Purpose and Rationale for Cold War and the Middle East

This course will serve the History Department as an upper division elective (non-US history). In terms of skills-building specific to the history major, this is a research- and writing-intensive methods course that requires students, particularly majors and minors, to practice the discipline through examination of the Middle East during the period of the Cold War. I have taught this course twice as a Topics course (HIS 470: Topics in 20th Century History) in Spring 2014 and Fall 12.

Cold War/Middle East will serve the history department curriculum by providing a research- and writing-intensive upper division elective for undergraduate- and graduate-level History students. The History Department offers a variety of upper division courses categorized as non-US history, but in order to serve the University needs for general education curriculum, most of these courses are designed as inter-disciplinary ECCE; this means that history students are exposed to many aspects of historical narrative, but due to the broad nature of the ECCE curriculum, students have limited options for research- and writing-focused classes that are specific to history as a discipline. Currently, this is the only non-general education course designed specifically to address history of the Middle East, which is my area of specialization.

HIS 485 will appeal to both upper division undergraduate students as well as graduate students in the History department. As a 400-level course this class will be available to graduate students in our program, who are required to have at least one world history concentration course. I have had graduate students in the course both times I have taught it. Additionally, undergraduate students are required to take a minimum of 8 hours in non-US history courses at the upper division, and this course will appeal to many of those students. Both times, students from other majors, particularly Global Studies and Political Science, have been able to use the course to satisfy major requirements.

My previous efforts to teach Cold War/Middle East have been largely successful. Enrollment in the sections offered were 19 and 10 students, respectively, indicating interest in the subject matter. In both sections of the course, students successfully completed research papers and subsequently presented their research at STARS (2013) or expanded their research as part of their CAP senior symposium projects (2013 and 2014), indicating that students found the course to significantly increase their interest in the project.