I. COURSE REQUIREMENTS & OBJECTIVES:

Course Description: Designed for students with some background in U.S. diplomatic history and international studies, the course probes the dynamics of CIA covert wars through comparative case histories over the past 75 years. Sometimes these clandestine interventions have ended successfully from a U.S. perspective. But they have often left behind ruined battlegrounds that became geopolitical black holes of international instability.

After several sessions surveying the character of the CIA and its clandestine operations, the seminar will apply a case-study approach to covert wars in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America--including, the anti-Mossadeq coup in Iran, Lumumba’s assassination in the Congo, and the ongoing war in Afghanistan. Reflecting the significance of Southeast Asia to CIA operations, the seminar will devote four sessions to this region—including the Huk communist revolt in the Philippines, destabilization of the Sukarno regime in Indonesia, pacification in South Vietnam, and the secret war in Laos—arguing that the latter two operations are central to understanding contemporary conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As the course progresses, the class will engage in a collective model-building exercise, drawing insights from each successive case to build, factor-by-factor, a working paradigm for analysis of both CIA operations and their larger covert netherworld. By the third week, it will become apparent that most of the literature is densely empirical, largely devoted to penetrating the veil of secrecy to establish a narrative of events—an approach that denies these readings an adequate theoretical framework. With each passing week, therefore, we will engage in a collective model-building exercise to probe the context, conduct, and consequences of each CIA covert operation.

For context, we will devise an applied historical analysis that identifies key actors or factors during the conduct of a CIA operation and then traces them backward until we come a watershed when these actors emerged in a political array that resonates with the later covert war. In the conduct phase, we will learn to identify the weapons or tactics in the Agency's evolving arsenal of covert warfare. In the final consequences phase, we will examine the impact of each operation at three levels: (1.) in the society that became this covert battleground; (2.) its immediate region; and, (3.) the larger geopolitical arena, from the perspective of both the world order and the conduct of U.S. foreign policy. In assessing the consequences of each operation, we will weigh short-term tactical gains in a Cold War context against long-term costs for both the subject society and broader U.S. geopolitical interests.

Based on these discussions and additional research, each student will apply this three-phase model to a particular covert war in writing the research essay outlined in Section III below, hopefully expanding upon the insights gained in the seminar’s weekly discussions.

Through the sum of such content, students should finish the seminar with knowledge about a key facet of U.S. foreign policy and a lasting ability to analyze future international developments. Beyond such empiricism, the course will impart sharpened analytical abilities, refined research skills, improved oral presentations, and better writing skills.
Credit Policy: The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course’s learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Course Aims: As the final phase of the undergraduate History major or first step in a graduate career, the seminar allows students an opportunity to reflect upon lessons learned in past courses and to refine essential academic skills--critical reading, academic analysis, primary research, expository writing, and formal oral presentation.

Class Meetings: The seminar is scheduled to meet on Tuesdays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:55 p.m. in Room No. 5255, Humanities Building. In the event that the Covid pandemic forces a cancellation of in-person meetings, we will move to remote instruction via Canvas and Zoom.

Office Hours: On Thursdays from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, in-person or via telephone after making an appointment via e-mail to <awmccoy@wisc.edu>.

Grading: In addition to participating in each class, students shall be marked upon their participation in discussions and their weekly writing exercises.

Class Attendance: Starting in Week One, each class shall begin with every student summarizing two or more readings in a two-minute analysis. Attendance is mandatory. Every absence leads to a reduction in the grade for “participation.”

Class Presentations: Starting in Week Two, several students shall offer 15-minute discussions of the required readings for the week, with each student making two such oral presentations during the semester. Each presenter will consult with the professor three times to plan this presentation: first, for a few minutes at the close of class to apportion the work for the following week’s presentation; and next, during Thursday office hours with a five-page draft outline of the presentation. After revision, each presenter should email me a revised penultimate draft by Sunday at 5:00 pm, and I will reply via email with suggested changes by Monday at 12:00 noon.

