

POL 40591, Section 1
Russian Politics and Economics

POL 40591
Fall 2015

Satterfield 215
Class meetings: MW 2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

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Overview

News reports about Russia and the former Soviet Union are often a jumble of terms and images: corruption...oil...nationalism...terrorism. How bad is the situation in Russia? How did it get to this point, and where is it likely to go from here?

In pursuing answers to these kinds of questions, students in this course will examine some of the most important developments in Russia since the dissolution of the USSR, including the extraordinary struggle over the country's wealth, the pervasiveness of “informal” practices, and the (in)ability of various social groups to make themselves heard in Russia's new politics. During the semester, students will also develop a mental framework for understanding the Russian political economy long after this course is over.

One of the central aims of the course is to force students to question dominant interpretations of recent Russian political and economic history, many of which are inaccurate or incomplete. Because a number of misunderstandings about today's Russia are tied to faulty interpretations of past events—most importantly, the breakup of the USSR—we will revisit those events in the first few weeks of this course.

Thus, by taking this course, you will

- Acquire empirical knowledge about politics and economics in Russia (and some of the surrounding countries)
- Compare and adjudicate among different explanations of outcomes in Russia
- Recognize and discuss implications of different arrangements of formal and informal institutions in Russia

Readings

The required reading load will be about 100-150 pages per week. Since the study of Russian politics is a large and changing field, no single text can cover it well, so most of the course reading will come from photocopied articles and book chapters.

We will, however, read several chapters from the following book, which is therefore required for the course: **Mary McAuley, *Soviet Politics, 1917-1991* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992)**. It should be available at the KSU bookstore and through several other sources.

Need help?

That's why I am here. Even though the readings for this course are not terribly long, some of them may seem dense or even impenetrable. *Don't worry! You're not alone!* The key is to let me know if you're having trouble. You can drop by during my office hours or make an appointment for another time if you prefer. You are also welcome to call (330-672-8928) or e-mail (abarnes3@kent.edu) at any time.

Decorum and Integrity

I don't expect any problems in these areas, but it is best if I am explicit about my expectations.

If we are all to learn, everyone must feel welcome and able to trust the others in the class. A central aim of the course is to encourage you to think and to be critical, so you may say virtually anything you like in here, but I will not tolerate anything that seems to insult or intimidate others.

You should also recognize that academic dishonesty (such as cheating on a test or plagiarism on a paper) completely undermine the mission of this class, are surprisingly easy to catch, and are taken very seriously by your professor and the university (see **Kent State's Statement on Academic Dishonesty** (http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/policydetails.cfm?customel_datapageid_1976529=2037779)). They can get you kicked out of school, and I've seen it happen. Don't be tempted to take a short cut to complete an assignment—talk to me instead. If you have *any* questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask me.

Cell phones and such

Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices that could be distracting during class. (This includes email, Facebook, and so on—have a little respect...) If you have an emergency situation that requires you to be contacted quickly, let me know at the beginning of class, and an exception can be made.

For students requiring accessibility

University policy 3342-3-18 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content, and I am happy to comply. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note that you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Disability Services. (Contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures.)

Important university dates

Please visit the registrar's site to learn the last day to register (with or without a late fee) and the last day to withdraw (with or without a "W").

Notice of instructor's copyright and intellectual property rights

Any intellectual property displayed or distributed to students during this course (including but not limited to syllabi, notes, quizzes, and examinations) by the instructor remains the intellectual property of the instructor. This means that the student may not distribute, publish, or provide such intellectual property to any other person or entity for any reason, commercial or otherwise, without the express written permission of the instructor. (The instructor hereby grants permission for students in the course to share course handouts with each other as appropriate.)

Grading

Your final grade will be based on the following five criteria:

1. Participation and Attendance (10%): This is a seminar class, so everyone needs to come prepared to discuss the readings. Persistent failure to join in the discussions will adversely affect your grade. Of course, discussions will not work if not everyone is present. In addition, I believe that students will learn things in class that they will not be tested on, so those who attend regularly will know more than those who don't (all else being equal). Therefore, each unexcused absence after the first one will reduce your participation grade by 2 percentage points (i.e., from 10 to 8, from 8 to 6, etc.)

