

## PS 122: SOVIET, RUSSIAN, AND POST-SOVIET POLITICS

Fall term 2015

T&Th 10:30 -11:45 (Block D+)

Bromfield-Pearson, Room 101

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Office hours: Thursdays 1:30-3:30pm, and by appointment

Course website accessible through <https://trunk.tufts.edu>

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### Course description and objectives

In this course, you will be studying one of the most important countries of the 20th century, the Soviet Union, and the states – the Russian Federation (Russia) and 14 others – that were formed from its collapse. Approximately one third of the course will be devoted to an overview of political, economic, and social structures that defined Soviet communism. This historical overview will cover the time period from the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution through Gorbachev, “perestroika,” and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

In the remaining two-thirds of the course we will explore the unprecedented “triple transition” in national identities, political institutions and economic systems that followed the collapse of Soviet communism, and will examine and critically evaluate theoretical attempts to explain the different developmental trajectories upon which the 15 successor states of the Soviet Union have embarked. While Russia will receive the most extensive consideration, we will cover the other successor states as well.

As we examine and compare developments in the region after 1991, we will consider topics such as state collapse and state formation, regime types, political and institutional changes, the politics of economic reform, the challenges of nationalism within the multinational state, causes and consequences of popular uprisings against authoritarian leaders, current crisis between Russia and Ukraine, and others.

### Course requirements

Final grade will be based on grades awarded for each of the following:

Class participation	10%
Midterm	25%
Short paper	15%
Simulation exercise and paper	20%
Final exam	30%

All assignments will be given a numerical grade on the following scale:

A	93 and higher	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	59 and below

**Regular class attendance and active participation (10%).** You should come to class having done the readings, having thought about them critically, and prepared to discuss the assigned readings during the class period for which they were assigned. I will be posting a study guide to course website on Trunk at the end of each week for the following week. The study guide will indicate what to focus on when you do the readings, and writing down answers to the study guide questions will be an excellent preparation for the exams. Pop quizzes on the readings may be given in class, to count towards your participation grade.

**Midterm (25%).** The in-class midterm will take place on **Tuesday, October 13**. The midterm will include identification questions on key concepts, events, people, and dates, essay questions, and a map component. Study maps will be posted on course website on the Trunk.

**Short paper (15%).** Students will write a two-page (single-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margin) paper that answers a specific question given by the professor on the basis of course readings. Papers getting the best grades will be those that make a single crisp, clear argument demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of the relevant course material. Papers more than 3-4 lines over page limit will be graded down. Short papers will be due on **Friday, November 20**.

**Simulation exercise and paper on the current crisis in Ukraine (20%).** At the end of the course we will spend two class periods in a mock simulation debating possible ways to solve current conflict between Russia and Ukraine. The class will divide in groups representing major parties involved in the conflict: Ukrainian government, separatists in control of the Donbas region, Russia, and western powers. Each group will prepare a proposal on how it desires to solve the current crisis, and will then debate with other parties. Let's see if we can find compromises on issues such as the status of Donbas, Crimea, and Ukraine's domestic constitutional system and foreign policy alliances! After the simulation each student will submit a 5-7pp paper (double-spaced, Times Roman 12-point or similar font) based on the pre-simulation research and the result of the in-class debate. The papers will be due on **Friday, December 11**.

**Final exam (30%).** The exam will cover the course material pertaining to the post-Soviet period. You will be tested on the material covered in lecture and contained in the readings. The exam will include a choice of term IDs and short essay questions. The essay questions will be theoretically-driven, so to best prepare for the exam, go over the major theories we have discussed in lecture and encountered in the readings. Of course, be prepared to back up your theoretical argument with some empirical facts as well. Per final exam schedule, the final will take place on **Wednesday, December 16, 3:30-5:30pm**.

### **Course policies**

**Late policy:** Absences will be excused and requests for extensions and make-ups considered only if you have a legitimate and documented excuse (e.g. serious illness, death in the family) *and* inform me promptly (usually prior to the start of that day's class in case of absences, and prior to assignment deadlines). Since assignment deadlines are known well in advance, I will grant extensions only in truly exceptional circumstances. Students experiencing such circumstances should inform me as far as possible in advance. Under no circumstances will

extensions be granted due to general pressures of academic life such as exams and assignments due in other classes, or due to computer failures. No exceptions will be made to this rule, so please plan accordingly. Students who miss class are responsible for keeping track of any announcements, including possible changes in the syllabus, made in class.

**Possible changes to the syllabus:** the syllabus may change as the semester progresses. Updates/changes will be announced in class as well as posted on Trunk. Please treat the version on Trunk as the most up-to-date, and thus definitive, version.

