

March 30, 2021

POLISCI 212 | REES 219 | INTLPOL 211

A New Cold War? Great Power Relations in the 21st Century

Term: Spring 2021

Units: 2 units

Instructor: Michael McFaul, mcfaul@stanford.edu

Teaching Coordinator: Bronte Kass, bkass@stanford.edu

Time: Wednesdays 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Course Description

When the Cold War ended in 1991 as the Soviet Union disintegrated, it was a glorious moment to be a multi-lateralist and liberal democrat; it seemed like the whole world wanted to join the democratic community of states. Today, great power competition is back – or so it seems – with many describing our present era as a “New Cold War” between the United States and autocratic China and Russia. How did international system go from euphoria about democracy, globalization, the West, and the United States three decades ago, to uncertainty about democracy, doubt about the liberal international order, and fear about the rise of illiberal great powers? Moreover, is the Cold War label an illuminating or distorting analogy, and how stable or enduring is this current moment of global confrontation?

This course seeks to analyze contemporary great power relations, first by tracing the historical origins of the U.S.-Russia and U.S.-China relationships and examining the interplay between three central drivers of international relations – power, regimes and leaders – over time. Next, we will assess the similarities and differences between the Cold War and U.S.-Russia relations and U.S.-China relations today along three dimensions over the international system: (1) Power, (2) Ideology, (3) Interdependence and Multilateralism.

Informed by diagnostics from the previous chapters, we will conclude with a grand strategy and set of concrete policy recommendations for how U.S. leaders can enhance national security, deepen prosperity, and advance liberal values by adopting a new set of domestic and foreign policies for the 21st century.

The main text for this course will be a new book in draft by Professor McFaul, as well as accompanying academic articles.

Office Hours

Thursday afternoons and by appointment only.

Please schedule with Mahlorei Bruce Apalis, mahlorei@stanford.edu

Assignments

We will meet for seven weeks for one hour on Zoom. Students are expected to attend every class and complete all required readings before each session, in which we will engage in discussion. Because this course is not a lecture class, sessions will be highly participatory. Students with an excused absence must notify the course assistant in writing before the start of class.

Before each session, students will write a 2-3 page review of the chapter(s) being discussed. These reviews will contain both criticisms and suggestions for improvement.

Every week, students will be offered an alternative assignment, to be discussed the week before.

Evaluation

40%: class participation.

60%: short reviews.

Technology Policy

Because this class is being held remotely, every student must participate on Zoom.

Students with Documented Disabilities

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty. Unless the student has a temporary disability, Accommodation Letters are issued for the entire academic year. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations.

The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, <https://oae.stanford.edu/>).

Course Materials

Readings and chapters will be posted on Canvas.

COURSE SCHEDULE

March 31st: Introduction

Required Materials:

Chapter 1 – Introduction: The Return of Cold Wars?

Recommended Materials:

The White House. *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. December 2017. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905-2.pdf>.

Fontaine, Richard. “Great-Power Competition Is Washington’s Top Priority—but Not the Public’s: China and Russia Don’t Keep Most Americans Awake at Night.” *Foreign Affairs*. September 9, 2019. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-09-09/great-power-competition-washingtons-top-priority-not-publics>.

Lucas, Edward. *New Cold War: Putin’s Russia and the Threat to the West*. Palgrave Macmillan Trade, 2008.

Diamond, Larry. *Ill Winds: Saving Democracy from Russian Rage, Chinese Ambition, and American Complacency*. Penguin Press, 2019.

Kagan, Robert. *The Jungle Grows Back: America and Our Imperiled World*. Knopf, 2018.

Kagan, Robert. “The strongmen strike back.” *The Washington Post*. March 14, 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/opinions/wp/2019/03/14/feature/the-strongmen-strike-back/>.

Polyakova, Alina. “Are U.S. and Russia in a new Cold War?” *Brookings Institution*, January 20, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/are-u-s-and-russia-in-a-new-cold-war/>.

Zhong, Raymond, and Paul Mozer. “For the U.S. and China, a Technology Cold War That’s Freezing Over.” *The New York Times*. March 23, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/23/technology/trump-china-tariffs-tech-cold-war.html>.

