Meets with POLS-Y368

After decades of Cold War, for a while it seemed possible that the bitter enmity between Russia and the West might give way to an amicable partnership that could address many pressing world problems. Although Cold War tensions have not entirely resumed, years of rivalry have left a legacy of mistrust and suspicion that seems increasingly unlikely to dissipate. This course will attempt to understand the reasons for this disappointing outcome. We will examine the evolution of Soviet foreign policy in the period after World War II and the foreign policy of Russia since the collapse of the Soviet state, focusing in particular on Russia's relations with the West. Tensions between Russia and the West with regards to developments in Eastern Europe, Central and East Asia, and the Middle East will also be considered. Topics may include the competing views on foreign policy held by various Russian elites, the persistent legacy of the Russian past and of Soviet experience in international affairs before 1945; the impact of ideology on Soviet and Russian decisions and actions; and the institutions involved in the making of Moscow's foreign policy. Readings, lectures and discussions will analyze Soviet conduct during the Cold War, the changes in Soviet policy that led to the end of the Cold War, and Russia's policies in the post-Cold War era. We will also discuss the continuities and discontinuities between the foreign policies of the USSR and those of contemporary Russia and the dilemmas Russia faces in a new and very different international environment. Students will participate in a role-playing exercise, simulating discussions in the Russian Foreign Ministry.