**Academic dishonesty.** There will be a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty in this course. Tufts holds its students strictly accountable for adherence to academic integrity. The consequences for violations can be severe. It is critical that you understand the requirements of ethical behavior and academic work as described in Tufts' Academic Integrity handbook (hyperlinked on Trunk). If you ever have a question about the expectations concerning a particular assignment or project in this course, be sure to ask me for clarification. As part of this course, I may utilize TurnItIn in the Trunk learning management system to help determine the originality of your work. The Faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering are required to report suspected cases of academic integrity violations to the Dean of Student Affairs Office. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized in this class, I must report the situation to the dean.

### Course readings

**Books.** There are four required book for this course. They can be purchased at the campus bookstore or elsewhere.

- Mary McAuley, *Soviet Politics 1917-1991* (Oxford University Press, 1992).
- Vladimir Gel'man, *Authoritarian Russia. Analyzing Post-Soviet Regime Changes* (University of Pittsburg Press, 2015).
- Henry Hale, *Patronal Politics. Eurasian Regime Dynamics in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis and What it Means for the West* (Yale University Press, 2015).

**Additional required readings** are posted on Trunk course site. They are marked **TR** in the syllabus.

A research guide (compendium of resources) was prepared by Tisch librarian Ms. Reick for our class. It should be a helpful resource for digging deeper into the topics covered in the course. The guide is available at <http://researchguides.library.tufts.edu/PoliticalScience122> (also linked on Trunk).

## Schedule of topics, readings, and assignments

Readings should be completed *\*before\** the start of the class for which they are assigned.

To help you budget time, figures in brackets (e.g., “[32]”) report the number of pages in each reading.

### **#1. Tue, Sept 8. Introduction to the course.**

No readings assigned.

#### *The Soviet experiment (1917-1991)*

### **# 2. Thur, Sept 10. The old regime, Marxism, and the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution [34].**

1. McAuley, ch. 1, pp. 12-23 [11].
2. Suny, “Towards a Social History of the October Revolution.” (TR) [16].
3. V.I. Lenin, “The Task of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution (“April Theses”). (TR) [3].
4. V.I. Lenin, “Letter to Central Committee Members.” (TR) [2].

### **# 3. Tue, Sept 15. The creation of party-state under Lenin and Stalin: from pluralism to totalitarianism [24].**

1. McAuley, ch. 2, pp. 24-33; ch. 3, pp. 34-37 only (until “The New Economic Policy”) [12].
2. The dissolution of the Constituent Assembly (TR) [4].
3. Lenin’s letter to V.V. Kuraev et. al.(TR) [1].
4. Iulii Martov’s letter to A.N. Stein (TR) [5].
5. Resolution of the 10<sup>th</sup> Party Congress “On Party Unity.” (TR) [2]

### **#4. Thur, Sept 17. Shaping economy and society under Lenin and Stalin: industrialization, collectivization, and famine [61].**

1. McAuley, ch. 3, pp. 37-43 only (until “Meanwhile the ruling authorities”) [6].
2. Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (Basic Books, 2010), pp. 21-58, 412-413 [39] (TR).
3. Andrea Graziozi, “Why and in What Sense Was the Holodomor a Genocide?” in Lubomyr Luciuk, ed. *Reflections on the Great Famine of 1932-1933 in Soviet Ukraine* (Kingston, Ontario, 2008), pp. 139-155 [16] (TR).

### **#5. Tue, Sept 22. Cult of personality, purges and terror under Stalin [29].**

1. McAuley ch. 3, pp. 43-49 only; ch. 4, pp. 50-61 [17].
2. Lenin’s “testament” (TR) [2].
3. Nikolai Bukharin’s letter to Stalin; Interview with Nikolai Bukharin’s widow and Bukharin’s last letter (TR) [10].

**#6. Thur, Sept 24. Khrushchev to Brezhnev: "thaw" to "stagnation" [45].**

1. McAuley chs. 5-6, pp. 62-88 [26].
2. Khrushchev's "Secret speech" at the 20th Communist Party Congress, February 1956 (TR) [10].
3. James Millard, "The Little Deal: Brezhnev's Contribution to Acquisitive Socialism" (TR) [9].

**#7 Tue, Sept 29 – Gorbachev and reforms: from optimism to collapse. [54].**

1. McAuley, ch. 7, pp. 89-102 (Until "When, in March 1990, elections took place...") [13].
2. Mikhail Gorbachev's 31 July 1986 speech at the conference of the *aktiv* of the Khabarovks Party Organization [4] (TR).
3. Daniel Triesman, *The Return: Russia's Journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev* (Free Press, 2011), pp. 1-38 [37] (TR).

