

POLITICAL SCIENCE 410/510: POLITICS OF RUSSIA

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Office Hours: Thursday 1:00-2:30 (or by appt.)

Fall 2018

Tues. & Thurs. 10:00-11:50

Room: Cramer 258

Website: <http://web.pdx.edu/~mev/>

Objectives and Approach: This course offers an in-depth exploration of a fascinating and important country: Russia. We begin with a focus on history, and thus consider the beginnings of the Russian Empire across the centuries. Understanding this history and its cultural impact is vitally important to understanding the politics of Russia today; this is not a country that ignores the past. We then consider the rise and fall of communism – with a particular focus on Lenin and Stalin – and then turn to the rise of Putin. The second half of the course focuses on modern Russian politics, and the ways in which Putin maintains his hold on power. We will consider his use of corruption, electoral strategies, media, as well as his strategies for hyper-masculinization of his image and Russia's involvement in Ukraine, all in an effort to understand Putin's techniques for cultivating legitimacy.

Course Assignments and Grading:

15%= Discussion & Participation in Class

20%= Discussion Paper One

20%= Discussion Paper Two

45%= Final Exam

Discussion & Participation In Class:

Class attendance is required, and you are expected to do the reading for each week and be prepared to discuss the reading in class. In addition, there will be periodic in-class assignments based on the readings, and those grades will be included in this category as well.

Discussion Papers: The discussion paper should be submitted at the beginning of lecture, and should engage the readings of that day. This discussion paper is expected to engage with the readings and offer your own original contribution to the subject. Thus, it should include a brief summary of the readings that you choose to engage in your paper, but the majority of the paper should move beyond summary. This may be, but is not limited to, an attempt to answer an unanswered question, an application of theories to a current event in Russia not discussed in the readings, or even a comparison to another country (though do make sure that your primary focus remains on Russia). This should be a formal paper with a thesis (i.e., an "I argue" statement), not an informal reflection paper. I would like you to conclude your discussion paper with three questions that will provoke and stimulate classroom discussion.

Please note: There are no allowances for late discussion papers, and discussion papers that are simply a summary of the assigned reading will be considered weak and will receive substantially fewer points.

If you are an undergraduate: the discussion paper should be 6-7 pages, double-

spaced.

If you are a graduate student: the discussion paper should be 9-10 pages, double-spaced.

UNDERGRADS: You can turn in your discussion paper any day- just pick the day that the readings look most interesting to you. **BUT REMEMBER:** All students must submit their first discussion paper on or before October 30, and then their second paper on or before November 27.

GRAD STUDENTS ONLY: You will be signing up for a discussion paper due date, and will present your paper to the class on that date. Your presentation will only be 10-15 minutes long, though feel free to include visuals if you'd like.

Final Exam: The final exam is a take-home paper, typically 8-10 pages long for undergraduates and 15-20 pages for graduate students. The exam instructions will be distributed on the last day of class, and a paper copy of your exam is due on December 4.

Required Reading:

The following books have been ordered by the PSU bookstore- all readings are required.

1. *The Dictator's Handbook: Why Bad Behavior is Almost Always Good Politics*
By Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair Smith
2. *The Man Without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin*
By Masha Gessen
3. *Sex, Politics, and Putin*
By Valerie Sperling
4. *Russia: What Everyone Needs to Know*
By Timothy Colton
5. *The Conflict in Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know*
By Serhy Yekelchuk
6. *Russia's Empires*
By Valerie Kivelson and Ronald Suny

Online Readings: In addition, there will be articles and book segments available online. You can access these articles via my website, or via any computer with a PSU connection. (hereafter referred to as "ONLINE")

Late Paper Policy: Discussion papers will not be accepted late- a paper copy must be submitted on the day of the lecture. The final exam will be accepted late, but there is a half-grade penalty for each day that it is late. For example, if it is one day late, the highest grade you can receive on the paper is an 'A-'

Academic Honesty: Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, and any violation is a very serious matter. PSU rules concerning academic dishonesty are spelled out in the General Catalog. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course are *individual*, and no collaboration with any other person is permitted. In-class tests are *closed-book*, with no aids allowed. These rules will be strictly enforced. Any academic

dishonesty will without exception be reported to the student's dean for disciplinary action.

Class Schedule:

Tues, Sept 25: Introduction and logistics

Thurs, Sept 27: Russia Overview

1. "The Russia Left Behind: A journey through a heartland on the slow road to ruin" in the *New York Times*: (though try to read it online because of the pictures)
<http://www.nytimes.com/newsgraphics/2013/10/13/russia/index.html>
2. "A Literary Road Trip in the Heart of Russia" in the *New York Times*:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/14/magazine/a-literary-road-trip-into-the-heart-of-russia.html>
3. Colton, Chapters 1 and 2

Tues, Oct 2: The Russian Empire in History

1. Kivelson & Suny, Chapters 1-3

Thurs, Oct 4: No Class

Tues, Oct 9: The Russian Empire in History

1. Kivelson & Suny, Chapters 4-7

Thurs, Oct 11: The Russian Empire in History (Lenin)

1. Kivelson & Suny, Chapters 8-9
2. Colton, pages 31-43

Tues, Oct 16: The Russian Revolution

1. Online: Shelia Fitzpatrick- *The Russian Revolution*, chapters 1-3

Thurs, Oct 18: The Russian Empire (Stalin)

1. Kivelson & Suny, Chapter 10
2. Colton, pages 43-57
3. Online: Lynne Viola- *The Peasant Rebels Under Stalin*,
Introductory Chapter and Chapter 1

Tues, Oct 23: The Russian Empire (The Fall)

1. Kivelson & Suny, Chapter 11
2. Colton, pages 57-84
3. Online: Cohen "Was the Soviet System Reformable?"

Thurs, Oct 25: The Beginning of Putin's Rule/Foundations of Ukraine

1. Colton, chapters 4 & 5
2. Yekelchuk, chapters 2-4

Tues, Oct 30: Putin (last day to submit discussion paper #1)

1. Gessen, Chapters 1-6
2. Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, Chapters 1-2

Thurs, Nov 1: More Putin

1. Gessen, Chapters 7-12
2. Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, Chapter 3

Tues, Nov 6: Economic Crisis and Control

1. Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, Chapter 4 & 5
2. Online: Rosenfeld "The Popularity Costs of Economic Crisis..."

Thurs, Nov 8: Ukraine

1. Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, Chapter 8
2. Yekelchik, chapters 5 & 6

Tues, Nov 13: Media

1. Online: Enikolopov et al. "Media and Political Persuasion..."
2. Online: Peisakhin & Rozenas "Electoral Effects of Biased Media..."

Thurs, Nov 15: Elections and Parties

1. Online: Harvey "Changes in the Menu of Manipulation..."
2. Online: Reuter & Remington "Dominant Party Regimes and the Commitment Problem"

Tues, Nov 20: Corruption

1. Online: Reisinger et al. "Does Everyday Corruption Affect..."
2. Online: Obydenkov & Libman "Understanding the Survival of Post-Communist Corruption"
3. Bueno de Mesquita & Smith, Chapter 6

Thurs, Nov 22: No Class

Tues, Nov 27: Power and Masculinity (last day to submit discussion paper #2)

1. Sperling: Entire Book

Thurs, Nov 29: Review & Conclusions

(Final Exam Question will be distributed in class)

Tuesday, December 4: Final Exam Due

A paper copy of your final exam must be submitted to my mailbox by 4pm on this day. Instructions for content will be distributed in week 10.