In addition, I ask students to come by my office at least once during the first few weeks of class. This helps us get to know each other early in the course and talk about any problems you're having with the class (or to revel in how well things are going!). These visits are *required*, and your attendance grade will drop by half (i.e., from 20 to 10) if you miss yours.

2. Sentences (20%). To help you get your thoughts together, you should write a ONE-SENTENCE summary of the ARGUMENT of each reading for the week. Avoid the traps of writing too much or summarizing the SUBJECT of the reading. Ask yourself, "What is the author trying to convince the reader of?" (My apologies for ending that sentence with a preposition!)

The summaries should be typed and are due in class each Wednesday. (If there's not Wednesday class, they will be due on Monday.) You may skip two of these without penalty. After that, each failure to turn them in will drop this part of your grade by 5 percentage points (i.e., by a quarter). (If you turn them in by the end of the following day, you will lose 2.5 percentage points.)

The grading of the sentences will be up or down: if you do a reasonable job, you will receive full credit; if you simply "mail it in," you will get no credit, and it will be as if you hadn't turned the assignment in.

3. A short essay (4-5 pages) in reaction to the first part of the semester (20%): In the first few weeks, we will examine the Soviet experience, the fall of the USSR, and the chaotic competition over economic assets that followed. We will wrap that up with a documentary called *My Perestroika*, which recounts that same period through the eyes of several people who lived it. Your paper will be grounded in the readings, but it will also be a reaction to the film's presentation. We will discuss the assignment further after we have seen the film. **The assignment will be due 10/7.**

4. A significant research paper (35%): This is a writing-intensive seminar, and here is where the class earns that designation! The final product will be about 20 pp. long (12-pt. font, double-spaced, 1.25" margins), but you will write more than that along the way.

The project will include several stages:

Early in the semester you will choose your topic, either from the list I give you or in individual consultation with me. Due 9/30.

Soon thereafter you will turn in a list of potential sources. These should be of multiple types: books, journal articles, news coverage, and web-based sources. I want to see if you are on the right track. (10% of assignment grade)

Next will be an outline of the paper. This will continue to evolve as you write the paper, but it should be the best you can do at this stage. (20% of assignment grade)

Then comes a draft of the paper. Again, you should make this the best paper you can write, even though you know you will be re-writing. (30% of assignment grade)

Finally you will re-write the paper, and it will be perfect! All kidding aside, writing and re-writing are essential parts of developing not only coherent sentences and paragraphs, but also coherent *ideas*. (50% of assignment grade)

5. A presentation of your research (15%): After spending so much time on this project, you will want to share your results with your classmates, and they will want to hear what you have learned. These presentations will be our opportunity to hear about and discuss the work that everyone has been doing. They should be professional, but the experience will be surprisingly fun. NOTE: The presentations will take place during our last few classes *and* our final exam period: **Friday, December 18, 12:45-3pm** (not my choice!).

I use the following, fairly traditional, grading scale:

90-92, 93-96, 97-100:	A-, A, A+	91, 95, 100
80-82, 83-86, 87-89:	B-, B, B+	81, 85, 88
70-72, 73-76, 77-79:	C-, C, C+	71, 75, 78
60-62, 63-66, 67-69:	D-, D, D+	61, 65, 68
Below 60:	F	50

Schedule of classes and readings*Part I: The rise and fall of the Soviet Union*

- M 8/31 **Introduction**
John Robson, "Russia under Putin Will Suck, As Always," *Ottawa Citizen* (January 7, 2000) and follow-up letters. (Distributed in class)
- W 9/2 **Pre-1917, the October "Revolution, the Civil War, and NEP (1920s)**
McAuley, 12-33
- M 9/7 (Labor Day)
- W 9/9 **Stalinism: Collectivization, Industrialization, Terror, and the Great Fatherland War**
McAuley, 34-61
- M 9/14 **Khrushchev & Brezhnev: Did the Reforms Matter?**
McAuley, 62-88
- W 9/16 **Reform and breakdown in the USSR**
McAuley, 89-106
Andrew Barnes, "Three in One: Unpacking the 'Collapse' of the Soviet Union," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 61:5 (September-October 2014), 3-13.