Tharoor, Ishaan. “Under Trump, U.S. enters a new ‘Cold War’ with China.” *The Washington Post*. October 10, 2018. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/10/11/under-trump-us-enters-new-cold-war-with-china/>.

Ferguson, Niall. “The New Cold War? It’s With China, and It Has Already Begun.” *The New York Times*. December 2, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/02/opinion/china-cold-war.html>

Kaplan, Robert D. “A New Cold War Has Begun.” *Foreign Policy*. January 7, 2019. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/07/a-new-cold-war-has-begun/>.

Editorial Board. “The U.S. and China are on the brink of Cold War 2.0. This is how to avoid it.” *The Washington Post*. November 29, 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-and-china-are-on-the-brink-of-cold-war-20-this-is-how-to-avoid-it/2018/11/29/24105fb6-f409-11e8-acea-b85fd44449f5_story.html.

Coats, Dan. “There’s no Cold War with China – and if there were, we couldn’t win.” *The Washington Post*. July 28, 2020. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/28/new-cold-war-between-us-china-is-dangerous-myth/>.

Freeman, Chas. “The Struggle with China is not a Replay of the Cold War.” *Chas W. Freeman Jr.* September 25, 2020. <https://chasfreeman.net/the-struggle-with-china-is-not-a-replay-of-the-cold-war/>

Karabell, Zachary. “There’s No Cold War with China.” *Foreign Policy*. August 14, 2020. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/08/14/cold-war-china-misuse-of-history-united-states-soviet-union/>.

Christensen, Thomas J. “There Will Not Be a New Cold War: The Limits of U.S.-Chinese Competition.” *Foreign Affairs*. March 24, 2021. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-03-24/there-will-not-be-new-cold-war>.

April 21th: The Past – Causes of Great Power Conflict

Required Materials:

Chapter 2 – The Origins of U.S.-Russia Confrontation

Chapter 3 – The Origins of U.S.-China Confrontation

Recommended Materials:

X (Kennan, George F.). “The Sources of Soviet Conduct.” *Foreign Affairs*. (July 1947). <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1947-07-01/sources-soviet-conduct>.

Kagan, Robert. *Dangerous Nation: American’s Foreign Policy from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*. Knopf, 2006.

Pomfret, John. *The Beautiful Country and the Middle Kingdom: America and China, 1776 to the Present*. Henry Holt and Co., 2016.

Gaddis, John Lewis. *Russia, the Soviet Union and the United States: An Interpretive History (America & the World)*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1978.

Haas, Mark. *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789-1989*. Cornell University Press, 2005.

Kennedy, Paul. *The Rise and the Fall of Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. Random House, 1987.

X. "The Longer Telegram: Toward a New American China Strategy." *Atlantic Council*. January 2021. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The-Longer-Telegram-Toward-A-New-American-China-Strategy.pdf>

Shell, Orville. "The Death of Engagement." *The Wire China*. June 7, 2020. <https://www.thewirechina.com/2020/06/07/the-birth-life-and-death-of-engagement/>.

April 28th: The Present – The Balance of Power

Required Materials:

Chapter 4 – The Balance of Power

Recommended Materials:

Stoner, Kathryn. *Russian Resurrected: Its Power and Purpose in a New Global Order*. Oxford University Press, 2021.

Beckley, Michael. *Unrivaled: Why America Will Remain the World's Sole Superpower*. Cornell University Press, 2018.

Allison, Graham. *Destined for War: Can America And China Escape Thucydides Trap?* New York: Mariner Press, 2017.

Allison, Graham. "China vs. America: Managing the Next Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*. September/October 2017. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-08-15/china-vs-america> .

Mearsheimer, John. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 1-54. W.W. Norton & Company, 2014.

May 5th: The Present – Ideological Competition

Required Materials:

Chapter 5 – Ideological Competition

Recommended Materials:

Jinping, Xi. “Full Text: Special Address by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the World Economic Forum Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda.” *Xinhua*. January 25, 2021.

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2021-01/25/c_139696610.htm.

Putin, Vladimir. “Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy.” *President of Russia*. February 10, 2007.

<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>.

