forum. Students should respond to the questions in one paragraph per question. They should briefly substantiate their answers and opinions with material culled from the web and text readings. In the subsequent couple of days, the instructor will comment on the response in the forum. In addition, students will react to one another's responses to the questions. They can also make comments and pose questions regarding other issues brought up in the forum. Each student's participation is evaluated in the following manner. A student can earn up to twenty points for their answers to the week's questions and ten points for their other comments, questions, and reactions in the forum. (50 points per week for 12 weeks; about 600 points total for the semester). **As this the coursework can be asynchronous, do not worry about the lateness of your responses, as long as you participate.**

3) **Four book reviews (1500 to 2500 words each).** Each student will write one book review on each of the four books assigned for this course. They are called upon to analyze the author's views as to the development of Balkan resistance movements and guerrilla armies, as well as their impact on wartime and post-war southeastern Europe. Each essay will be worth 100 points for a total of 400 points.

5) **Course evaluation and grades.** Evaluation of student performance will be based upon the following criteria:

- Regular Participation in all forums and promptness in turning in assignments. (100 points or 10 percent of the course grade).
- Performance in Discussion Forums (600 points or 60 percent of the course grade).
- Four Book reviews (400 points or 30 percent of the course grade).

7) **Grade scale:** 900-1000=A; 800-899=B; 700-799=C; 600-699=D; 0-599=F.

REQUIRED READINGS FOR REVIEW:

1. [John Lewis Gaddis, *WE NOW KNOW: RETHINKING COLD WAR HISTORY*. Oxford University Press, 1997, ISBN-0198-78071-0. \(Gaddis\).](#)
2. [Vojtech Mastny, *THE COLD WAR AND SOVIET INSECURITY: THE STALIN YEARS*. Oxford University Press, 1996. ISBN: 0195-12659-9. \(Mastny\).](#)

3. [Vladislav Zubok, *A FAILED EMPIRE: THE SOVIET UNION IN THE COLD WAR FROM STALIN TO GOBACHEV*. University of North Carolina Press, 2009. ISBN: 0807-85958-3.](#) (Zubok)
 4. [Andrei Gromyko, *MEMOIRS*. Doubleday, 1989. ISBN 0-385-41288-6.](#) (Gromyko)
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 5. [Anatoly Dobrynin, *IN CONFIDENCE: MOSCOW'S AMBASSADOR TO AMERICA'S SIX COLD WAR PRESIDENTS* \(New York, 1995\). ISBN 0-8129-2894-6.](#) (Dobrynin)
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COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1: The Cold War from an American Perspective: A Geopolitical Assessment of the Origins of the Cold War. Gaddis, pp. 1-84.

Week 2): The Cold War from an American Perspective: The Nuclear Option, Europe and the World Rivalry. Gaddis, pp. 85-188.

Week 3): The Cold War from an American Perspective: Economic and Insurgent Warfare, Brinkmanship, and the End of the Cold War. Gaddis, pp. 189-295.

Week 4: The Early Cold War from a Czech Perspective: The Formation of the Eastern Bloc, 1945-1949. Mastny, pp. 3-79.

Week 5: The Early Cold War from a Czech Perspective: Point and Counterpoint in Europe and Asia, 1949-1952. Mastny, pp. 80-133.

Week 6: The Early Cold War from a Czech Perspective: The End of the Stalin Years. Mastny, pp. 134-198.

Week 7: The Cold War from a Russian Perspective: The Stalin Years, 1945-1953. Zubok, pp. ix-93.

Week 8: The Cold War from a Russian Perspective: The Interregnum and Khrushchev Years, 1953-1964. Zubok, pp. 94-191.

Week 9: The Cold War from a Russian Perspective: The Brezhnev Years, 1964-1980. Zubok, pp. 192-272.

Week 10: The Cold War from a Russian Perspective: Transition and the End of the Cold War, 1980-1991. Zubok, pp. 272-344.

Week 11: The Cold War from a Soviet Diplomatic Perspective: Early Career and the early years as Ambassador to the United States (1945-1968). Dobrynin, pp. 1-195. .

Week 12: The Cold War from a Soviet Diplomatic Perspective: The last Nixon and Ford Years, 1973-1980. Dobrynin, pp. 196-378 .

Week 13: The Cold War from a Soviet Diplomatic Perspective: Ambassador During the Carter and Early Reagan Years, 1980-1983. Dobrynin, pp. 379- 522.

Week 14: The Cold War from a Soviet Diplomatic Perspective: End of the Ambassadorship and the Cold War, 1983-1991. Dobrynin, pp. 523-662.

Week 15: Overview of the Readings and Finishing Up.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS SHOULD BE TURNED IN BY SUNDAY, MAY 10.

DUE DATES FOR ASSIGNMENTS:

02/11---Book reviews for Gaddis Due.

03/04---Book reviews for Mastny Due.

04/08---Book reviews for Zubok Due.

05/06---Book reviews for Dobrynin Due.

05/10---Final Date to finish all assignments.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS REQUIRED BY THE UNIVERSITY. STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPLY WITH THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN ATTENDING THIS CLASS. A DETAILED LIST OF THESE CAN BE FOUND AT THE FOLLWING LINK:

<http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>