For nearly half a century, the Cold War dominated world history and reshaped American and Soviet societies. Responding to perceived existential threats, sensing unprecedented opportunities, US(SR) constructed a world order designed to ensure their security while creating ultimate insecurity. The two superpowers imposed a form of order on the rest of the world. Once the initial front lines of the Cold War were relatively stabilized, proxy wars on the periphery consumed not only the societies in which they were fought but produced profound dislocations in the patrons' social fabrics. The superpowers' clients chafed at the limits imposed by Moscow and Washington but often proved to be adept at manipulating their patrons. Movements for cultural and political alternatives struggled – often against seemingly insuperable odds – to fashion "third ways" outside the Cold War's iron binary, whether in areas dominated by the superpowers' military hegemony, newly independent nations, or within Soviet and American societies.

To prosecute so transcendent a conflict as the Cold War, both the Soviet Union and the United States reordered their political, economic, and cultural priorities, with sometimes paradoxical results, as they tested the boundaries of freedom played out for political advantage globally. Locked in mutual embrace, threatened by catastrophe, but gradually accommodating to a regime of order and predictability, US(SR) became not only the Cold War's perpetrators but its prisoners. When the Cold War ended not in the nuclear Armageddon so many had feared but subsided peacefully, a new era of peace and freedom
seemed to beckon – but one soon overshadowed by a host of conflicts, some submerged by Cold War priorities but also structured by the monumental conflict’s legacy.

This colloquium focuses on three areas: the origins and early phase of the Cold War (from Yalta to the Yalu), the “cultural Cold War” in which the two sides used cultural diplomacy in the quest for political advantage, and the end of the Cold War (debates over when and why it happened).

Four visitors will share their expertise about various phases of the Cold War: S. Frederick Starr, a leading figure in Russian/Soviet studies, an active participant in Cold War diplomacy, and former president of Oberlin College; Simo Mikkonen, professor of history at University of Jyväskyla in Finland, and an authority on the cultural Cold War; Rebecca Mitchell, visiting assistant professor of history at Oberlin College, and an authority on Russian music in its cultural context; and Tim Scholl, professor of Russian at Oberlin College, who spearheaded the effort to recover the memory of the Oberlin College’s ten-week tour of the Soviet Union in 1964 – itself a major demarche in Cold War cultural diplomacy.

Course Goals

This course aims has three principal aims: to make you more knowledgeable about the Cold War events and processes; to make you more sophisticated and analytical thinkers, to make you clear, effective, and persuasive presenters.

I. Content:

By the end of the semester, students should be familiar with:

- the political, social, economic, and cultural events, processes, and phenomena that defined the Cold War.
- the chronology of the Cold War (while being ready to complicate it).
- basic theories, generalizations, and debates on the character and evolution of the Cold War.
- the theories on the end of the Cold War.

II. Cognitive skills:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- identify and relay an argument of a specific readings concisely and precisely
- think critically about an author’s approach and execution of a historical problem.
- think historically about events, processes, and significant individuals.
- negotiate several (disparate) perspectives to produce a distinct point of view (i.e., eschew empty relativism)

III. Communication skills:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- present their point of view concisely and persuasively while staying on topic.
- participate in a group discussion in a productive and collaborative manner.
Assignments

There will be two types of written assignments: 8 short analytical response papers and 3 synthetic essays.

Analytical Responses should be between 350-500 words in length and should meaningfully engage with the reading and convey the author's main point of view/argument and his/her supportive logic. The main objective is to convey the significance of the reading and, when appropriate, relate it to either the Cold War more broadly or to the specific subject we are examining. Rather than just a summary, the analytical responses are meant to test your ability to identify the import of the readings you are engaging with. This assignment is designed to help you become an active and engaged reader.

You can choose when to turn in the analytical responses under the following conditions:
1. You must turn in a hard-copy at the beginning of the class for the readings that are due that day.
2. You must write 4 responses before Break and 4 after Break.