The Elements of the China Challenge. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, November 2020. https://beta.documentcloud.org/documents/20407448-elements_of_the_china_challenge-20201117.

O’Brien, Robert. “The Chinese Communist Party’s Ideology and Global Ambitions,” *The White House*, June 2020, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/chinese-communist-partys-ideology-global-ambitions/>.

Kroenig, Matthew. “The Democratic Advantage Today.” In *The Return of Great Power Rivalry: Democracy versus Autocracy from the Ancient World to the U.S. and China*, 155-212. Oxford University Press, 2020.

Hyde, Susan, and Elizabeth Saunders. “Recapturing Regime Type in International Relations: Leaders, Institutions, and Agency Space.” *International Organization* 74, no. 2 (2020): 363-395.

McFaul, Michael. “The Domestic Determinants of Russian Foreign Policy: Individuals, Ideas, and Institutions.” *International Security* 45, no. 2 (Fall 2020): 95-123.

May 12th: The Present – Interdependence and Multilateralism

Required Materials:

Chapter 6 – Interdependence and Multilateralism

Recommended Materials:

Rolland, Nadege. *China’s Vision for a New World Order*. NBR Special Report No. 83, National Bureau of Asian Research. January 2020. <https://www.nbr.org/publication/chinas-vision-for-a-new-world-order/>.

Hass, Ryan. *Stronger: Adapting America's China Strategy in an Age of Competitive Interdependence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021.

Tan, Yeling. "How the WTO Changed China." *Foreign Affairs*. March/April 2021. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2021-02-16/how-wto-changed-china>.

Johnston, Alastair Iain. "China in a World of Orders: Rethinking Compliance and Challenge in Beijing's International Relations." *International Security* 44, no. 2 (2019): 9-60.

Keohane, Robert, and Joseph S. Nye Jr. *Power and Interdependence*. Pearson, 2011.

Ikenberry, John. *A World Safe for Democracy: Liberal Internationalism and the Crises of Global Order*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.

Stent, Angela. *Putin's World: Russia Against the West and with the Rest*. Twelve, 2019.

Silaev, Nikolai. "Russia and its Allies in Three Strategic Environments." *Europe-Asia Studies* (2021).

May 19nd: The Future – Components of "Pragmatic Idealism"

Required Materials:

Chapter 7 – Prescriptions: Unilateral, Bilateral and Multilateral Components of a New "Pragmatic Idealism"

Chapter 8 – The Unilateral Agenda: The Imperative of American Renewal at Home

Chapter 9 – The Bilateral Agenda: Containing and Engaging Russia and China

Chapter 10 – The Multilateral Agenda: Revitalizing Liberal Internationalism

Recommended Materials:

The White House. *Interim National Security Strategic Guidance*. March 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf>

Biden, Joseph. "Remarks by President Biden on America's Place in the World." *The White House*. February 4, 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/04/remarks-by-president-biden-on-americas-place-in-the-world/>.

Biden, Joseph. "Remarks by President Biden at the 2021 Virtual Munich Security Conference." *The White House*. February 19, 2021. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/02/19/remarks-by-president-biden-at-the-2021-virtual-munich-security-conference>

Blinken, Antony. "A Foreign Policy for the American People." *U.S. Department of State*. March 3, 2021. <https://www.state.gov/a-foreign-policy-for-the-american-people/>.

McFaul, Michael. "Cold War Lessons and Fallacies for US-China Relations Today." *The Washington Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2020): 7-39.

McFaul, Michael. "Dressing for Dinner." *American Purpose*. November 25, 2020. <https://www.americanpurpose.com/articles/dressing-for-dinner/>.

McFaul, Michael. "Sometimes You Get Another Chance." *American Purpose*. December 14, 2020. <https://www.americanpurpose.com/articles/sometimes-you-get-another-chance/>.

McFaul, Michael. "Sell It Again, Uncle Sam." *American Purpose*. January 13, 2021. <https://www.americanpurpose.com/articles/sell-it-again-uncle-sam/>.

McFaul, Michael. "How to Contain Putin's Russia: A Strategy for Countering a Rising Revisionist Power." *Foreign Affairs*. January 19, 2021. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2021-01-19/how-contain-putins-russia>.

May 26th: Final Thoughts