Discussion Summaries: Students shall submit two short discussion papers during the semester. First, before 9:00 am, Monday, January 23, all students shall email me (awmccoy@wisc.edu) a two-page reflection on the week’s reading, addressing the question: “Assess the impact of CIA covert operations on the conduct of U.S. foreign policy since 1947.” Next, before 9:00 a.m., Monday, May 1, students will submit a second paper, in both hard copy (Box 5026, Humanities) and email, that asks: “Selecting any covert operation covered in the course, reflect on the paradox that their short-term success often leads to long-term complications for the conduct US foreign policy. In your concluding paragraph, weigh up the costs and benefits of covert operations to determine whether they can be considered, on balance, an ‘effective’ instrument for US foreign policy.”

Final Paper: Drawing on both primary and secondary sources, students shall write a 15-page analytic essay on a single CIA covert war or clandestine operation by following the directions specified below in Part V. While students are free to examine any of the case...
In addition to books and articles, essays must cite 10 different primary sources, which include the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, U.S. Congressional hearings, the *New York Times* (on Proquest), and official documents found in the State Historical Society and on-line at sites such those curated by the National Security Archive.

As a first step, students shall email me a one-page outline of their research paper in (as a MSWord attachment) by 9:00 a.m., **Monday, April 3**—with a thesis statement, bullet points for the analytical narrative, and a brief bibliography of key primary and secondary sources. During that week, students with questions can meet with me during office hours to discuss their proposed papers.

By 9:00 a.m., **Monday, April 24**, students shall submit, in my mailbox and as an email attachment, a 15-page essay, drawn from both secondary and primary sources, analyzing a single CIA covert operation, assessing both its short-term gains and long-term impact. Each essay shall have full footnote citations and a complete annotated bibliography. Students should use their research skills to cite at least 10 primary documents from the *New York Times, Foreign Relations of the United States*, the CIA website, or the National Security Archive.

**Final Grade:** Marks in the course shall be computed as follows:
- short papers: 20%
- presentations: 20%
- class attendance: 20%
- research essay: 40%

**Readings--Texts:** Sold at University Bookstore, State Street Mall (opposite Memorial Library):


**Readings-Canvas:** In preparation for each meeting, students are expected to cover the required readings below marked by an asterisk (*). Students presenting should review all readings in the “required” section. Apart from those in the textbooks, required readings are available via Canvas, which you can access through your <MyUW> account.

**II. READINGS {N.B.: *Key Reading available in Texts or on Canvas}:-**

{DISCUSSION PAPER Due via Email, 9:00 am, Monday, January 24}

**WEEK 1 (January 24): CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE--ORIGINS & HISTORY**

*Required--Origins & History:*- (Total *= 184 pages)


Recommended:-


**WEEK 2 (January 31): MIND CONTROL & COVERT OPERATIONS**

*Required--Intellectual Mobilization:* (Total *= 184 pages)


*Required--Mind Control:*


**Required—Covert Operations:**


**Required—Covert Netherworld:**


**Recommended:**


Marks, John D. The Search for the “Manchurian Candidate”: the CIA and Mind Control New York: Times Books, 1980, pp. 87-104.


WEEK 3 (February 7): EUROPE—SECURING GREECE, FRANCE & ITALY

Required:- (Total *= 166 pages)


**Recommended:**


Ganser, Daniele, **NATO’s Secret Armies: Operation Gladio and Terrorism in Western Europe** London: Frank Cass, 2005, pp. 212- 23.


**WEEK 4 (February 14): IRAN--COUP AGAINST MOSSADEQ**

*Required:* (Total *= 184 pages)


**Recommended:**


Alexander, Yonah and Allan Nanes, eds. The United States and Iran: a Documentary History Frederick: Aletheia Books, 1980.