**#8. Thur, Oct 1. The rise of nationalism in the republics [46].**

1. McAuley, ch. 7, pp. 102-106 [4].
2. Terry Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire: The Emergence of Soviet Nationalities Policy, 1919-1932." (TR) [9].
3. Ronald Suny, *Revenge of the Past* (Stanford UP, 1993), ch. 4, pp. 127-160 [33] (TR).

**#9. Tue, Oct 6. Collapse of the USSR: theories of the inevitability, probability, and chance [44].**

1. Andrew Barnes, "Three in One. Unpacking the "Collapse" of the Soviet Union," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 61, No. 5 (September-October 2014), pp. 3-13 [10] (TR).
2. Kathryn Stoner and Michael McFaul, "The Soviet Union and Russia: The Collapse of 1991 and the Initial Transition to Democracy," in Kathryn Stoner and Michael McFaul, eds., *Transitions to Democracy. A Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2013), pp. 27-61 [34] (TR).

*Approaches to understanding post-Soviet trajectories*

**#10. Thur, Oct 8. Analytical perspectives on post-Communist transitions. [42].**

1. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), ch. 2 ("Stateness, nationalism, and democratization"), pp. 24-37 [13] (TR).
2. Valerie Bunce, "Comparing East and South," *Journal of Democracy*, v. 6, no. 3 (July 1995), pp. 87-100 [13] (TR).
3. Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm," *Journal of Democracy*, v. 13, no. 1 (January 2002), pp. 5-21 [16] (TR).

**#11. Tue, Oct 13. IN-CLASS MID-TERM.**

## *Nation-building, nationalism, and ethnic conflict*

### **#12. Thur, Oct. 15: Explaining war and peace in the former Soviet space. [53].**

1. David Laitin, "Secessionist Rebellion in the Former Soviet Union," *Comparative Political Studies*, v. 34, no. 8 (October 2001), pp. 839-861 [22] (TR).
2. Svante Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective," *World Politics*, v.54, no.2 (January 2002), pp. 245-276 [31] (TR).

### **#13. Tue, Oct 20. Challenge of nation-building in Russia: inventing the nation. [60].**

1. Vera Tolz, "The Search for National Identity in the Russia of Yeltsin and Putin," in Yitzhak Brudny, Sefani Hoffman and Jonathan Frankel, eds., *Restructuring Post-Communist Russia* (Cambridge UP, 2004), pp. 160-78 [18] (TR).
2. Oxana Shevel, "Russian Nation-Building from Yeltsin to Medvedev: Civic, Ethnic, or Purposefully Ambiguous?" *Europe-Asia Studies*, v. 63, no. 1 (March 2011), pp. 179-202 [23] (TR).
3. Marlene Laruelle, "The Three Colors of Novorossiia, or the Russian Nationalist Mythmaking of the Ukrainian Crisis," *Post-Soviet Affairs* (March 2015), pp. 1-20 [19] (TR).

### **#14. Thur, Oct 22. Dilemmas of nation-building in the non-Russian post-Soviet states. [54].**

1. Lowell Barrington, "Understanding Citizenship Policy in the Baltic States," in Alexander Aleinikoff and Douglas Klusmeyer, eds., *From Migrants to Citizens* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), pp. 253-294 [41] (TR).
2. David Smith, "Framing the national question in central and eastern Europe: a quadratic nexus?" *Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, vol. 2, no. 1 (September 2002), pp. 3-16 [13] (TR).

## *The politics of economic reforms.*

### **#15. Tue, Oct 27. From command to market economy: what had to be done and why it was hard to do [34].**

1. Leslie Amijo, Thomas Biersteker, Abraham Lowenthal, "The Problems of Simultaneous Transition" in Larry Diamond and Marc Platter, eds. *Economic Reform and Democracy* (Johns Hopkins UP 1995), pp. 226-240 [14] (TR).
2. Neil Robinson, "The Context of Russia's Political Economy: Soviet Legacies and Post-Soviet Policies," in Neil Robinson, ed. *The Political Economy of Russia* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), pp. 15-35 ONLY [20] (TR).

### **#16. Thur, Oct 29. Theories of economic reforms meet the post-Soviet realities, or why did some countries reform quicker/better than others? [62].**

1. Joel Hellman, "Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Postcommunist Transition," *World Politics*, vol. 50, no.2 (January 1998), pp. 203-234 [31] (TR).
2. Andrew G. Walder, Andrew Isaacson, and Qinglian Lu, "After State Socialism: The Political Origins of Transitional Recession," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 80, No. 2 (2015), pp.

