

PLS 431 Politics and Governance of the Russian Federation, Spring 2016

Tuesday/Thursday, 9:00-10:15 a.m., Rm. 8.310

Prof. Caress Schenk

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10:30-11:00, 16:30-17:00; Thursday 10:30-11:30, 13:00-16:00 or other time arranged by email (even during the times listed, you should make an appointment to let me know when you are planning to come).

Course objectives and structure: This course analyzes Russian politics in comparative perspective. The goal of the course is to bring together the key theoretical concepts of comparative politics, current scholarly research on Russia, and current events, trends and perspectives. The course operates on three levels in terms of ideas and concepts: theories of comparative politics, scholarship on Russian politics, and current events in Russian politics and society. Each week there will be readings that target the first two levels. Students will be responsible for bringing in the third level. We will look at Russia through the lenses of institutions (i.e. the constitution, executive, legislature, federal system), political economy, state-society relations, and identity. We will assess how international scholars approach the study of Russia and how that fits into the study of comparative politics. Students will then take the theoretical concepts and apply them to current events related to *domestic* politics in Russia.

Course aims:

- 1) to build critical thinking skills
- 2) to apply Comparative Politics theory to current events
- 3) to understand and evaluate the literature on Russian Politics

Course learning outcomes:

By the end of the course the student will be expected to be able to:

- 1) Students will be able to make their own evidenced-based arguments
- 2) Students will be able to listen to and be tolerant of different ideas
- 3) Students will be able to present their ideas and the information in an appropriate format
- 4) Students will be able to synthesize arguments within Comparative Politics and apply them to the study of Russia.

Final Grades will be comprised of:

Participation:	15%
Current events memos (3):	15%
Current events memo presentations:	15%
Literature and culture assignments:	15%
Subject paper:	20%
Final exam (take-home):	20%

Grading scale

A	95-100	Excellent, exceeds the highest standards in the assignment or course
A-	90-94.9	Excellent; meets the highest standards for the assignment or course
B+	85-89.9	Very good; meets high standards for the assignment or course
B	80-84.9	Good; meets most of the standards for the assignment or course
B-	75-79.9	More than adequate; shows some reasonable command of the material

C+	70-74.9	Acceptable; meets basic standards for the assignment or course
C	65-69.9	Acceptable; meets some of the basic standards for the assignment or course
C-	60-64.9	Acceptable, while falling short of meeting basic standards in several ways
D+	55-59.9	Minimally acceptable
D	50-54.9	Minimally acceptable; lowest passing
F	0-49.9	Did not satisfy the basic requirements of the course

Attendance will be taken at each class meeting. More than two unexcused absences will result in a 5% deduction of the final grade. Missing class without prior permission from the instructor or without a written excuse will be deemed an unexcused absence. Absences due to religious observances or university events must be negotiated with the instructor prior to missing class. Students who arrive late, leave early, or are disruptive in class will be counted absent.

Learning through **participation** is a key goal for this course. This course will be discussion-driven, so you need to come to class prepared to interact and reflect on the things you have read. **You must prepare to discuss each reading. In class, you will be expected to have a copy of the reading with you that you can refer to. You need to refer to specific page numbers. You need to know the name of each author so you can refer to them as you go.** The participation grade includes attendance, being involved in class discussions based on the readings and lectures, and being an active participant in all class activities. An A for participation requires: regular attendance and contribution to the learning environment of the course by asking thoughtful questions (in response to readings, lectures and class discussions), offering comments on course material that show insightful reflection, analysis of material and synthesis of concepts, demonstrating an ability to link theory to cases and current events, etc. To receive a B for participation, students must: attend regularly and show a mastery of assigned readings. A participation grade of C will be assigned for regular attendance without the above-stated contributions to class discussions. Students will receive a D for participation for excessive absences regardless of the quality of contributions to class discussions.

Current events memos will follow the topics on the syllabus. Each student should write 3 memos and give 3 corresponding presentations across three different units of the course. Up to three students per class meeting can choose to write a current events memo related to the topic of the day. Each memo should be written independently and should discuss a different current event (you will therefore need to agree with other students presenting on that day about what you will write about). Current events must be about **DOMESTIC** events in Russia, with the exception of the final unit. Issues related to foreign affairs presented in the first three units will receive an automatic zero. Memos should give a current events perspective on the more theoretical approach given in the readings. Therefore in order to write an effective memo, the course readings (on the syllabus) should be read well in advance of the presentation day. They should make a precise, logical, and evidence-based argument about why a particular event in Russia (drawn from news sources within the past year) demonstrates a particular theoretical concept (either a core concept of Comparative Politics, a theoretical debate going on within scholarship on Russia, or both). Memos should be 2 pages single spaced (1,000-1,200 words).

