

Spring 2016 History 378-01
2:00-3:15 TR BRYN 121

Russian History Since 1900 (www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia)

Instructor: Jeff Jones	jwjones@uncg.edu
Office: 2139 MHRA	Phone: 334-4068
Office Hours: M 10-10:50; T 9-10:15; Th 11-11:50 and by appointment	

Course Description

This introductory course, which is cross-listed with International and Global Studies (IGS), examines Russian and Soviet history in the 20th century in two parts. Part I: “From Traditional Russia to the Civil War,” looks at traditional Russian society and culture; developments in the late 19th century; and the upheavals in Russian society from the late tsarist period through World War I, the revolutions of 1917, and the civil war. Part II: “From the Rise of Joseph Stalin to post-Soviet Russia,” emphasizes the impact of the Stalin Revolution, the purges, and WWII; the reformist course of de-Stalinization pursued by Nikita Khrushchev; neo-Stalinism under Leonid Brezhnev; the Soviet-Afghan War and Mikhail Gorbachev’s dramatic reforms in the 1980s; and the collapse of the USSR and post-Soviet Russia with an emphasis on the conflict in Chechnya. The course explores several themes: Russia’s relationship with the West; revolution and the role of the individual in history; the role of gender and class in Russian and Soviet society; and the role of ideology and socialism in theory and practice.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to ...

- Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
- Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing
- Comprehend that history is not the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the *interpretation* of the past.
- Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods.
- Analyze the key terms, facts, and events in modern Russian/Soviet history and thereby exhibit an informed historical perspective.
- Critically appraise varying historical arguments and clearly express their own interpretations.
- Learn how to critically read and distinguish between different types of historical sources and to “read between the lines” of differing points of view.
- Analyze primary sources and gain insight on how to interpret history through such sources.

QEP Global Engagement SLOs:

1. Students will explain environmental, historical, social, economic, political and/or cultural factors relevant to understanding a contemporary issue(s) within a global framework.
2. Students will compare and contrast at least two different ethical perspectives on a salient and contemporary issue in a global context.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate in a culturally informed manner in international, intercultural and/or multicultural contexts.

Required Books:

- *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Mikhail Sholokhov (New York: Vintage Publishers, 1989; ISBN: 9780679725213).
- *Bitter Waters: Life and Work in Stalin's Russia*, Gennady Andreev-Khomiakov (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1997; ISBN: 9780813323749).
- *Ivan's War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (New York: Picador, 2006; ISBN: 9780312426521).
- *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer: Technology and the Fall of the Soviet Union*, Lauren Graham (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1996; ISBN: 9780674354371).
- Reserve and online material identified below

Required Films:

- "Burnt by the Sun" (1994) directed by Nikita Mikhalkov;
- "Prisoner of the Mountains" (1996) directed by Sergei Bodrov

Course Activities:

Participation	40%	Midterm Exam	20%	(10% in-class; 10% Take Home Essay)
Review Essay	20%	Final Exam	20%	(10% in-class; 10% Take Home Essay)

Research Guide: David Warden, a former student in the class who is now a graduate student in the UNCG Library and Information Studies Program, constructed this [Research Guide](#) to assist students in this course, especially (though not only) for the Review Essay assignment.

Participation: The 40% class participation grade consists of Worksheets, Online Discussions, and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages, double-spaced) to the readings designated below. The Reaction Pieces are not a summary of the assigned reading but are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of the readings illustrated and supported by direct evidence from the readings. When a RP is due for more than one reading you can either weave them together in a single response or deal with them in separate entries. You can keep up with your participation grade on Canvas.

Review Essay: The Review Essay (worth 20%) requires you to define the issues and arguments involved in a topic of historiographical debate related to the course (see the list of possible topics below). For the essay you should summarize the opposing sides of a historical debate for a topic chosen ahead of time and approved by the instructor, identifying 3-5 major books or articles on that topic in a bibliography. **The essay is due April 7**, but can be turned in at any point after March 24. **Essays should be double-spaced, 12-pt. font, 10-12 pages** in length.

Written assignments for the course will be graded on the basis of these criteria:

- 1) **Level of analysis/argumentation.** Present a thoughtful argument and interpretation, *not* a mere summary of facts. (Note: it does not matter which side of an issue one argues, only how well or how poorly one makes the argument).
- 2) **Use of evidence.** The source material you select to support your argument must be relevant and must clearly back up your argument; where necessary defend your argument by effectively refuting "the other side" of the issue.

- 3) **Clarity of communication.** You must present the evidence and express your argument in a clear, comprehensible manner.

<p>A = excellent performance on all three criteria. B = above average on all three, or excellent on some tempered by flaws in others. C = average across the board, or above average in part but with significant flaws. D = below average overall performance.</p>

Exams: There is a midterm exam and a final exam (each worth 20%) for the class. The in-class exams are comprised of Slide/Visual IDs from course lectures, Identifications and Short Answer Questions based on course material and readings. In addition, each exam includes a Take Home Essay to be turned in on exam day; each essay, the topics for which are listed below, is worth 10% of the overall exam/course grade. The exams cover *only* the part of the course for which they are designated (Midterm: Late Imperial Period-Civil War; Final: Rise of Stalin-Contemporary Russia), so they are *not cumulative*. A Study Guide will be provided to students online for each of the exams no less than two weeks prior to the exam period.

Grading: Grades are compiled on a point system. For example, if you make an 80 on the Midterm Exam (12/15) + 88 on the Midterm Take Home Essay (8.8/10) + an 85 on the Final Exam (12.8/15) + 93 on the Final Take Home Essay (9.3/10) + 85 on your Written Assignment (17/20) + 90 on Participation (27/30), your final grade = **86.9** or **87 B+**

CLASS SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 12. Introduction

BEGIN READING: *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Parts I & II (“Peace” & “War”); [Worksheet 1](#) due in class February 2

Part I: From Traditional Russia to the Civil War

Thursday, January 14. Traditional Russian Society

- Reading for January 19: [“Prisoner of the Caucasus”](#) by Lev Tolstoy; **Online Discussion 1:** reply to the prompt on Canvas by 8:00AM Tuesday, January 19

Tuesday, January 19. Russia in the Caucasus: Discussion of the Reading

- Reading for January 21: excerpts from [“What is to be Done?”](#) by V. I. Lenin; **Online Discussion 2:** reply to the prompt on Canvas by 8:00AM Thursday, January 21

Thursday, January 21. The Origins of Russian Marxism & Lenin’s “What is to be done?”

- Reading for January 26: [“October Manifesto”](#)

Tuesday, January 26. The Russian Revolution of 1905: Battleship Potemkin

- Optional Reading: [“Potemkin’ Restored to Uncensored Glory”](#)

Thursday, January 28. Between the Revolutions: Russia in Transition

- Optional Reading: [“The Story of an Assassination”](#) by Marie Sukloff

Tuesday, February 2: Calm Before the Storm: Discussion of *And Quiet Flows the Don*

READING: *And Quiet Flows the Don*, Parts III & IV (“Revolution” & “Civil War”); [Worksheet 2](#) due February 16

Thursday, February 4. 1917: Revolutionary Turmoil in Russia

Tuesday, February 9. Revolutionary Turmoil in Russia (cont’d)

- Reading for February 11: “[Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited Peoples](#)”; excerpts from “[The Proletarian Revolution and The Renegade Kautsky](#)” by V. I. Lenin; and “[Theses on Communist Morality in the Sphere of Marital Relations](#)” by Alexandra Kollontai; ****RP 1** due in class

Thursday, February 11. The Bolsheviks Come to Power

Tuesday, February 16. The Cossacks & the Civil War: Discussion of *And Quiet Flows the Don*

Thursday, February 18. **MIDTERM EXAM: TAKE HOME ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

MIDTERM EXAM Take Home Essay Question (worth 10% of the overall course grade) (12-point font, 3-5 pages double-spaced): Drawing on at least two sources from the course, respond to this question: In your opinion, was the collapse of the Russian autocracy and the Bolshevik rise to power inevitable or, without the strains of World War I, could Russia have gradually evolved into a Constitutional Monarchy or parliamentary democracy?

Part II: From the Rise of Joseph Stalin to post-Soviet Russia

Tuesday, February 23. Stalin as a Historical Personality & the Struggle for Power

- Optional Reading: “[Stalin, Man of the Borderlands](#)” by Alfred Rieber

BEGIN READING: *Bitter Waters*; ****RP 2** due March 1

- Reading for February 25: “[Should This Pulitzer be Pulled?](#)” by Douglas McCollam; **Online Discussion 3**: reply to the prompt on Canvas by 8:00AM Thursday, February 25

Thursday, February 25. The Struggle for Power (cont’d) & the Stalin Revolution

- ❖ **FILM**: view “[Burnt by the Sun](#)” for an in-class discussion on March 3; ****RP 3** due in class

Tuesday, March 1. The Stalinist Repression(s): Discussion of *Bitter Waters*

Thursday, March 3. The Stalinist Repression(s) (cont’d): Discussion of “Burnt by the Sun”

BEGIN READING: *Ivan’s War*; ****RP 4** due March 17

Tuesday, March 15. The Beginning of World War II

- Optional Reading: [Stalin as Time’s “Man of the Year” 1939 & 1942](#)

Thursday, March 17. WWII in the USSR: Discussion of *Ivan's War*

- Optional Reading: excerpt from [Through the Burning Steppe](#)
- Reading for March 22: Stephen Bittner, "[A Negentropic Society? Wartime and Postwar Soviet History.](#)" *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 14, 3 (Summer 2013): 599-619.

Tuesday, March 22. Russia After the War

- Reading for March 24: [excerpts from the 1947 speeches of Andrei Zhdanov and President Harry Truman](#); [Worksheet 3](#) due in class

Thursday, March 24. Origins of the Cold War: Discussion of the Reading

- Optional Reading: "[A Cold War Crusader: Andrew Eiva, the KGB, and the Soviet-Afghan War](#)" by Jeff Jones

- Reading for March 29: Excerpt from Khrushchev's 1956 [Secret Speech](#)

Tuesday, March 29. Khrushchev & de-Stalinization: the "Thaw"

- Optional Reading: Khrushchev as [Time's "Man of the Year" 1957](#); excerpts from [One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch](#) by Alexander Solzhenitsyn and [Not By Bread Alone](#) by Vladimir Dudintsev

- Reading for March 31: "[Fiasco in Riazan Oblast](#)" by Roy and Zhores Medvedev; and "[Bloody Saturday: Novochoerkassk, 1962](#)"; ****RP 5** due in class

Thursday, March 31. Crisis in the Early 1960s

- Reading for April 5: [KGB Report on Discos in Kiev](#); and [KGB Report on Cafes and Restaurants in Kiev](#); ****RP 6** due in class

Tuesday, April 5. The Brezhnev Era: Stability, Neo-Stalinism, & Stagnation

BEGIN READING: [The Ghost of the Executed Engineer](#); ****RP 7** due April 12

Thursday, April 7. The Gorbachev Phenomenon: *Perestroika & Glasnost*; ****REVIEW ESSAY DUE IN CLASS**

- Optional Reading: "[Gorbachev: From High Hopes to the Bitter End](#)" by Theodore von Laue; and [Gorbachev as Time's "Man of the Year" 1987 and 1989](#)

- ❖ **FILM**: view "[Prisoner of the Mountains](#)" for an in-class discussion on April 14; ****RP 8** due in class

Tuesday, April 12. The Collapse of the USSR: Discussion of *The Ghost of the Executed Engineer*

Thursday, April 14. Post-Soviet Russia: Discussion of "Prisoner of the Mountains"

Tuesday, April 19. Russia Today: Conflict in Ukraine (and Beyond)

Thursday, April 21. TBA

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, April 28 at 3:30. TAKE HOME ESSAY DUE IN CLASS

FINAL EXAM Take Home Essay Question (worth 10% of the overall course grade) (12-point font, 3-5 pages double-spaced): Choose one of the following questions:

1. Drawing on at least three sources from the course, respond to this question: In your opinion, what were the main factors in the collapse of the Soviet Union? (Note: begin with the early Stalin era to address this question).

OR

2. Drawing on at least three sources from the course agree with one of these two statements:
a. The Soviet Union under Stalin and his successors was clearly a totalitarian society.

or

b. The term “totalitarian” does not adequately describe the Soviet Union under Stalin or his successors because it conceals more than it reveals.

List of Possible Topics* for the Review Essay:

- Traditional Russian culture and society
- Sport and entertainment in late imperial Russia and/or the Soviet period
- The 1905 Revolution and/or the “Transition Period” Between the Revolutions
- World War I in Russia/Russia’s Role in World War I
- The 1917 Revolution(s)/Revolutionary Period/The Soviet Civil War
- The NEP period
- A Comparison of Different Biographies of (choose 1):
Lenin/Stalin/Trotsky/Bukharin/Gorbachev, etc.
- The Collectivization of Agriculture/The “Stalin Revolution”
- The Debate over the Ukrainian Famine (1932-33)
- The Debate over the Assassination of Sergei Kirov (December 1934)
- The Origins and Causes of the purges of the late 1930s
- Religion in Russia/the Soviet Union
- Art/Literature/Film in the Soviet period
- Propaganda/Iconography/the Stalin Cult
- National Policy during the Stalinist/Soviet Period
- Soviet Foreign Policy
- The Role or Position of Women in Russia/the Soviet Union
- Anti-Semitism in Russia/the USSR
- The Soviet Educational System
- Nazi Occupation/the Holocaust in the USSR
- The Leningrad Blockade/World War II in the Soviet Union/Postwar Reconstruction
- The Origins of the Cold War
- The “Thaw”/Khrushchev Period
- The Brezhnev Period in Soviet History
- The Soviet-Afghan War
- The Gorbachev Reforms
- The Collapse of the USSR

*These are just suggestions of topics for the Review Essay and this list is *not* intended to be exhaustive; students are welcome to come up with their own possible topics (or variations of those listed above).