**WEEK 5 (February 21): COVERT OPERATIONS IN CENTRAL AMERICA**

*Required--Central America:*- (Total *= 285 pages)


*Required--Guatemala:*-


Required--Nicaragua:-


Required--El Salvador:-


Recommended:-


**WEEK 6 (February 28): PHILIPPINES--DEFEATING THE HUKS**

*Required:* (Total *= 190 pages)*


**Recommended:**


WEEK 7 (March 7): CUBA: SECRET WAR ON CASTRO

Required:- (Total *= 209 pages)


Recommended:-


{{SPRING BREAK: March 11 to March 19}}

WEEK 8 (March 21): INDONESIA--TOPPLING SUKARNO

Required--1957-58 Outer Islands Rebellion:- (Total *= 209 pages)


Required--1965-66 Coup & Crushing PKI:


*Bunnell, Frederick. “American ‘Low Posture’ Policy toward Indonesia in the Months Leading up to the 1965 'Coup,’” Indonesia 50 (1990), pp. 29-60.


Recommended:-


WEEK 9 (March 28): VIETNAM -- COVERT OPS & OPERATION PHOENIX

Required:- (Total *= 187 pages)


Recommended:-


WEEK 10 (April 4): LAOS--COUPS, TRIBAL MILITIA & AIR POWER

Required:- (Total *= 133 pages)


*FILM—Eberle, Marc, The Most Secret Place on Earth (Gebrüder Beetz Filmproduktion, 2008), all 77 minutes.


Recommended:-


McCoy, Alfred W. The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade

Morrison, Gayle. Sky is Falling: An Oral History of the CIA’s Evacuation of the

Parker, James E. Codename Mule: Fighting the Secret War in Laos for the CIA

Prados, John. Presidents’ Secret Wars: CIA and Pentagon Covert Operations from

Quincy, Keith. Harvesting Pa Chay’s Wheat: the Hmong and America’s Secret War

Scott, Peter Dale. Drugs, Oil, and War: The United States in Afghanistan, Colombia,

U.S. Department of State, John P Glennon., ed. Foreign Relations of the United States,

U.S. Department of State, John P Glennon., ed. Foreign Relations of the United States,

Warner, Roger. Shooting at the Moon: the Story of America’s Clandestine War in

Warner, Roger. Back Fire: The CIA’s Secret War in Laos and its Link to the War in

WEEK 11 (April 11): CHILE--KILLING ALLENDE

Required:- (Total *= 217 pages)

*Devine, Jack. “What Really Happened in Chile: The CIA, the Coup Against Allende, and the

Chile?" Foreign Affairs 93, no. 5 (2014), pp. 168-74.

*Dinges, John. The Condor Years: How Pinochet and his Allies Brought Terrorism
63-81, 99-125.


*Recommended:-*


WEEK 12 (April 18): AFRICA--CONGO & ANGOLA OPERATIONS

Required Congo:- (Total *= 130 pages + 94 [FRUS] + 67 pages [Stockwell])


Required--Angola:-


Recommended--Angola:-


Recommended--Congo:-


Required--Politics:- (Total *= 217 pages)


*Cogan, Charles, G. “Partners in Time: The CIA and Afghanistan since 1979,” World Policy Journal 10, no. 2 (Summer 1993), pp. 73-83


Required--Opium:-


**Recommended:**


Mamdani, Mahmood, Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror New York: Pantheon, 2004, pp. 119-77.


{{DISCUSSION PAPER Due via E-Mail, 9:00 am, Monday, May 1}}

WEEK 14 (May 2): WAR ON TERROR & FUTURE OF COVERT OPS

Required—War on Terror:- (Total *= 187 pages)


**Required—Future of U.S. Covert Warfare:**


**Recommended—War on Terror:**


III. MAJOR ESSAY QUESTION:

1.) Survey the context, conduct, and consequences of a CIA covert operation—assessing both the short-term impact on a single nation and the longer-term legacy for that country’s geographical region and the conduct of U.S. foreign policy.