We will be working with the Contemporary Russian and Russophone Literature course to do joint **literature and culture assignments**. These will require at least 2 meetings outside of class,

which you must attend. Only in the case that you have a course conflict will an alternative assignment be available.

Current events **memo presentations** will give students experience in a conference/roundtable setting. Memos will be distributed 1 day in advance (by 9:00 am the day prior to class) via email for all class participants to read, and will be presented in class as a conference presentation (5-7 minutes) followed by a Q and A session and class discussion led by the presenters. During the Q and A, the class will ask questions about how well the current event presented fits the theoretical concept being demonstrated. Participation in the Q and A session is mandatory and will be reflected in participation grades (see above). Presenters will also be expected to each pose a question for discussion related to the readings on the syllabus and guide the class in a discussion of a key concept from the readings. This should be a natural extension of the current events memo/presentation, and therefore does not aim to summarize the readings, but rather highlight why a particular concept is interesting and worth discussing. After the presentations, Q and A, and discussion, verbal feedback will be given on all parts of the exercise.

Each student will write a **subject paper** of 6-8 single spaced pages (3,000-5,000 words) on a topic of their choice. It is highly recommended that students choose one of the topics from the syllabus. However, if you have an idea that we are not covering during the semester, you may feel free to propose it. Topics should lean towards DOMESTIC politics. Paper topics are due March 9, outlines and a list of literature due March 30, rough drafts due April 11, peer review due April 15, and final drafts due April 24.

The **final exam** will be comprehensive. It will focus on bringing together theories of comparative politics with the study of Russian politics by contemporary scholars. The final exam will be take home and will be due April 28 at 23:59.

The **required reading** for this course can be found in the textbooks, via weblinks in the syllabus, and on Moodle. Each week, you can expect to have a theoretical reading from the comparative politics literature (which may not be related to Russia), a reading from current scholarship that looks at Russia, and textbook readings that aim to give you a general overview of the topic at hand.

- Textbooks
 - Sakwa, Russian Politics and Society, 4th Edition (Sakwa) (MOODLE)
 - Routledge Handbook of Russian Politics and Society (RPS) (library)
 - Routledge Handbook of Comparative Political Institutions (CPI) (MOODLE)
 - The Oxford Handbook of the Russian Economy (RE) (accessible through library e-resources)
- Reading load: You will be expected to read a number of pages for each class session. Please plan ahead (download articles, look at the length of each reading, etc.) so you have ample time to prepare. You must keep up with the reading so that you can be an active part of class discussions.

Class policies

- You should follow all instructions specified in the syllabus.

- If you bring a laptop, mobile phone or other mobile device to class it must be used strictly for class purposes (taking notes and accessing readings). I reserve the right to garnish your final course grade 5% for violations.
- All assignments should be submitted in class or on Moodle unless otherwise specified. Assignments submitted via email will not be accepted. Keep in mind that when you submit assignments to Moodle, you should not wait until the last minute because the system sometimes gets overloaded.
- **All written assignments must use Times New Roman font, size 12, single-spaced. Margins must be 1 inch. All citations must adhere to the American Political Science Association Style Manual (<http://www.apsanet.org/files/APSASStyleManual2006.pdf>).**
- While you are welcome to email anytime about any issue you may be having in the class, please use proper email etiquette. Do not start your email “Hey Dr. Schenk,” or “Hey” or “Professor” or “Mrs. Schenk” or without a salutation. Instead, “Dear Dr. Schenk,” or “Dear Professor Schenk,” should be used for initial contact. I will not answer emails that use an improper salutation.
- I will also not answer emails that can be answered by looking at the syllabus.
- Late assignments turned in more than 5 minutes late on the due date will receive half credit. Assignments turned in past the due date will receive no credit.
- There will be no make-ups for quizzes or in class assignments.
- Tests may only be made up if prior arrangements have been made.
- Plagiarism will not be tolerated including self-plagiarism (submitting the same assignment to multiple courses/professors). Any plagiarism will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and will be reported to the dean to be placed on your permanent record. Violations could result in an F for the course.
- Cheating will not be tolerated. Any behavior that even hints of cheating will be reported to the school disciplinary committee and will result in an automatic F for the assignment and/or course.
- Office hours are listed at the beginning of the syllabus. **I cannot guarantee that I will be in my office outside posted office hours.** If you need to meet with me at a different time, send me an email and I will be glad to make arrangements with you. (What this really means: **DO NOT** complain to me that you were looking for me but I wasn’t in my office if you are looking for me at a time outside my office hours!)
- I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed, including adding and subtracting assignments and changing due dates. I will notify you in class or via email about changes (this means you are responsible for checking your email and for being in class to hear about changes).

