Course title: Ethnic Studies: National and Ethnic Issues in Modern Russia
Course code: RAST 3002 RASP
Programs offering course: Russian Area Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Fall 2020

Course Description

This course provides a general introduction into the discipline of Ethnic Studies and puts the problems of ethnic identity and ethnic conflicts in the Russian Federation in historical and theoretical context. The course addresses competing theories of ethnicity, the history of ethnicities in the Russian Empire and the USSR, and traces the origins of the widespread surge of ethnic nationalism which accompanied the collapse of the Soviet Union. Finally, the course investigates the urgent problems of the relationships between different ethnic groups in today's Russia, both in large central cities and in national provinces, with a special emphasis on the conflict in Chechnya. The course makes extensive use of primary visual materials and involves substantial reading of secondary literature. No knowledge of Russian is required.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Know basic concepts and theories of ethnicity and use them while analyzing ethnic issues in Russia
- Evaluate the impact of the Empire and Soviet Communism on the development of ethnicity in Russia;
- Analyze key problems of nation-building during various periods of Russian history;
- Analyze and discuss cases of ethnic issues in Russia.

Course Prerequisites

None.

Methods of Instruction

Summarize instructional activities that will be used to deliver course content and meet Learning Objectives in alignment with the course level. Refer to SOP and Academic Manual for instruction to populate this field.

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

1. Essay 30%
2. Quizzes (3) 30%
3. Final Exam 20%
4. Participation 20%
TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Essay

A goal of this 2,250 - 2,750 word essay is to narrate your experience of observing race and ethnicity in Russia
and critically engage concepts and categories studies in this class. Students are supposed to discuss the topic for the essay by Week 6 and to submit a final copy by deadline on Week 11. Your essay should double-spaced, and use 12-pt Times New Roman font.

**Quizzes (3)**

Three quizzes will be given during the semester (worth 10% each). 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.

**Final Exam**

Your final exam will assess your knowledge of main course concepts, theories and facts, and it will be a combination of multiple-choice questions, several short open questions and a large question, which would require an essay-type response. It will take 45 to 90 minutes, and it will be given during the last class session.

**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 means 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 in room 116 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: 1.0 WHY ETHNICITY MATTERS

Overview of ethnic problems in contemporary Russia. Ethnicities and geography. Soviet legacy and Post-Soviet challenges. Theories of ethnicity.

Class: 2.0 Basic Concepts of Ethnic Studies

Overview of the fundamental attributes of ethnicity and their applicability to ethnic groups in Russia. The Russians and the Chechens. The Russians and the Ukrainians.


Reading: *Ethnicity Reader* (Introduction)

**Week 2**

Class: 3.0 Theories of Ethnicity, Part 1

Primordialism, transactionalism, instrumentalism. Analysis of the works of Max Weber, Clifford Geertz, Steven Grosby, Jack Eller, Pierre van den Berghe, Joshua Fishman, and Walker Connor.

Reading: *Ethnicity Reader*, Ch. 5-11; p. 35-69.

Class: 4.0 Theories of Ethnicity, Part 2
Week 3
Class: 5.0 Ethnicity in the Modern World

Analysis of the works of Nathan Glazer, Daniel Bell, Etienne Balibar, Rogers Brubaker, Walter Zenner.

Reading: *Ethnicity Reader*, Ch. 22-30, pp. 135-179

Class: 6.0 Ethnicity, Religion, and Language

Analysis of the works of Anthony Smith, Cynthia Enloe, Jacob Landau, Jaroslav Krejci, and John Edwards.

Reading: *Ethnicity Reader*, Ch. 31-36, pp. 197-227

Week 4
Class: 7.0 Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism

Analysis of the works of John Stone, Donald Horowitz, Milton Esman, Hakan Wiberg, Sammy Smooha, John McGarry, and Ray Taras.

Reading: *Ethnicity Reader*, Ch. 45, 47, 54-57, pp. 278-285; 321-347.

Class: 8.0 Quiz 1

Week 5
Class: 9.0 The Multinational Russian Empire

Overview of religions, peoples, and ethnicities in Russia before 1917. The Russian frontier.

Reading: Dominic Lieven, "Russia as empire and periphery"; Ronald G. Suny, "The Empire Strikes Out."

