This graduate seminar will cover the National Security process of the US from 1947 to the present, beginning with passage of the National Security Act of 1947 creating the National Security Council; the Department of Defense; the Central Intelligence Agency; and the U.S. Air Force. It will deal with the steps taken to contain the Soviet Union after the Kennan “Long Telegram”; the onset of CIA-mounted covert action; passage of the National Security Act of 1949; National Security Directive 68; the covert actions in Iran in 1953; Guatemala in 1954; and the run-up to and mounting of the Bay of Pigs operation in 1961. The seminar will consider the Soviet Missile Crisis of October, 1962; the build-up in Vietnam; the Vietnam War; the Paris Peace Treaty ending the Vietnam War and subsequent relations with the USSR until its demise in 1991; and relations with China. It will explore the rise of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda, the 9/11 attack and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) that followed, in Iraq and Afghanistan. It will conclude with an examination of the Predator Drone and how it has changed the nature of anti-terrorist operations.

There will be a long term paper (25 double-spaced pages) required, and individual précis on the assigned reading each week will be prepared and circulated by individual students in the seminar.

Required Reading:

George Kennan (biography) by John Lewis Gaddis

Legacy of Ashes by Tim Weiner

Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy by Mark Lowenthal

Secret History: The CIA’s Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-54 by Nick Callather

The Coldest Winter by Michael Halberstam

CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers: Three Episodes, 1962-68 by Harold Ford

Diplomacy by Henry Kissinger

Ghost Wars by Steve Coll

First In by Gary Schroen

9/11 Commission report
Top Secret America by Dana Priest and William A. Arkin

The Rise of the Spy Commando by Frederick P. Hitz (Harv. Journ. of Law and Public Policy, Jan, 2012)

The Dark Side by Jane Mayer

The Predator War by Jane Mayer, series in The New Yorker magazine, 2009

The Triple Agent by Toby Warrick

The Art of Intelligence by Henry Crumpton

The Good Spy by Kai Bird

WEEK ONE: Reading: George Kennan by John Lewis Gaddis; Legacy of Ashes by Tim Weiner, pp. 1-54
Exploration of the origins of the Cold War, Joseph Stalin and the defeat of Hitler; The “X” Telegram; early covert actions; the National Security Act of 1947.

WEEK TWO: Reading: Lowenthal, Chaps 1-10 (continue with Gaddis and Weiner)
Discussion of Soviet Threats to Greece and Turkey, the Berlin Airlift and the development of NSC 68

WEEK THREE: Reading: Continue with Weiner. The Coldest Winter by Michael Halberstam
1950, The Soviets get the A-bomb; China goes Communist and North Korea attacks the South

WEEK FOUR: Reading: Weiner, 92-119 (Chapters 9 and 10) and Cullather’s Secret History of the Guatemala CA

The Early Covert Actions, Iran and Guatemala


The Bay of Pigs and Atmospherics of the 1950s


The Significance of Cuba to the US and the Cuban Missile Crisis
WEEK SEVEN: Reading: Harold Ford, CIA and the Vietnam Policymakers: Three Episodes 1962-68; and Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy, Chapters 27 and 28

The Vietnam War and China

WEEK EIGHT: Reading: Findings and Recommendations of the Church Committee: http://www.icde.com/~paulwolff/cointelpro/churchfinalreportIIId.htm

The Church Committee and Pushback against the “intelligence state”

WEEK NINE: Reading: Lowenthal, Chapter 11; Coll, Ghost Wars, pp.1-187

The Afghanistan Covert Action against the USSR and the End of the Cold War

WEEK TEN: Reading: Ghost Wars, pp.187-end

The Post-Cold War world and the Road to 9/11

WEEK ELEVEN: Reading: The 911 Commission Report; First In
By Gary Schroen

9/11 and its Aftermath

WEEK TWELVE: Reading: The Good Spy by Kai Bird; Top Secret America by Dana Priest and William A. Arkin;
The Rise of the Spy Commando by Frederick P.Hitz

The Rise of the Spy Commando and the use of Predator Drones

WEEK THIRTEEN: Reading: The Predator War by Jane Mayer (series in the New Yorker magazine, 2009); The Dark Side by Jane Mayer; The Triple Agent by Toby Warrick

Complications of the GWOT (Global War on Terrorism)

WEEK FOURTEEN: Reading: The Art of Intelligence by Henry Crumpton

Should Drone Wars and Counter-terrorism Ops be an Intelligence Mission?