Course Outline

January 10

Course Introduction

January 12

Russia in the World, Russia in Comparative Politics

- Culpepper, “Single Case Studies and Comparative Politics”
<http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pculpepper/PC%20Web%20links/Single%20Country%20Studies%20and%20Comp%20Pol.pdf>

- Collier, “The Comparative Method”
<http://polisci.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/people/u3827/APSA-TheComparativeMethod.pdf>
- Gelman, “The Dynamics of Subnational Authoritarianism” (MOODLE)
- RPS, chapter 5 (if the textbook package is not available yet, you can find this chapter at
https://books.google.kz/books?id=yGOpAgAAQBAJ&pg=PA45&lpg=PA45&dq=How+Russia+Compares+Rodney+Tiffen&source=bl&ots=DRp3Kir6wH&sig=h0nP1R5SlusbAD6Sr93U3bbxzF8&hl=en&sa=X&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=How%20Russia%20Compares%20Rodney%20Tiffen&f=false)

Unit 1

STATE INSTITUTIONS and ACTORS

January 17

Soviet Legacies: Institutions and Culture

- Wittenberg, “Conceptualizing Historical Legacies” (MOODLE)
- Nelson, “History as Ideology” (MOODLE)
- Lee, “Nostalgia as a Feature of Glocalization” (MOODLE)
- <http://m.voanews.com/a/stalin-putin-russia/3112458.html>

Recommended:

- Sakwa, chapters 1-2
- Sullivan, “Breaking Down the Man of Steel”

Current events memos/presentations:

January 19

Special meeting #1: Viktor Pelevin, *Generation II* (1999) (*English version: Homo Zapiens*)
(You must obtain a copy of this on your own. Please feel free to read it in either Russian or English)

January 24

Transition toward/away from democracy? Hybrid regime? Competitive Authoritarianism? What is the best framework for assessing Russia?

- Gilbert and Mohseni, “Beyond Authoritarianism” (MOODLE)
- Levitsky and Way, “Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism” (MOODLE)
- Evans, “Failure of Democratization in Russia” (MOODLE)
- Harvey, “Changes in the Menu of Manipulation” (MOODLE)

Recommended:

- Sakwa, chapters 19-20
- Carothers, “End of the Transition Paradigm” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

January 26

Institutions: the executive (vs. the actor: Putin)

- Sakwa, chapter 6
- RPS, chapters 3 and 7 (Shared folder)
- Chapter 2 of Sakwa, “Putin redux” (MOODLE)
- Chapter 1 of Remington, “Presidential Decrees in Russia” (MOODLE)
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/putins-popularity-real>
- <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/putins-popularity-explained-14609>
- http://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2016/01/05/putins_fragile_popularity_108855.html
- <http://carnegie.ru/commentary/2015/12/18/no-longer-people-s-president-new-putin/in97>

Current events memos/presentations:

January 31

Institutions: the bureaucracy

- CPI, chapter 16 (Shared folder)
- RPS, chapter 15 (Shared folder)
- Chapter 13-15 in “Russian Bureaucracy and the State” (MOODLE)
- Barabashev and Straussman, “Public Service Reform in Russia, 1991-2006”

Current events memos/presentations:

February 2

Institutions: legislatures, parties and elections

- CPI, chapter 9-11 (Shared folder)
- Sakwa, chapters 8-9
- RPS, chapters 9-10 (Shared folder)
- Reuter and Remington, “Dominant Party Regimes and the Commitment Problem” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

February 7

Institutions: executive-legislative relations. Is Russia semi-presidential or superpresidential? How do we know? Why does it matter?