Part II: Russia after the USSR

- M 9/21 **Overview of formal political institutions & elections** (NOT THE WHOLE STORY!)
Reading TBA
- W 9/23 **The realities of governance: “Violent entrepreneurs” in Russia & elsewhere**
Kimberly Marten, *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), Chapter 1, 1-19.
Vadim Volkov, “Violent Entrepreneurship in Post-Communist Russia,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 51:5 (July 1999), pp. 741–754.
- M 9/28 **FILM: *My Perestroika***
(no readings)
- W 9/30 **FILM continued & discussed**
(no readings)
- M 10/5 **Economic change I** (intrigue with money)
Juliet Johnson, *A Fistful of Rubles: The Rise and Fall of Russia’s Banking System* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), Chapter 4, 98-136.
David Woodruff, *Money Unmade: Barter and the Fate of Russian Capitalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 1-20.
- W 10/7 **Economic change II** (intrigue with property)
Andrew Barnes, *Owning Russia: The Struggle over Factories, Farms, and Power* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), Chapter 5, 106-140 (on industry).
Jessica Allina-Pisano, *The Post-Soviet Potemkin Village: Politics and Property Rights in the Black Earth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-27.
→ **Mid-term essay due**
- M 10/12 **Economic change III** (intrigue under Putin)
Andrew Barnes, “Russia’s New Business Groups and State Power,” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 19:2 (April-June 2003), 154-186.
Michael Bradshaw, “The Kremlin, National Champions, and the International Oil Companies: The Political Economy of the Russian Oil and Gas Industry,” *Geopolitics of Energy*, 31:5 (May 2009), 2-14.
Peter Rutland, “The Oligarchs and Economic Development,” In Stephen K. Wegren and Dale R. Herspring, eds. *After Putin’s Russia, fourth edition*. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), p. 170-178.
- W 10/14 **Party substitutes and United Russia**
Henry Hale, “Why Not Parties? Supply and Demand on Russia’s Electoral Market,” *Comparative Politics* 27:2 (January 2005), pp. 147-166.
Vladimir Gel’man, “Party Politics in Russia: From Competition to Hierarchy,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 60, No. 6, 2008, pp. 913 – 930.
- M 10/19 **Regional governance in the long 1990s**
Henry E. Hale, “Explaining Machine Politics in Russia’s Regions: Economy, Ethnicity, and Legacy,” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 19:3 (July-September 2003), 228-263.
Robert W. Orttung, “Business and Politics in the Russian Regions,” *Problems of Post-Communism* (March/April 2004), 48-60.