Class: 10.0 The Russian Empire and the Russian Nation

The place of the Russians in the Russian Empire. The problem of Russian national identity.

Reading: Hubertus F. Jahn. "Us": Russians on Russianness; Mark Bassin, "Geographies of imperial identity"; Leonid Gorizontov, "The 'Great Circle' of Interior Russia"

Week 6
Class: 11.0 The Russian Empire and Non-Russian Ethnicities

Russification, nationalism, and the role of religion.

Reading: Theodore Weeks, "Managing empire: Tsarist nationalities policy"; Timothy Snyder, "Ukrainians and Poles"; Benjamin Nathans, "Jews"; Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "Islam and the Russian Empire"; Robert Crews, For Prophet and Tsar; Elena Campbell, "The Muslim Question in Late Imperial Russia."

Class: 12.0 The Caucasus in Russian XIX Century Imagination

The place of Caucasus in Russian Romanticism. The ethnic Other and the Russian self.

Screening: Stanislav Rostotski, Bela; Georgii Kalatozishvili, The Prisoner of the Mountains.

Reading: Mikhail Lermontov, The Hero of Our Time; Leo Tolstoy, The Prisoner of the Caucasus; Susan Layton, Russian Literature and Empire.

Week 7
Class: 13.0 Russian Revolution, Modernization, and the Emancipation of Nationalities
The Bolsheviks and the national question. Modernization and emancipation in the 1920s.

Screening: Vsevolod Pudovkin, *Storm Over Asia*;
Dziga Vertov, *Three Songs of Lenin*.


Class: 14.0 Soviet Union, Ethnicities, and Nation-Building

Screening: Grigorii Kozintsev & Leonid Trauberg, *Alone*;
Grigory Aleksandrov, *A Swineherd and a Shepherd*.

Reading: Yuri Slezkine, "The Soviet Union as a Communal Apartment."

**Week 8**

Class: 15.0 World War II and the Great-Russian Nationalism


Reading: David Bradenberger, "... It is Imperative to Advance Russian Nationalism as the First Priority." Debates within the Stalin’s Ideological Establishment, 1941-1945"; Peter Blitstein, "Nation-Building or Russification?"

Class: 16.0 The Family of Nations: Ethnicities and Stereotypes in the Late Soviet Union


**Week 9**

Class: 17.0 Quiz 2

Quiz 2

Class: 18.0 The Rise of Ethnic Nationalism and the Collapse of the Soviet Union

Reading: Dmitry Gorenburg, Minority Ethnic Mobilization in the Russian Federation; Yuri Slezkine, "Ethnoterritorial Units in the USSR and Successor States."

Screening: documentary footage of popular unrest in Soviet republics.

**Week 10**

Class: 19.0 Without the Homeland: Ethnic Russians after the Collapse of the USSR


Reading: Anatol Lieven, Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power.

**Quiz 3**

Class: 20.0 Chechnya: Ethnic Mobilization and Two Wars

Reading: Dmitry Gorenburg, Minority Ethnic Mobilization in the Russian Federation;
Valery Tishkov, Chechnya: Life in a War-Tom Society;
Svante Cornell, Small Nations and Great Powers; Georgi Derluguian, Bourdieus’s secret admirer in the Caucasus; Anatol Lieven, Chechnya: Tombstone of Russian Power.


**Week 11**

Reading: Stephen Shenfield, "Russian Fascism"

Screening: YouTube and TV news videos; Andrey Malyukov, We Are from the Future (2008); Pavel Bardin, Russia 88 (2009).

**Your essay is due**

Class: 22.0 Anti-Semitism and Russian-Jewish Relationship

The history of Jews Russia in the XX century. Anti-Semitism in contemporary Russian society.

Reading: Daniel Mahoney. "Solzhenitsyn on Russia's 'Jewish Question'"; Yuri Slezkine. The Jewish Century.

**Week 12**

Class: 23.0 Being Russian in the Wide World

Class: 24.0 Final exam

**Final exam**

**Course Materials**

**Readings**


Mahoney, Daniel. "Solzhenitsyn on Russia's 'Jewish Question.'" Society. 11-12, 2002.


**Online Resources**

World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples - Russian Federation. [https://www.refworld.org/docid/4954ce18c.html](https://www.refworld.org/docid/4954ce18c.html), assessed February 1, 2019