- CPI, chapter 12 (Shared folder)
- RPS, chapter 8 (Shared folder)
- Clark, “Boxing Russia” (MOODLE)
- Clark and Wittrock, “Presidentialism and the Effect of Electoral Law” (MOODLE)
- Chapter 7 of Fish “Democracy Derailed in Russia” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

February 9

Institutions: federalism

- RPS, chapters 12-14 (Shared folder)
- Chapter 2 from Sharlet and Smith, “Law in Eastern Europe, Volume 58 : Russia and its Constitution : Promise and Political Reality” (**accessible through the library’s electronic resources**)
- Herd, “Russia and the Politics of Putinism” (MOODLE)
- Baranov, et al. “How (not) to measure Russian regional institutions” (MOODLE)
- Blakkisrud, “Governing the Governors” (MOODLE)
- Moses, “Russian Mayors Embattled” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

February 14

Informal institutions: pathological or functional?

- CPI, chapter 5 (Shared folder)
- Helmke and Levitsky, “Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics” (MOODLE)
- Gelman, “The Unrule of Law in the Making” (MOODLE)
- RPS, chapter 31 (Shared folder)
- RE, “Russian Corruption” (Shared folder)
- Torniainen and Saastamoinen, “Formal and Informal Institutions and their Heirarchy” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

Unit 2:

THE PUBLIC: political participation and state-society relations

February 16

Political culture and political participation

Required:

- Theoretical: Elkins and Simeon, “A Cause in Search of Its Effect, or What Does Political Culture Explain?” (MOODLE)
- Applied: Salmenniemi, “Struggling for Citizenship” (MOODLE)
- Applied: Lussier, “Contacting and Complaining: Political Participation and the Failure of Democracy in Russia” (MOODLE)

Recommended:

- Applied: Busse-Spencer, “Culture as Structure” (MOODLE)
- Textbook: Sakwa, chapter 15

Current events memos/presentations:

February 21

Civil society

- Theoretical/applied: Sam Greene, “Moscow in Movement : Power and Opposition in Putin's Russia”, chapter 1, 2, and 4 (**accessible through the library’s electronic resources**)
- Applied: RPS, chapter 30 (Shared folder)

- Applied: Robertson, “Managing Society” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

February 23

Political opposition and the regime’s response

Required:

- Theoretical/applied, Turovsky, “Opposition Parties in Hybrid Regimes” (MOODLE)
- Judah, “Five Myths about Putin’s Foes” (MOODLE)
- <https://newrepublic.com/article/113929/aleksei-navalny-trial-blogger-gets-five-years-jail>
- Applied: Atwal and Bacon, “The Youth Movement Nashi” (MOODLE)

Recommended:

- Nemtsov, “Winter Olympics in the Subtropics”
<http://www.putin-itogi.ru/zimnyaya-olimpiada-v-subtropikax/>
- Browse <https://navalny.com/>
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/putin%E2%80%99s-crackdown-sources-instruments-and-challenges>

Current events memos/presentations:

February 28

Resisting the state: the politics of protest

Required:

- Theoretical: Tarrow, “Power in Movement”, introduction (MOODLE)
- Applied: Evans, “Protests under a Semi-Authoritarian Regime in Russia” (MOODLE)
- Applied: Lankina and Voznaya, “New Data on Protest Trends in Russia’s Regions” (MOODLE)
- Applied: Lankina, “It’s Not All Negative” (MOODLE)

Recommended:

- Applied: Sam Greene, “Moscow in Movement : Power and Opposition in Putin’s Russia”, chapter 7 (**accessible through the library’s electronic resources**)
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/daring-protest-when-why-and-how-russia%E2%80%99s-citizens-engage-street-protest>
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/political-protest-and-regime-opposition-dynamics-russia>
- <https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/emil-pain/from-protests-to-pogroms>

Current events memos/presentations:

March 2

Public opinion, does it matter? Legitimacy, the social contract, and the power of populism

Required:

- Person, “Potholes, pensions, and public opinion” (MOODLE)
- Bertrand, “Disaster, Communication and Legitimization of Power” (MOODLE)
- Petrov, Lipman, and Hale, “Three dilemmas of hybrid regime governance” (MOODLE)

Recommended:

- <http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/op-ed/alexei-bayer-does-the-success-of-russian-propaganda-matter-388745.html>
- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/paulcoyer/2014/12/31/does-public-opinion-matter-to-authoritarian-leaders/#1d2805f3123b>

