History of the USSR and Post-Soviet Russia

HIST 133

Fall 2021

Matthew Lenoe

370A Rush Rhees Library

[matthew.lenoe@rochester.edu](mailto:matthew.lenoe@rochester.edu)

Office hours: M, 2:30-3:45 p.m.; T, 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Mode of address: Professor Lenoe / Mr. Lenoe

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| W, 8/25 | Introduction | View “Merchant Bashkirov’s Daughter” (1912) in class. Discuss. |
| M, 8/30 | Marxism: Discussion | Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/> (Skip Preface, read only Preamble and Parts I and II). |
| W, 9/1 | Revolutionary Russia and World War I, 1905-1917. L/D | Kenez, 1-13. V. I. Lenin, “The Principles of Socialism and the War of 1914-1915,” at  <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1915/s-w/ch01.htm> |
| W, 9/8 | The February and October Revolutions, 1917-1918. Lecture. | Kenez, 14-33. |
| M, 9/13 | Revolutionary Voices. Discussion. | Steinberg, *Voices of Revolution* (on e-reserve). **Short paper due.** |
| W, 9/15 | Civil War and Initiation of NEP. Lecture. | Kenez, 33-53. In class: View excerpts from Vertov film, “Man with a Movie Camera” |
| M, 9/20 | *Cement* I. Discussion. | *Cement*, Chapters 1-11. **Second draft of short paper due.** |
| W, 9/22 | *Cement* II. Discussion. | *Cement*, Chapters 12-17 |
| M, 9/27 | New Economic Policy - Towards the Great Break, 1923-1930. Lecture. | Kenez, 53-82. Shliapnikov and Tararukhin political autobiographies on electronic reserve. |
| W, 9/29 | Collectivization. Discussion. | Kenez, 83-89. Letter from Feigin to Ordzhonikidze, 1932 at <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/trans-aa2feign.html> . Lev Kopelev, “The Last Grain Collections (1933),” on e-reserve. |
| M, 10/4 | Industrialization. Lecture. | **Political autobiographies due.** Kenez, 89-102 |
| W, 10/6 | High Stalinism and Terror, 1934-1938. Lecture. | Kenez, 103-132 |
| M, 10/11 | **HOLIDAY** |  |
| W, 10/13 | “Great Retreat,” 1939-1941. L/D | View excerpts from “Volga, Volga,” “Aleksandr Nevskii” |
| M, 10/18 | The Great Patriotic War I. Lecture. | Kenez, 125-159 |
| W, 10/20 | Great Patriotic War II. Discussion. | Translated soldiers’ letters and morale reports on e-reserve (under heading “Soldiers’ letters and morale reports”). Leningrad diary on e-reserve. |
| M, 10/25 | Late Stalinism and Cold War Origins. Lecture | Kenez, 160-184. |
| W, 10/27 | Origins of the Thaw in the Late Stalin Era | Juliana Furst, “Prisoners of the Soviet Self? Political Youth Opposition in Late Stalinism.” Find on JSTOR. View excerpts from “Battle of Stalingrad” in class. |
| M, 11/1 | The Thaw, 1956-1964. Lecture. | Kenez, 184-214. |
| W, 11/3 | Changing Memories of the Great Patriotic War: Discussion. | View “The Cranes are Flying” outside of class. |
| M, 11/8 | “Stagnation,” 1965-1985. Lecture. | Kenez, 214-242. |
| W, 11/10 | Growing Up Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev. Discussion. | Excerpts from oral histories in Donald Raleigh, *Russia’s Sputnik Generation: Soviet Baby-Boomers Talk about Their Lives* (e-book at U. of Rochester library website – specific excerpts TBA). **Paper due.** |
| M, 11/15 | The Brezhnev era… a novel. Discussion. | Erofeev, *Moscow to the End of the Line* |
| W, 11/17 | Gorbachev, *Perestroika* and Collapse / Lecture | Kenez, Chapter 10 |
| M, 11/22 | Gorbachev, *Perestroika* and Collapse / primary sources | Excerpts from *Small Fires: Letters from the Soviet People to Ogonyok Magazine, 1987-1990*. |
| W, 11/24 | **THANKSGIVING** |  |
| M, 11/29 | The Russian Federation / Search for Stability, 1991- 2014. Lecture | Kenez, 278-299. |
| W, 12/1 | Russian nationalism and transformations | In class view documentary “Red Army” on Soviet hockey team’s star “Russian Five” and their path from *perestroika* to the early 2000s. |
| M, 12/6 | Discussion | Putin address on Crimea, excerpts from Russian 2010 defense white paper (both on e-reserve) |
| W, 12/8 | Discussion | Lukyanov, “Perestroika 2014” translated by Lenoe, on e-reserve. |
| W, 12/15 |  | **Final paper due / periodization of Soviet and post-Soviet history** |

Books you must get hold of / at bookstore or get any other way.