444-468 [24] (TR).

3. Gel'man, pp. 43-50 [7].

**#17. Tue, Nov 3. Economic reform results: focus on Russia [52].**

1. Neil Robinson, "The Context of Russia's Political Economy: Soviet Legacies and Post-Soviet Policies," in Neil Robinson, ed. *The Political Economy of Russia* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2013), pp. 35-45 ONLY [10] (TR).
2. Gel'man, pp. 91-93 [2].
3. Hale, pp. 95-117 [22].
4. Richard Connolly, "Troubled Times. Stagnation, Sanctions and the Prospects for Economic Reform in Russia," Chatham House Russia and Eurasia Program Research Paper (February 2015) [20] (TR).

*Regime types and trajectories of development*

**#18. Thur, Nov 5. Authoritarian regimes: focus on post-Soviet Central Asia [37].**

1. Kathleen Collins, "Clans, Pacts, and Politics in Central Asia," *Journal of Democracy*, v. 13, no. 3 (July 2002), pp. 137-152 [15] (TR).
2. Hale, pp. 118-122, 162-165, 242-248 [13].

**Tue, Nov 10. NO CLASS (Monday schedule)**

**#19. Thur, Nov 12. What are post-Soviet hybrid regimes and how do they work? Focus on Russia [87].**

1. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism," *Journal of Democracy*, v. 13 no. 2 (2002), pp. 51-65 [14] (TR).
2. Gel'man, chs. 1-2, pp. 1-42 [41].
3. Hale, ch. 11, pp. 422-454 [32].

**#20. Tue, Nov 17. What are post-Soviet hybrid regimes and how do they work? Focus on Ukraine [33].**

1. Keith Darden, "Blackmail as a Tool of State Domination: Ukraine under Kuchma," *East European Constitutional Review*, v. 10, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2001) [6] (TR).
2. Wilson, ch. 3, pp. 38-65 [27].
3. Hale, pp. TBD.

**Thur, Nov. 19 - No class.** Class cancelled (professor attending conference).

**\*\* Short papers due Friday, Nov. 20 by 12 noon in my mailbox at the PS department in hard copy AND ALSO via Trunk electronically (no email submissions).\*\***

**#21. Tue, Nov 24. The instability of hybrid regimes and popular uprisings [49].**

1. Michael McFaul, "Transitions from Postcommunism," *Journal of Democracy*, v. 16, no. 3 (July 2005), pp. 5-19 [14] (TR).
2. Lucan Way, "The Real Causes of Color Revolutions," *Journal of Democracy*, v. 19, no. 3 (July 2008), pp. 55-69 [14] (TR).
3. Valerie Bunce and Sharon Wolchik, "Debating the Colored Revolutions: Getting Real about 'Real Causes,'" *Journal of Democracy*, v. 20 (January 2009), pp. 69-73 [4] (TR).
4. Hale, ch. 7, pp. 178-199 [21], PLUS skim other cases in the remainder of chapter 7.

**Thur, Nov 26. NO CLASS (Thanksgiving break)**

**#22. Tue, Dec 1. The Crisis in Ukraine: from Euromaidan to secessionist war [63].**

1. Taras Kuzio, "The Origins of Peace, Non-Violence, and Conflict in Ukraine," in Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska and Richard Sakwa, eds. *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives* (E-International Relations Publishing, 2015), pp. 110-122 [12] (TR).
2. Maria Popova, "Why the Orange Revolution Was Short and Peaceful and Euromaidan Long and Violent," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 61, no. 6 (November-December 2014), pp. 64-70 [6] (TR).
3. Wilson, ch. 4 (pp. 65-85) and ch. 7 (pp. 118-143) [45], plus OPTIONAL: ch. 5 and 6.

**#23. Thur, Dec 3. In-class simulation: how to solve current conflict?**

Readings TBA.

**#24. Tue, Dec 8. In-class simulation: how to solve current conflict?**

Readings TBA.

**#25. Thur, Dec 10. Wrap-up. What's next for Russia and its neighbors? [65].**

1. Hale, ch. 12, pp. 456-458, 472-489 [19].
2. Gel'man, ch. 6, pp. 129-154 [25].
3. Wilson, ch. 9, pp. 161-182, [21], and SKIM ch. 10 and conclusion, pp. 183-207.

**\*\* Simulation exercise paper due Friday, December 11, by 5pm. There will be a box near the front desk at the PS department where you can drop off hard copies of your papers. IN ADDITION, electronic copies should be uploaded to Trunk (email submissions will not be accepted). \*\***

**\*\* In-class final exam will take place Wednesday, December 16, 3:30-5:30pm. \*\***