- W 10/21 **“Rebuilding the power vertical”** (federal reform & the *siloviki*)
 Nikolay Petrov, ‘Who is running Russia’s regions?’, in Vadim Kononenko and Arkady Moshes (eds), *Russia as a Network State: What Works in Russia When State Institutions Do Not?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; Helsinki: Ulkopoliittinen instituutti, 2011), pp. 81–112.
 Brian Taylor, *State Building in Putin’s Russia: Policing and Coercion after Communism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Introduction & Chapter 2 (Chapter 1 optional)
- M 10/26 **Chechnya & the North Caucasus**
 “The North Caucasus,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 22 (June 2007), 2-11 (but also look at maps in the rest of the report).
 Kimberly Marten, *Warlords: Strong-Arm Brokers in Weak States* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), Chapter 5, 102-138.
- W 10/28 **The “color revolutions”**
 Henry E. Hale, “Democracy or autocracy on the march? The colored revolutions as normal dynamics of patronal presidentialism,” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39, 3 (2006): 305-329.
 Radnitz, Scott, “The Color of Money: Privatization, Economic Dispersion, and the Post-Soviet Revolutions,” *Comparative Politics*, 42:2 (January 2010), 127-146.
 Policy change:
 Dmitry Gorenburg, “Countering Color Revolutions: Russia’s New Security Strategy and Its Implications for US Policy,” *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no. 342* (September 2014).
 Margarete Klein, “Russia’s New Military Doctrine: NATO, the United States, and the ‘Color Revolutions’,” *SWP Comments*, vol. 9 (February 2015), 1-4.
- M 11/2 **Public opinion: What do Russians think of this?**
 Henry Hale, “The Myth of Mass Russian Support for Autocracy: The Public Opinion Foundation of a Hybrid Regime,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63:8 (October 2011), 1357 – 1375.
 Hendley, Kathryn, “‘Telephone Law’ and the ‘Rule of Law’: The Russian Case,” *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 1:2 (September 2009), 241–262.
 Maria Lipman, “Rethinking Russia: Freedom of Expression without Freedom of the Press,” *Journal of International Affairs*, 63:2 (Spring/Summer 2010), 153-169.
- W 11/4 **Protests and crackdowns**
 Graeme Robertson, “Protesting Putinism: The Election Protests of 2011 – 2012 in Broader Perspective,” *Problems of Post-Communism*, 60:2 (March – April 2013), 11-23.
 Regina Smyth & Irina Soboleva, “Looking Beyond the Economy: Pussy Riot and the Kremlin’s Voting Coalition,” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 30:4 (July-August 2014), 257-275.
- M 11/9 **Sex & sexuality in Russian politics**
 Valerie Sperling, *Sex, Politics, & Putin: Political Legitimacy in Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1-28, 273-285. **(Planned Skype conversation with author)**
 “Anti-gay Law Shames Putin’s Russia,” Tanya Lokshina, Russia Program Director for Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2013/09/13/anti-gay-law-shames-putins-russia>.
- W 11/11 Veterans’ Day

- M 11/16 **Development of nationalism from above and below**
 Julie Hemment, "Nashi, Youth Voluntarism, and Potemkin NGOs: Making Sense of Civil Society in Post-Soviet Russia," *Slavic Review*, 71:2 (Summer 2012), 234-260.
 Todd H. Nelson, "History As Ideology: The portrayal of Stalinism and the Great Patriotic War in contemporary Russian high school textbooks," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 31:1 (January-February 2015), 37-65.
- W 11/18 **The Russo-Georgian War, 2008**
 Cory Welt, "The Thawing of a Frozen Conflict: The Internal Security Dilemma and the 2004 Prelude to the Russo-Georgian War," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 62:1 (January 2010), 63-97.
 Charles King, "The Five-Day War: Managing Moscow after the Georgia Crisis," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2008).
 Katya Soldak, "Georgian President Margvelashvili Condemns Russian Aggression, Says Georgia Looks To the West," *Forbes* (October 8, 2014).
- M 11/23 **The War in Ukraine I**
[LECTURE ON UKRAINIAN BACKGROUND AS NECESSARY]
 Oxana Shevel, "Russia and the Near Abroad," *Great Decisions* (2015), 5-15.
 Vladimir Putin, Presidential Address on Crimea, (March 18, 2014).
 Peter Rutland, "An Unnecessary War: The Geopolitical Roots of the Ukraine Crisis" in Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska and Richard Sakwa, eds., *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda, and Perspectives* (Bristol, UK: E-International Relations Publishing, 2015), 129-140.
 (Find book here: <http://www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Ukraine-and-Russia-E-IR.pdf>)
 Andrei Tsygankov, "Vladimir Putin's Last Stand: The Sources of Russia's Ukraine Policy," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 31:4 (July-August 2015), 279-303.
- W 11/25 Thanksgiving Break
- M 11/30 **The War in Ukraine II**
 2 chapters from Pikulicka-Wilczewska & Sakwa, eds. (2015) (<http://www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Ukraine-and-Russia-E-IR.pdf>):
 Mark Galeotti, "'Hybrid War' and 'Little Green Men': How It Works, and How It Doesn't," 156-164.
 Richard Connolly, "Western Economic Sanctions and Russia's Place in the Global Economy," 223-233.
- W 12/2 Presentations 1
 M 12/7 Presentations 2
 W 12/9 Presentations 3

➔ ➔ ➔ Friday, December 18, 12:45 – 3 p.m.: Final Exam Period ← ← ←
 Complete presentations (reactions due by Monday at noon)