Kenez, Peter.  A History of the Soviet Union from its Beginning to its Legacy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.  Third Edition. **Be sure to get this edition.  Not available in electronic edition or at Rush Rhees in e-format.**

Gladkov, Fyodor.  Cement.  Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1994. ***This edition only.***

Erofeev, Venedikt.  Moscow to the End of the Line.  Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1992. **This edition only**.  If you read Russian, you are welcome to purchase any Russian edition (Москва-петушки is the title).

Written assignments and grading (all papers double-spaced)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment |  |
|  |  |
| 3-page paper on “Voices of Revolution” (9/13) | 20% |
| 3-4 page political autobiography of a Soviet alterego (10/4) | 20% |
| 5-page paper on *Sputnik Generation* (11/10) | 25% |
| 5-page paper on periodization of Soviet history (12/8) | 25% |
| Discussion participation | 10% |

**Submisssion of Written Assignments:** You will need to submit assignments using the course Blackboard page. I’ll provide instructions on doing so.

**Goals of the course:**

1. To learn what historians do:
   1. Analysis of primary sources, including authorship, audience, and connections to historical context.
   2. Analysis of popular culture representations of historical events, in particular films
2. Improvement of writing skills, including the composition of primary source based research papers.
3. Deepening student’s knowledge of Soviet and post-Soviet history, including its relevance to current events and global history. Integrating economic, social, cultural and political history into an overall picture of life in the USSR.
4. Provide students with tools to think rigorously about political, social, and economic upheaval in our own time.

**Academic honesty:** All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. *I will not accept Paper One from students who have not signed the “Acceptance of Academic Honesty Policy” on the course Blackboard site.*

**I DO NOT TOLERATE CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM (PRESENTING SOMEONE ELSE’S SCHOLARLY WORK AS YOUR OWN). I WILL PURSUE THE UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINARY PROCESS AGAINST STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE OTHERS’ WORK. AT A MINIMUM, STUDENTS WHO PLAGIARIZE WILL RECEIVE A “0” ON THE ASSIGNMENT IN QUESTION.**

You are required to read the American Historical Association’s “Defining Plagiarism” at <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism> before the second class meeting.

The College’s credit hour policy on undergraduate courses is to award 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week.  Students enrolled in History 208/208W are expected to devote at least several hours each week outside of class to reading, identifying the main lines of argument in readings, preparing for class discussion, writing papers, etc.

**MASKING:** As per university policy, it is required that all students wear a mask covering mouth **and nose** during class. I will be doing the same. Masking is mostly to protect others from infection (you can be a carrier without symptoms). So it is a matter of concern *for others*. The usefulness of masks in preventing COVID spread is very well-documented in the scientific literature (as opposed to rumors on FB or websites that focus on politics or are run by hucksters of quack health products).

**COVID CONTINGENCIES:** The course will meet in person. Given the fluid nature of the COVID pandemic, it is possible that we will have to meet online. We will follow university guidance in this matter.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR READING.** For a number of discussion classes there are several different documents assigned. Keeping track of these sources for the class discussions is one of the biggest challenge of reading for the course. I would recommend noting down for yourself the date and authorship/provenance of each source, so you can place each in context and differentiate one from another during class discussions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDYING IN GENERAL.** Because there are no tests for the course, you may have the impression that you can skate through or nor turn up for discussions, and just do readings when it is time to write your papers. This would be a mistake. I would take notes on lectures. I would also do so for discussions, not as dense as you would on lectures, but on anything particularly interesting that pops up (you don’t need to transcribe all of class discussion!!). I will expect you to show mastery of all course materials in your papers, including the short tlectures and concepts that we explore during discussion

**ATTENDANCE:** You need to attend class regularly and contribute to discussion. My experience shows that students who do not do these things get substantially lower grades, because they do poorly on class assignments.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Class participation is 10% of your grade. You don’t have to be the most active student in class to get full credit (100%) for this, but you do need to contribute a several comments per class. I will often ask students early in discussion to offer any thoughts at all they had about the reading. This is your chance, if you are shy, to have formulated something beforehand and to offer it for discussion.

If you never say a word in class, you will get a “zero” for class participation and you will have lost one full-grade grade step right there.

If you have real difficulties speaking up in class, contact me to discuss.

In my experience students almost never ask “stupid” questions or make “stupid” comments. So don’t fear doing this. Moreover, your classmates may be grateful to you if you ask a very basic question – they may have also been confused, but afraid to ask. Also, do not be intimidated if some class members show superior background knowledge about events we are discussing. The course is designed for students with very little background in the events we study, and such students generally do as well as any others. Moreover, students with weaker background knowledge will often make very perceptive comments.

**Students with disabilities:**The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the [Office of Disability Resources](http://www.rochester.edu/college/disability/index.html) at: [disability@rochester.edu;](mailto:disability@rochester.edu;) (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.