IV. LEARNING FROM FILM & FICTION:

FILM—Suggested Titles:
--Miscellaneous Films: The films listed below are all highly recommended and most are available on-line for purchase in DVD format or free at YouTube:
1.) "The Quiet American" (South Vietnam--black and white; with Audie Murphy)
2.) "The Quiet American" (South Vietnam--color; with Michael Caine)
3.) “The Skeleton Coast” (Angola)
4.) “The Tailor of Panama.”
5.) “Shadow Play” (Indonesia--documentary, Director: Chris Hilton, 2003)
6.) “Our Man in Havana”
7.) “The Third Man” (Austria)
8.) “The Most Secret Place on Earth” (Laos--documentary, Director: Marc Eberle, 2008)

--Learning Support Services in Van Hise Hall: This on-campus media center has a collection of feature films and documentaries that can provide visual imagery that will help this chronicle of colonialism, revolution, diplomacy, and battles come alive. Among the films available are:
1.) “The Trial of Henry Kissinger”
2.) “Bombies” (Laos)

FICTION—Some Suggested Titles:
1.) Graham Greene, The Quiet American.
2.) Graham Greene, Our Man in Havana.
3.) Graham Greene, The Third Man.
4.) John LeCarré, The Tailor of Panama.
5.) Jean Larteguy, Bronze Drums
6.) Paul Theroux, The Consul’s File
7.) Christopher Koch, The Year of Living Dangerously
8.) Cristopher Koch, Highways to a War

V. HOW TO WRITE A RESEARCH ESSAY—THE THREE-STEP METHOD:

1.) STEP ONE--Reading & Research:-
a.) Sources/Research:
   1.) All good essays begin with the three “Rs”—reading, research, and reflection.
2.) Like most essays, a History term paper is a distillation of its author's reading and reflections upon the subject whose quality usually reflects the depth of the author's research.

b.) How to Read for an Essay:
1.) Using the course syllabus, begin with a general text to get an overview of the problem.
2.) Using the syllabus or textbooks, select more specific sources.
3.) As you read, begin forming ideas in your mind about:
   a.) your overall hypothesis, and;
   b.) the evidence you will need to support your argument.
4.) As you read, take notes, either on paper, or in the margin of a photocopy of the source. As you take notes, make sure you have the bibliographic information for your source: author, title, place of publication, publisher, and relevant pages.
5.) Towards the end of your reading, draw up an outline of the essay. If you are missing sources for your argument, then do some supplemental reading.

c.) Citing Sources:
1.) Assuming three paragraphs per page, you should have a minimum of one source or note per paragraph.
2.) Every idea that is not your own and every major body of data you use in your essay should be sourced. In particular, quotations must be sourced.
3.) Use endnotes or footnotes in the following format:


4.) For a second, non-sequential citation of the same work use a short citation:

27. McCoy, Southeast Asia Since 1800, 77-78.

5.) If you are citing the same source in sequence, use Ibid for second citation.

27. McCoy, Southeast Asia Since 1800, 77-78.
28. Ibid., 79-80.
29. Ibid., 80-81.


2.) STEP TWO—Framing the Argument:
   a.) Outline: With your reading done, restrain the urge to plunge right into writing and instead take some time to outline your argument. Begin by articulating the single, central question you will ask and answer in the course of this paper. Next, write a one- or two-page outline of your essay’s basic components, which are discussed below.

   b.) Overall structure: Almost every scholarly essay has three basic components—(1.) the problem/hypothesis, (2.) the evidence/argument, and (3.) the conclusion. To summarize very broadly, the introduction asks a question and poses a hypothesis, the argument
arrays evidence to establish that hypothesis, and the conclusion reflects upon the original hypothesis in light of the evidence presented.

Of these three elements, the opening hypothesis is, by far, the most difficult and the most essential for the success of your essay. In your opening paragraph, try to stand back from the mass of material you have read and articulate an historical thesis, which usually explains causality (why events occurred) or analyzes significance (the particular import of an event or a pattern of events). Then identify the key elements—whether factors, themes, or topics—that you will explore to test your thesis in the second part of the essay, the analytical narrative that contains the evidence to support your thesis.

