



ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME(S)/ STUDY TRACK(S)

Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies
Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies (Study Track: European Security and Strategy)
Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs (Study Track: European Interdisciplinary Studies)
Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs (Study Track: European Interdisciplinary Studies - European Security and Strategy)

YEAR

2026-2027

COURSE TITLE

Cold War Strategies from the Central Eastern Europe Perspective

SEMESTER

1

PROFESSOR(S)

CICHOCKI Marek Aleksander & DĘBSKI Sławomir

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

DAMIANI Giulio

COURSE TYPE

Contextual Course

MAJOR(S)

Not applicable

ECTS CREDITS

0

TEACHING HOURS

10

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

10

TUTORIAL(S)

0

COEFFICIENT

0

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The growing crisis of the liberal world order after the Cold War and the increasing potential for conflict of the revisionist powers, Russia and China, with the West are reigniting debates about the authentic legacy of the Cold War. Some commentators and interpreters even suggest that the world may be entering a new phase of global conflict, continuing the old Cold War modes of rivalry and domination. On the other hand, it is hard to deny that in many important respects the current divided world differs fundamentally from the conditions that shaped the international situation in Europe and the world after the end of World War II and that contributed to the establishment of the key principles of the Western strategic identity during the Cold War. In this context, it is crucial to take a close look at the roots of the process by which these principles of the Western strategic identity were shaped after World War II and their impact.

Therefore, the aim of the course is to analyze the key intellectual and political texts and speeches of leaders that formed the background for the main Western Cold War strategies after World War II. We will also explain the perception of these strategies behind the Iron Curtain in Central and Eastern Europe. By re-examining the basic strategies of the Cold War, we will try to answer the question to what extent they can still be applied in the current conflict between the West and the revisionist states, and where their clear limits lie.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this course, the students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and present the main Western strategies during the Cold War and understand their historical and intellectual context. This allows them to reconstruct the main elements of the Western strategic identity (A1, MATA1.1, ESST4);
- 2) Identify the political and ideological differences between the strategies and describe their evolution. They also understand their impact on the societies and countries behind the Iron Curtain during the Cold War (B6, MATA1.5, MATA2.1, MATA2.2, ESST5);
- 3) Use their knowledge of the strategies to individually assess their applicability and limitations in current wars and conflicts waged by revisionist states against the West (A2; MATA1.4, ESST3).

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

Readings (see below).

TEACHING METHOD(S)

Seminar including introduction to the key problems, common interpretation of text and discussion.

ASSESSMENT METHOD(S)

The course will be assessed on a pass/fail basis based on:

1. A digital onsite multiple-choice, closed-book test (80% of the final score) at the end of the final course session - 15 minutes to answer 7 questions, and
2. overall attendance (20% of the final score).

The weighted average of both assessment elements needs to be equal to or greater than 50% for a student to pass the course. Each student is entitled to retake the test once. The retake test will account for 80% of the final score, while overall attendance will account for the remaining 20%.

COURSE CONTENTS

The course aims to provide a better understanding of the current debates on the entry into the New/Second Cold War and of the historical context of the beginnings and evolution of the old Cold War. The seminar is an introduction to the texts of Halford Mackinder, George Orwell, George Kennan, James Burnham and Walter Lippmann. Based on these texts, we will identify key premises and idea of different Cold War strategies, such as geopolitical rivalry, ideological struggle, containment, deterrence, intervention, liberation, convergence.

In addition, selected historical speeches (Winston Churchill, Harry Truman, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush) will be discussed with students to show the strategic evolution of the West during the Cold War. Similarly, selected events taking place behind the Iron Curtain, such as the Budapest Uprising of 1956, the Berlin Crisis of 1961, the Prague Spring of 1968, and the Solidarity Movement of 1980, will be discussed in order to show the connections between them and Western strategies during the Cold War.

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

Texts:

- Halford Mackinder, *The Round World and The Winning of Peace*, "Foreign Affairs", 1943.

- George Orwell, You and The Atomic Bomb, "Tribune" 1945.
- X Article: George Frost Kennan, The Sources of Soviet conduct, "Foreign Affairs", 1947.
- James Burnham, Containment and liberation? 1952, (selected fragments).
- Walter Lippmann, The Cold War, A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy, 1947, (excerpt in "Foreign Affairs" 1987).

Speeches:

- Winston Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech, Fulton 1946.
- Harry Truman's Speech to a joint session of Congress, 1947, "The Fateful Hour".
- Ronald Reagan's Westminster Speech to British Parliament, 1982.
- George H.W. Bush, "A Whole Europe. A Free Europe", Mainz 1989.