Course title: Russian History II: the Soviet Union and Contemporary Russia
Course code: HIST 3004 RASP
Programs offering course: Russian Area Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2021

Course Description

The course will provide an in-depth examination of the history of Russia from 1917 to present day. Major topics include: the Russian revolutions of 1917, the Soviet system under Bolsheviks and Stalin, the mass terror of the 1920s-1930s and during late Stalinism in the 1950s; the Great Patriotic War, the Thaw, the Cold War, the Perestroika and the collapse of the USSR, the emergence of the post-Soviet states, and socio-economic developments in contemporary Russia. Special attention will be given to continuities and discontinuities between Russia’s imperial past and the Soviet period in Russian history, as well as the country’s post-Soviet present.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- examine essential historiographic debates in Russian and Soviet history;
- demonstrate ability to analyze primary and secondary sources by completing historiographic review of literature;
- analyze cultural and technological transfers of Russia and Europe during Soviet and post-Soviet times;
- implement historic approach to analyze and contextualize contemporary debates on Russia’s current political, social and economic issues;
- evaluate different ways to create historic narratives of the period by examining museum exhibitions, visual and textual representations of Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

The course will consist of lectures and seminar discussions on materials read at home and included in the lecture. Students are expected to participate actively in classroom discussions and prepare all written assignments in a timely manner.

Assessment and Final Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tests</th>
<th>Quizzes</th>
<th>Essay</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Requirements

Tests

20% for each test

A midterm and a final test will be a combination of short answers and problem-oriented questions. They will be based on the quizzes, lectures, readings, and homework assignments. The goal of the tests is to assess students’ knowledge of facts and historic events covered in the class, as well as understanding of important concept and historiographic theories under analysis. Students are expected to demonstrate both their in-depth knowledge of
Quizzes

15% for each quiz

Two quizzes will be given during the semester. These quizzes will test your knowledge of course concepts, theories and facts, and they will be a combination of multiple-choice questions and several open questions.

Essay

The format and the genre of the essay could be best described as “historiographic essay.” The goal of the essay is to analyze and compare several historiographic concepts of a particular event, episode or period in the Russian history. After having analyzed and compared the concepts developed by other historians, students are expected to build their own argument exploring the significance of the historical events and processes under consideration. Please, see the instructor during office hours in order to discuss the choice of topic for your essay.

Your essay should be between 1200 – 2000 words long, must be Word processed, follow one of the conventional citation styles, such as MLA, APA or Chicago Manual style.

Participation

Taking part in class discussions is essential for learning. It is important that all students prepare course readings for the assigned date and come to class ready to analyze and debate issues raised by the readings. All reading materials will be made available to students in electronic form (pdf), so having a convenient device to read .pdf files (a laptop, a pdf-capable e-book reader, etc.) would be of great help. If necessary, paper copies of the readings will be available upon your request.

Attendance

Attendance is crucial for successful completion of the class. Students are allowed to have two unexcused absences for each course for the whole semester program. These allowed unexcused absences should be used for situations such as minor illnesses without a doctor's note or personal situations that prevent the student from attending the class. Allowed unexcused absences should not be used in a planned way for travel or other activities. Unexcused absences beyond the limit of two will lower a student’s grade by 2 points on the 100-point scale each. For example, if your overall score in the class is 90 (an equivalent of A-) and you have had three unexcused absences, your final score will be 88 (B+).

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class: 1.1

Introduction to the course. Course syllabus, practical matters. The main sources for studies of Russian and Soviet history. Problems of Russian historiography.

Class: 1.2

World War I, the crisis of tsarism and the Russian revolutions. The revolutions of 1917: from abdication of the tsar to the Bolshevik dictatorship.

Reading: A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond, pp. 400-445


Week 2

Class: 2.1

Political radicalization and Lenin. Bolshevism and the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat.’ The civil war, 1918-1920.

Class: 2.2

Class 2. The civil war in Russia, continued. The red terror. Uprisings in Kronstadt and Tambov.

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 430-450


**Week 3**

Class: 3.1


Class: 3.2


**Quiz 1**

**Week 4**

Class: 4.1

The ‘great transformation’ of the 1930s: industrialization and the forced collectivization. The phenomenon of the ‘former people.’

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp.473-480;


Class: 4.2

The ‘great transformations’ of the 1930s: the mass terror of the 1930s and the Gulag.


**Week 5**

Class: 5.1

The art of Soviet propaganda. Revolution and the masses. Culture One and Culture Two (Vladimir Paperny). The Orthodox church and militant atheism.

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 498-520


Class: 5.2

The Great Fatherland War. The coming of World War II: the Nazi-Soviet pact. Invasion and the siege of Leningrad. Stalin as Supreme Commander.

Reading: Suny, Chapter 14, pp. 336-360.

*A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 520-562

**Week 6**

Class: 6.1
The Khrushchev era, 1953-1964: de-Stalinization of the country, the Thaw and the Caribbean crisis

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 562-583


Class: 6.2 .

The Khrushchev era, 1953-1964: the housing reform and introduction of modern consumerism


**Week 7**

Class: 7.1 .

The Brezhnev era, 1964-1982: stagnation and détente


Class: 7.2 .

The Brezhnev era, 1964-1982: the economic crisis and emergence of political dissent

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 583-611

Mid-Term Exam

**Week 8**

Class: 8.1 .

The Soviet war in Afghanistan

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 599-608.

Class: 8.2 .

The Soviet Union, 1982-1985: the ‘evil empire’ and the anti-American campaign

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, pp. 611-624.

**Week 9**

Class: 9.1 .

The Russian perestroika, 1985-1991: the Gorbachev revolution

Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond* pp. 630-676


Class: 9.2 .


Reading: *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond*, 630-640

**Week 10**

Class: 10.1 .


Class: 10.2 .

Week 11

Class: 11.1


Reading: Suny, 491-512.

A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond, pp. 695-721

Lowe, Norman, Mastering twentieth-century Russian history, pp. 453-479

Class: 11.2

War in Chechnya. Independence of Chechnya and first terrorist attacks in Russia. The first and second Chechen campaigns.

Reading: Anna Politkovskaya, A Small Corner of Hell: Dispatches from Chechnya.

Essay

Week 12

Class: 12.1

The Putin presidency. Natural resources and power structures. Putin’s ‘vertical of power.’

Reading: A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond, pp 725-734.

Class: 12.2

Final Exam

Course Materials

Readings


MacKenzie, David; Curran, Michael A History of Russia, the Soviet Union, and Beyond Wadsworth Group, 2002.


Online Resources


http://www.iisg.nl/exhibitions/chairman/sovintro.php