Current events memos/presentations:

Unit 3:

POLITICAL ECONOMY: Kremlin Capitalism

March 7

Transitions from command to market to state economy

- RE, “Command Economy and its Legacy”
- RE, “Russia’s Economic Transformation”
- Steen, “Political Elites and the New Russia,” chapter 5

Current events memos/presentations:

March 9

Big business (the oligarchs)

- RE, “Corporate Governance in Russia”
- Antonova, “Last Days of the First Oligarch”
- Feifer, “Russia’s Real Rulers”
- Sakwa, “Putin and the Oligarch,” chapter 2 (available through library e-resources)

Current events memos/presentations:

March 14

Big business (the oil industry)

- RE, “The Russian Oil Sector”
- Booth, “Russia’s Natural Resources”
<http://imrussia.org/en/economy/255-russian-oil-blessing-or-curse>
- Aron, “The Political Economy of Russian Oil and Gas”
<http://www.aei.org/publication/the-political-economy-of-russian-oil-and-gas/>
- Blank, “From Russia With Greed” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

March 16

Does Russia suffer from the resource curse?

- RE, “Russia’s Dependence on Resources”
- Aslund, “Russian Resources: Curse or Rents?”
- Treisman, “Is Russia Cursed by Oil?”

Current events memos/presentations:

March 20-24: Spring Break

UNIT 4:

NATIONAL IDENTITY: Us vs. them at home and abroad

March 28

National identity: where does it come from?

- Gerber, “Beyond Putin” (MOODLE)
- Tolz, “Inventing the Nation”, chapter 8 (MOODLE)
- Laruelle, “The Russian Idea on the Small Screen” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

March 30

Between public policy and national identity: migration policy

- Laruelle, “The Ideological Shift on the Russian Radical Right” (MOODLE)
- Malenkin, “Mother Russia’s Chilly Embrace” (MOODLE)
- Schenk, “Why Control Immigration?” excerpts (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

April 4

Religion and Politics

- Rutland, “The Pussy Riot Affair” (MOODLE)
- Jarzynska, “The Russian Orthodox Church as Part of the State and Society” (MOODLE)
- Turoma and Aitamurto “Renegotiating Patriotic and Religious Identities” (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

April 6

Special Meeting #2: Vladimir Sorokin, *The Day of the Oprichnik* (2006)

April 11

Ukraine

- Tsygankov, “Vladimir Putin's last stand: the sources of Russia's Ukraine policy” (MOODLE)
- Teper, “Official Russian identity discourse in light of the annexation of Crimea: national or imperial?” (MOODLE)
- Morozov, Chapter 8 of *Migration and the Ukraine Crisis* <http://www.e-ir.info/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Migration-and-the-Ukraine-Crisis-E-IR.pdf>
- Alexseev and Hale, Chapter 7 of *The New Russian Nationalism* (MOODLE)

Current events memos/presentations:

April 13

Sanctions and embargos, foreign policy tit-for-tat

- Logendran, “How Russia Survived Sanctions” (MOODLE)
- Ashford, “Not-So-Smart Sanctions” (MOODLE)

- Schenk, “Assessing Foreign Policy Commitment through Migration Policy in Russia” (MOODLE)

Recommended:

- <https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/rr-impact-russias-grain-export-ban-280611-en.pdf>

Current events memos/presentations:

April 18

A New Cold War?

- Relevant articles from edition #6 and 7 of Johnson’s Russia List from January (MOODLE)
- <https://jamestown.org/program/putin-demands-improved-russia-us-relations/>
- <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2017/03/17/will-europe-form-its-own-nuclear-deterrence-program-us-experts-doubt-it.html>
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/article/marten-us-airstrike-may-be-opening-us-russia-cooperation>
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/soviet-roots-meddling-us-politics>
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/european-missile-defense-system-and-russia-can-there-be-dialogue>

Current events memos/presentations:

April 20

Eurasianism and Russian Imperialism?

- “Eurasian Integration, the View from Within,” chapters 4-5 (MOODLE)
- Krickovic, “Imperial nostalgia or prudent geopolitics? Russia's efforts to reintegrate the post-Soviet space in geopolitical perspective
- <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/eurasia-eurasianism-eurasian-union-terminological-gaps-and-overlaps>

Current events memos/presentations: