

University of Rochester
Department of Political Science

IR 210: RUSSIAN POLITICS
SPRING 2010

Instructor: Tatiana Vashchilko

Class Location: MEL 205

Class Lectures: MW 12:30 – 1:45 PM

Office Hours: MW 2:00-4:00 PM, and by appointment

Office: Harkness 320B

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Required Texts:

1. Remington, Thomas F. 2010. *Politics in Russia*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Longman/Pearson Education.
2. Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Noguee. 2009. *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*, Fourth Edition, Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe.
3. White, Stephen, eds. 2009. *Developments in Russian Politics 7*. Durham: Duke University Press.
4. Randall W. Stone. 1996. *Satellites and Commissars: Strategy and Conflict in the Politics of Soviet-Bloc Trade*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
5. Randall W. Stone. 2002. *Lending Credibility: The International Monetary Fund and the Post-Communist Transition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

WELCOME! You have chosen a course which will improve your understanding of the politics of Russia and the successor states of the Soviet Union. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia and the successor states have transitioned across differing paths to establish new political and economic systems. The Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) have made their transitions toward democracy and a market economy, while many of the other former Soviet Republics have struggled with these changes. This course offers a comprehensive analysis of contemporary political and economic systems in Russia and other former Soviet states including the evolution of those systems over the last century. The main goal of this course is to create a familiarity with the Soviet and post-Soviet polity, with an emphasis on Russia, the most powerful and the largest of the fifteen successor states, and its evolving role in the international community of the 21st century. Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments, contribute to class discussion, and design a semester-long research project.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION

	% of Total	Maximum Possible Points
Mid-Term Exam I (February 24 th)	20%	100
Mid-Term Exam II (March 31 st)	20%	100
Final Exam (May 4 th at 8:30 AM)	20%	100
Short Papers	15%	75
Final Paper	15%	75
Presentation	10%	50

COURSE POLICIES

Lectures: I expect you to be on time at every lecture, and you have the right to expect that every lecture will start and end on time. You have the right to determine how much reading you need to do well in the class, but I expect you to read the assigned chapter(s) and papers in the Course Outline before each class. You have the right to learn passively in class. That is, I will not force you to participate by calling on you. But I am going to create an effective learning environment in the classroom. And there is a lot YOU can do to help to make a good learning environment for yourself and your classmates. This includes not only active participation in class by asking questions and getting involved in class tasks, but also avoiding any distracting activities, such as coming to lecture late or leaving it early, reading newspapers during the lectures, or even talking with other students. All of that will make it impossible to give a good lecture and add value to you and your colleagues. I will appreciate you turn off cell phones before class begins. **PLEASE AVOID ANY DISTRACTING ACTIVITIES DURING THE LECTURE!!!**

Attendance: I will take attendance every day by doing small in-class tasks or pop-quizzes, which can be in the very beginning or very end of the class, or in the middle of the class. Moreover, coming to every lecture gives you the opportunity to earn those 5% that sometimes is crucial in raising the grade from C+ to B-. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE IN CLASS!!!**

Short Papers: The specific requirements for the short papers will be distributed during the second week of classes.

Final Paper: Ideally your final paper will consist of a few short papers that you write during the course.

Exams: The total number of exams is THREE: TWO midterms and a final. The length of each exam is 1 hour and 40 minutes. You will need a pencil or pen on your exams, and you are not allowed to use a cell phone or to borrow a calculator during the exam. The exam scores will be available by the next week class period. All exams are closed book. Each exam will focus on all the material covered before the exam. There are two sections in each exam: a concept/argument part and an article part. Each section will account for 50% of your grade. In the concept part, your comprehension of the key course concepts and arguments is tested. In the argument part, your comprehension of the research question, the main argument of an academic journal article, and interpretation of the statistical findings in the article is tested. The academic journal article for the second part of the exam is not covered in the course.

Make-ups: If you miss an exam without any valid excuse, you will receive 0 points for the exam. With a valid excuse you will be allowed to take the regular subsequent exam instead of the one you missed without penalty. As a result the weight of missed exams with a valid excuse will be reallocated to the remaining exams.

Grades and Grading Scale: As one of my professors has noted, “grades are a carrot that encourages learning.” I will not hesitate to give a poor grade, if your performance indicates that you have not learned the material, but I want everyone in this class to do well.

Regrades: I will give you the grade that reflects at what rate your assignment is correct. I will put every effort to do it the first time around. I reserve the right to raise, leave the same or lower the grade. I will regrade the work in its entirety. If you would like to regrade your work, please, write the memo explaining why you are uncomfortable with grade and why you think your work should be regraded.

DISABILITY ACCESS

University of Rochester encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access let me know as soon as possible. I'm here to help!

VALID EXCUSES

During the course many possible situations may arise that would result in your inability to attend class, attend exams, or perform at a minimally acceptable level during an examination. Illness or injury, family emergencies, certain University approved curricular and extra-curricular activities, and religious holidays can be legitimate reasons to miss class or to be excused from a scheduled examination.

In the case of your own illness or injury, confirmation from a physician, physician's assistant, a nurse practitioner, or a nurse is required. Barring extraordinary circumstances, the confirmation must be available to the instructor prior to the missed course event.

With regard to family emergencies, you must provide verifiable documentation of the emergency. Given the vast array of family emergencies the instructor will provide precise guidance as to what constitutes adequate documentation. Unless the emergency is critical you should notify the instructor in advance of your absence from the scheduled course event. In cases of critical emergencies, you must notify the instructor within one week of your absence.

For University approved curricular and extra-curricular activities, verifiable documentation is also required. The student should obtain from the unit or department sponsoring the activity a letter (or class absence form) indicating the anticipated absence(s). The letter must be presented to the instructor at least one week prior to the first absence. In the case of religious holidays, the student should notify the instructor by the third week of the course of any potential conflicts.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

University of Rochester Policy on Academic Honesty:

University of Rochester defines academic honesty as the respect of "the integrity of one another's work and recognize the importance of acknowledging and safeguarding intellectual property" (from Arts, Science and Engineering College Academic Honesty Policy, http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/docs/Academic_Honesty.pdf)

"Academic dishonesty can involve a wide range of offenses. Our policy lists several types of offenses, including (but not limited to): Plagiarism, Copying papers, Copying answers on exams, Any other act that represents someone else's work as your own, Misuse of library materials such as the removal of books from the libraries without formally checking out the items, or the intentional hiding of materials, or the refusal to return reserve readings to the library, etc., Obtaining an exam prior to its administration, Using unauthorized aid during an examination. Academic dishonesty is not limited to those offenses listed above. The best course of action if you're not sure if what you're doing constitutes academic dishonesty is to ask first. Ask via e-mail if possible, and save a copy of the response" (Definition of Academic Dishonesty in the Arts, Science and Engineering College Academic Honesty Policy <http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/students.html#con>).

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST

January 13. Overview of the course policies and readings.

Syllabus

Overview of the Contemporary Russian Political System

Remington, Chapter 1.

January 18. Martin Luther King Day – NO CLASSES.

January 20. Russia before 1917.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 2.

Remington, Chapter 1, pp.32-34.

January 25, 27. Soviet Union before Cold War.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 3.

Remington, pp. 34-44

February 1, 3. The Cold War.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 4.

Remington, Chapter 2 (up to p. 50), Chapter 4 (pp.95-100), Chapter 5 (pp.130-134).

February 8, 10. Central Planning and the Soviet Satellite System.

Randall W. Stone. *Satellites and Commissars: Strategy and Conflict in the Politics of Soviet-Bloc Trade*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

February 15, 17. The End of the Cold War and the Transition Period.

Remington, pp. 50-56.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 5.

February 22. The IMF and the Post-Communist Transition.

Randall W. Stone, *Lending Credibility: The International Monetary Fund and the Post-Communist Transition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). Chapters 1-2, 4-9.

February 24 – MIDTERM I

March 1, 3. Russia's Constitutional Order.

Remington, Chapter 3.

March 8, 10. SPRING BREAK - NO CLASSES.

March 15, 17. Political Participation and Political Culture in Russia.

Remington, Chapters 4 and 5.

March 22, 24. Interest Groups, Political Parties and the Law.

Remington, Chapters 6 and 8.

March 29. Russia's Economy.

Remington, Chapter 7.

March 31 – MIDTERM II

April 5, 7. Russia and the States of the Former Soviet Union.

Remington, Chapter 9.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 6.

April 12, 14. Russia and the rest of the World.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapters 7 and 8.

April 19, 21. Russian policy and security.

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 9.

April 26, 28. Student presentations.

May 4 (Tue), 08:30am – FINAL