Though scholars have long disagreed about the causes of the Cold War, no one disputes that the “German question” played a central role in the break-up of the wartime alliance and the political division of western and eastern Europe that lasted for almost half a century.

But was this division of Germany inevitable, and if so, why? If not, how did it happen? Was the Cold War inevitable? If yes, why? If not, why not?

The course will explore these questions in two main chronological contexts – 1945 to 1949, and 1989 to the present – using technology to explore Russian archival documents in search of answers. Readings and class discussions in English.