By the time you start writing, you should be able to summarize your argument in the essay’s first sentence with something akin to the following formulation: “By applying A to B, the essay will establish C.” To illustrate, an essay on the impact of the CIA covert intervention in Guatemala, might begin: “By analyzing the impact of the CIA’s intervention against the Abenz government, the agency’s coup exacerbated social tensions that led to a thirty-year civil war with a quarter-million deaths.”

Here are some further reflections on each of these three sections:

1.) **Hypothesis:** In your introduction, state your thesis clearly.
   a.) If necessary, you should give your definition of any key terms that require a specific usage (e.g., “revolution.”)
   b.) In stating your problem, refer to the literature in the syllabus.
   c.) A standard and often effective device is to identify two differing schools of thought about a single problem and offer resolution.
   d.) Make sure you are examining the main point, not a secondary issue.

2.) **The Evidence:** In the middle part of your essay, you must present evidence—through an analytical intertwining of events and factors—to deal with the problem posed at the beginning of your essay. Be specific. Give the reader a brief narrative of an event grounded in some statistical or anecdotal evidence.

3.) **The Conclusion:** In the final page or two of your essay, reflect on the problem as stated in the introduction in light of the evidence you presented in the middle part of the essay. Stretch the data you present for clarity, but do not exaggerate or over-extend the usefulness of your data.

e.) **Level of Argument:** Some students produce papers that fill all the demands of the format but do not produce an argument that fully engages the problem.
   1.) Drawing upon reading and lectures, try to frame an argument that seems to address the question in the most direct and significant manner possible, drawing the most convincing evidence to support the case you are making.
   2.) By reading several sources with diverse viewpoints and reflecting on the authors’ approaches, you can define an appropriate question and level of analysis.

d.) **Nature of History Questions:** Whether in books or courses such as this one, History usually explores the study of change in human communities, societies or nations over time. In general, History essays ask you to explain two key aspects of such change: *causality*, that is the underlying reasons for long-term change; or *significance*, that is the import or impact of an event upon a society over the longer term. Thus, most History questions, in both essays and exams, ask you to:
1.) analyze the forces or factors that explain how or why a human community changed in a particular way during a specific time period, or;
2.) explain the significance or lasting impact that an event, such as a war or revolution, had upon a society in the years following that event.

3.) **STEP THREE—Writing the Essay:**
   a.) **Procedure:**
   1.) As explained above, start by writing an outline of about 2 pages for a 10 to 15-page essay. Ideally, each projected paragraph in the essay should be a line in your outline.
   2.) Following your outline, write a first draft taking care to introduce transitional clauses or sentences that allow the reader to follow your argument paragraph by paragraph.
   3.) Reading aloud to yourself, edit the prose to produce a second draft.

   b.) **Sentences:**
   1.) Each sentence should be a complete with subject, verb, and direct object.
   2.) Vary your sentences to include short periodic sentences, simple compound sentences, and compound sentences with clauses in apposition.

   c.) **Paragraphs:**
   1.) Start your paragraph with “topic sentence”—that is, a periodic or compound sentence stating the basic message of this particular paragraph and its relation, in brief, to your overall argument.
   2.) Varying your sentence structure, elaborate and expand this theme into a fully developed paragraph.
   3.) Within the paragraph, try to link your sentences with words such as “similarly,” “moreover,” and “however” so they flow from one sentence to the next.
   4.) Paragraphs should not be too long. If you need a rough guide, have 3 paragraphs to a page with 8 to 10 typed lines in each.

   d.) **Aspire to style:**
   1.) As in all forms of discourse, there is an appropriate style for an academic essay somewhere between the chatty colloquial and the overly formal. Avoid contractions (can't, didn't) and colloquialisms.
   2.) There is a melody and tempo to good writing. Sensitize your mind's ear to the rhythms of your prose, thus giving written expression to your inner voice.