Synthetic Essays should be 6 to 8 pages in length (Times New Roman 12 font with 1 inch margins all around) and should reflect on the broader issues of the Cold War. Since these essays are due after we cover each of the larger thematic subsections, the goal is to encourage you to think broadly and critically about the larger questions about the genesis, evolution, and end of the Cold War. The first essay will focus on the origins of the Cold War, the second on cultural aspects of the Cold War, and the final will be a more general retrospective assessment. This assignment is designed to help you express yourself concisely about broad historical problems and precisely synthesize a wide range of material featuring dissimilar vantage points.

Grading Distribution
- Analytical responses: 20%
- 3 Essays: 60%
- Oral Participation: 20%

Honor Code

"The word plagiarism derives from Latin roots: plagiarius, an abductor, and plagiare, to steal. The expropriation of another author's work and the presentation of it as one's own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship." [American Historical Association, Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct]. Presenting the work of others as one's own goes against everything that a liberal education is about. It is a serious affront to the other students in the course, to me as a member of the course, and to the plagiarizer him/herself. The College requires that students sign an "Honor Code" for all assignments. This pledge states: "I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment." For further information, see the student Honor Code which you can access via Blackboard>Lookup/Directories>Honor Code. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, particularly in the context of joint or collaborative projects, please see me or raise it in class.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see me or the Office of Disability Services so that such accommodations may be arranged.
# Course Schedule

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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## Part I

### Political, Psychological and Strategic Origins, 1917-1960

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Reading/Assignment</th>
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**       |                                                                                       | Anders Stephanson, "Liberty or Death: The Cold War as U.S. Ideology"                  
<p>|        |                                            | Tony Judt, chapters 4 (The Impossible Settlement) and 5 (The Coming of the Cold War) from <em>Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945</em> (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 100-164. |</p>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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** Mr. X (George Kennan). "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." *Foreign Affairs*, July, 1947.  
* Truman Doctrine Speech |
** Responses:  
Gunter Bischof, "The Advent of Neo-Revisionism?"  
Marc Trachtenberg, "The Marshall Plan as Tragedy"  
Lazlo Borhi, "Was American Diplomacy Really Tragic?"  
**  
| March 5 (Tues) | FIRST ESSAY DUE AT 3 PM | **  
March 12 | S. Frederick Starr visit | Readings to be announced |
HIST 423 US(SR) Comparative Cold Wars

March 19  THE KOREAN WAR: FROM PUSAN TO THE YALU

Sheila Myoshi Jager, *Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea* (2013), pages TBA

March 26  SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

April 2  THE ENIGMA OF GEORGE KENNAN: COLD WAR ARCHITECT, COLD WAR CRITIC


Frank Costiglioia, *The Kennan Diaries* (2014),

H-diplo roundtable on the Kennan diaries with essays by Clayton Koppes, Thomas Schwartz, and Walter Hixson

April 9  THE CULTURAL COLD WAR, I

Visit by Simo Mikkonen, professor of history, University of Jyväskyla, Finland


Additional readings to be announced

April 16  THE CULTURAL COLD WAR, II: SOVIET AUTHORITY AND SHOSTAKOVICH

Visit by Rebecca Mitchell, visiting assistant professor of history, Oberlin College

Peter Finn and Petra Couvee, *The Zhivago Affair: The Kremlin, the CIA, and the Battle over a Forbidden Book* (2014)
Additional readings to be announced

April 23 THE CULTURAL COLD WAR, III: THE OBERLIN CONNECTION

Visit by Tim Scholl, professor of Russian, Oberlin College

Screening of The Tour of Tours (documentary on the Oberlin College choir tour to USSR in 1964)


April 28 (Tuesday) SECOND ESSAY DUE AT 3 PM

April 30 THE COLD WAR ENDS: GORBACHEV


Additional readings to be announced

May 7 THE COLD WAR ENDS: STRUCTURAL EXPLANATIONS

Vladislav Zubok, “Why Did the Cold War End in 1989?” in Odd Arne Westad, ed., Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory


MAY 16 FINAL ESSAY DUE AT 4 P.M.