New York City College of Technology

Interdisciplinary Committee

Change of Interdisciplinary Format Form for an Existing Course

(or designated section of an existing ID course)

DATE: Sept 4, 2020

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:  **HIS 3402ID Topics in Modern World History: the Global Cold War**

CREDIT HOURS: 3

CURRENT COURSE DESIGNATION: x College Option x Elective x Capstone 🞏Other

DEPARTMENT HOUSED IN: Social Science

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: History 3402ID is an interdisciplinary course which explores the global history of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union (1945-1991). Moving chronologically, we begin by examining the Cold War’s origins particularly in the second World War, and the implications of growing postwar hostilities: the rise of a nuclear arms race, the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and the establishment of a vast US national security state that sought to “contain” Communism at home and abroad. After the sources of conflict are understood, we move to specific Cold War inspired US and Soviet interventions in nations including Korea, China, Cuba, Guatemala, Chile, Germany, Iran, Hungary, Vietnam, Cambodia, Czechoslovakia, Nicaragua and Afghanistan. In the last segment of the course, we explore the social, political and economic challenges faced by Soviet satellites which led to the Berlin Wall’s fall, the USSR’s collapse and the Cold War’s end. History 3402ID aims for a multi-faceted understanding ofthe Cold War.

Much of the time we take a global “top-down” or “macro” view of cold war history (wars, covert/overt interventions, diplomacy, propaganda, weaponry, etc.). However the interdisciplinary course designation permits us to look at Cold War history from the perspective of scholars who specialize in fields other than history. Thus from a sociologist’s angle, we will examine the ideology of Marxism, the worldview upon which Soviet communism was built. Doing so helps us understand why Marxism was such a historically influential ideology, why it may or may not have appealed to people, and how communism or socialism *in practice* diverged from Marx’s original vision. Also from a sociologist’s angle, we will explore how citizens living in the Soviet bloc negotiated their daily lives in a socialist economy, how they responded to (or resisted) state imperatives, and the many ways in which they experienced firsthand the Soviet bloc’s collapse and its aftermath.

CURRENT STRUCTURE: Online

NUMBER OF SECTIONS CURRENTLY OFFERED: Fall semester\_2\_\_\_\_ Spring semester\_\_2\_\_\_

CHANGE OF INSTRUCTOR: Yes X No

CHANGE IN GUEST LECTURER(S): X Yes No

 Are one or more guest lecturers from a different discipline than originally proposed?

IF CO-TAUGHT, CURRENT CREDIT DISTRIBUTION:

PROPOSED CHANGE IN INTERDISCIPINARY FORMAT:

**From:** X Guest lecturers \_2/3\_ minimum 20% \_\_other % 🞏Co-taught 🞏Shared credits 🞏Learning Community ⌧ In person or hybrid

**To:** X Guest lecturers\_1\_ minimum 20% \_\_other % 🞏Co-taught 🞏Shared credits 🞏Learning community ⌧ Fully online

PROPOSED BY: Kyle Cuordileone

If co taught: Names of those co-teaching

Briefly explain reasoning for changing the format of the currently offered sections, or if new sections of the course are being offered for the first time, explain briefly the rationale for the change in format and attach your syllabus.

I will teach two sections of HIS 3402ID in the Spring 2021. Both sections will be offered in a fully online format. I have not yet decided whether the classes will be synchronous or synchronous (I want to see how the Zoom classes go in the next few weeks).

I frequently rotate guest lectures and have had a variety of them. I would like to have flexibility in these moving forward as I like the change of pace each semester. This semester, after to talking to Diana Mincyte, I thought that my class might come together a bit better with one single guest lecturer, a sociologist, addressing each of the three segments of the course 1) understanding the theory of Communism, upon which the USSR was based 2) understanding Communism in practice in the USSR 3) understanding the fall of Communism in the USSR. With one guest lecturer, Dr. Mincyte, this semester, I precluded some overlap in material at the end of the course (fall of the USSR), and I think this allows for more intellectual continuity and deeper understanding of the sociological perspective (from a person who actually lived in the USSR). I would like to continue this format next semester, however I would like the opportunity to switch up guest lecturers in the future, which keeps the class dynamic and interesting.

Guest lectures and format have been confirmed from the following:

Prof. Diana Mincyte (Sociology): Prof. Mincyte will provide recorded Zoom presentations, and live Zoom discussions if our schedules are in sync. Students will answer questions on the recorded lecture on the Discussion Board and provide feedback and comments on one another’s posts. These assignments will be evaluated and the guest lecturer will also be able to offer feedback. Prof. Mincyte’s lecture material is also incorporated into the exam material.

Unconfirmed possibilities in upcoming semesters:

Prof. Rob McDougal (Philosophy: the philosophical underpinnings of Marxism)

Prof. Sean McDonald (Economics: the economics of Communism and Russia’s transition to capitalism)

Prof. Anna Matthews (Dental Hygiene: health care in the USSR)

Prof. Judith Sedaitis (Sociology: the culture of Communism in the USSR)

Prof. Roman Kezerashrvili (Physics: the creation of the atomic bomb)