Course Objectives:
This course surveys the history of the Cold War. The focus will be on U.S.-Soviet/Russian relations, but there will be some examination of U.S. confrontations with the PRC and U.S. involvements in Vietnam and Central America. From the lectures, discussions, and readings, students are expected to gain an understanding of:
1. The emergence of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union in the latter stages of World War II.
2. The escalation of tensions in the aftermath of that war, leading to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962.
4. The progressive deterioration of the Soviet Union (and the fall of the Soviet regime) as a consequence of “imperial overstretch.”
Examinations and papers aim to develop writing skills and critical thinking about historical problems. Hence, questions on the examinations will require students to write essays that have a clearly stated thesis and are supported by relevant detail derived from the lectures and the readings. The required paper will be an analytical exercise based on the students’ reading of published primary sources.
Format: The class will meet twice a week. Most sessions will be devoted to lectures, but there will be several scheduled discussions of the assigned readings.
Reading: The following books are assigned and are available at the U of O Bookstore:
Leffler, FOR THE SOUL OF MANKIND
Fursenko and Naftali, “ONE HELL OF A GAMBLE”
Remnick, LENIN’S TOMB
Course Requirements: There will be a midterm, a paper, and a final exam. All exams will be essay tests. The midterm will count for 30% of your grade, the paper for 30%, and the final for 30%. Class participation will count for 10%.
Paper: The paper will require you to read approximately 200 pages of primary sources (in The Foreign Relations of the United States, a collection of documents available online). You will be expected to produce a well-organized, well-written, thoughtful analysis, approximately 5-6 pages in length (10-12 pages for graduate students). A separate document on this Blackboard site, also found in the Course Information section, will describe the paper in detail. Read it immediately. You need to get approval of your topic by 2/4/14. A hard copy of the paper will be due in class on 3/4/14.

Tentative Schedule
Week 1: 1/7, 1/9
Themes in US-Russian/Soviet Relations to 1941; FDR, the Soviets, and WW2
Reading for the week: Leffler, Introduction and Ch. 1.

Week 2: 1/14, 1/16
Truman and the Onset of the Cold War; The Pre-Eminence of Europe
Reading for the week: Begin ONE HELL.

Week 3: 1/21, 1/23
2 Shocks; Korean War
Reading for the week: Leffler, Ch. 2; continue reading ONE HELL.

Week 4: 1/28, 1/30
**Discussion of Leffler, thru p. 150 on 1/28; Ike
Reading for the week: Continue reading ONE HELL.

Week 5: 2/4, 2/6
JFK; **Discussion of ONE HELL, entire book, on 2/6.
Reading for the week: Finish ONE HELL.

Week 6: 2/11, 2/13
***2/11: Midterm (covering all lectures, discussions, and readings up to this point in the course); 2/13, film TBA

Week 7: 2/18, 2/20
“Imperial Overstretch”; Cold War in the Age of “Imperial Overstretch”
Reading for the week: Leffler, Ch. 3; begin reading Remnick.

Week 8: 2/25, 2/27
Nixon, Kissinger, & Détente; Carter & Human Rights
Reading for the week: Leffler, Ch. 4; continue reading Remnick.

Week 9: 3/4, 3/6
End of the Cold War; **Discussion, Leffler, Ch. 3-5.
Reading for the week: Leffler, Ch. 5; finish Remnick.
**Note: Paper is due in class, 3/4.

Week 10: 3/11, 3/13
Reading for the week: Leffler, Conclusion.

FINAL EXAM: Mon., 3/17/14, 8:00. (Note: The final will not be cumulative. It will cover lectures, discussions, films, and readings since the midterm.)