RUSSIAN POLITICS

Course Description: A historic transition began with the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Russia proclaimed its desire to break with its authoritarian past and to become a market democracy. The rise of Putin has brought a return to authoritarianism with a veneer of democracy. During the upcoming semester, we will assess the twists and turns of post-Soviet Russia and try to determine what the future holds for Russia. We will focus primarily on three key goals which Russia has set for itself: democracy, the market, and the rule of law. In each case, we begin by defining the concept and then turn to its applicability in the Soviet and post-Soviet context. In an effort to understand the legacy with which Russia was confronted when the Soviet Union collapsed in December 1991, we begin with a brief survey of the Soviet era.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to attend class regularly and to take part in class discussion. There will be mid-term and final examinations. There are two writing assignments. For the first, we will be taking advantage of the appearance of Pussy Riot on campus at the Union Theater on November 17th. Students should plan to attend this evening event (tickets are free). Students are required to write a paper (7-9 pages) reflecting on the experiences of Pussy Riot. Details about the requirements for this paper are on the course web page. This paper must be submitted in class on Tuesday, November 29th. For the second assignment, students will be required to write a short essay (4-5 pages) reflecting on the readings for one class meeting. A schedule for this assignment will be posted on the course website. Two cautionary notes: (1) these essays must be turned in during the class period for which the readings being discussed are assigned, and (2) students will be expected to participate actively in the class discussion on the day the essay is due. The grade for participation (10%) will be determined largely based on performance on this day. Students interested in receiving honors credit for the course must consult with the instructor by September 20th, to set up additional assignment(s). Graduate students should consult with the instructor for the supplemental reading list and paper assignments.

Grades: Final grades will be calculated on the following basis: final exam (25%), mid-term exam (25%), Pussy Riot paper (20%), two in-class quizzes on (a) Sofia Petrovna and The Whisperers and (b) Words Will Break Cement (10%), participation paper (10%), and class participation (10%).

Readings: A reading packet has been prepared and is posted on the course website. Students interested in obtaining a hard copy of this reader should contact the Law School Copy Shop (copyshop@law.wisc.edu), which is located on the ground floor of the law school. The cost is $40. Students should purchase all of the following books. They are available at the University Bookstore:

Lydia Chukovskaya, Sofia Petrovna (Northwestern University Press, 1994)
Stephen Wegren, ed., Return to Putin’s Russia (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015, 6th ed.)
Masha Gessen, Words Will Break Cement (Riverhead Books, 2014)
### PART I: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

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<td>Sept 6</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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Sept 22  Understanding Russia’s Place in the World: The Soviet Legacy
Arbatov, The Soviet Viewpoint, pp. 53-59

Sept 27  Understanding Russia’s Place in the World: The Post-Soviet Reality
Wegren ed., Putin’s Russia, chapters 11 & 12

Sept 29  Contemporary Challenges
Wegren ed., Return to Putin’s Russia, chapters 7 & 9
Video of Russian policemen confessing to corruption: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4vB2a15dOU
Razogreyeva & Chetverikova, “Russia’s War on Corruption Is a Sham,” Moscow Times, October 11, 2015
Chulkovskaya, “StopHam: The End of the Road for Russia’s Parking Vigilantes?” Russia Beyond the Headlines, April 4, 2016

PART II: IS RUSSIA MAKING A TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY?

Oct 4  Defining Democracy & Applying it to the Soviet Reality
Schmitter & Karl, “What Democracy is ... and is Not,” in The Global Resurgence of Democracy, pp. 49-62, 1996
McAuley, Soviet Politics, chs. 1-3 (review)

Oct 6  Guest Lecturer: Regina Smyth, Professor of Political Science
Indiana University
Oct 11  Stalinist Terror: Authoritarianism in Action  
Chukhovskaya, Sofia Petrovna  
Excerpt from Stalinist criminal code (Article 58)  
Solzhenitsyn, Gulag Archipelago, pp. 60-68  
Figes, The Whisperers, pp. 300-315, 552-566  

In-Class Quiz on Sofia Petrovna, Gulag Archipelago, and The Whisperers

Oct 13  Demokratizatsiya: Institutional Innovations During the Gorbachev Era  
White, Russia’s New Politics, pp. 1-33  
Brown, “Did Gorbachev as General Secretary Become a Social Democrat?” Europe-Asia Studies, 65:2, pp. 198-99, 202-8  

Oct 18  Political Parties and Elections – Part I  

Oct 20  Political Parties and Elections – Part II  

Oct 25  Reinventing Legislative and Executive Power  
Election Results – President  
Wegren, ed., Putin’s Russia, Chapter 2 (review)  

Oct 27  Federalism: The Rise and Fall of Regional Leaders  
Wegren, ed., Putin’s Russia, Chapter 3  
Fishman, “Governor Belykh’s Arrest Has Russian Elite on Edge,” Moscow Times, June 29, 2016
Nov 1  
**State-Society Relationship: Civil Society**
Wegren, ed., *Putin’s Russia*, Chapters 5 & 6
Levada Center, “Foreign Agents,” December 17, 2015
Seddon, “Russia Declares Group a ‘Foreign Agent’ After its Director Spoke at Harvard,” *BuzzFeed*, July 13, 2015

Nov 3  
**MID-TERM EXAM**

**PART III: IS RUSSIA MAKING A TRANSITION TO THE RULE OF LAW?**

Nov 8  
**Starting Point: Defining the Rule of Law & the Role of Law During the Soviet Era**
Fuller, *The Morality of Law*, pp. 33-41
Excerpt from 1936 (Stalin) Constitution
Excerpt from the 1977 (Brezhnev) Constitution

Nov 10  
**Reforms to the Legal System Under Gorbachev**
Excerpt from the 1977 Constitution, as revised
Sharlet, “The Fate of Individual Rights in the Age of Perestroika,” *Toward the ‘Rule of Law’ in Russia?*, pp. 197-213

Nov 15  
**Reforms to the Legal System in Post-Soviet Russia**
Wegren, ed., *Return to Putin’s Russia*, Chapter 4
Baker & Glasser, *Kremlin Rising*, pp. 231-50
Barry, “In Russia, Jury is Something to Work Around,” *New York Times*, November 16, 2010
Excerpt from the 1993 (Yeltsin) Constitution
Nov 17  Modern-Day Show Trials: The Famous and the Ordinary
Documentaries (in class): Khodorkovsky, Pussy Riot: A Punk Prayer
Gessen, Words Will Break Cement: The Passion of Pussy Riot
Chaika video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vakUHfUSdf8
Pomerantsev, Nothing is True and Everything is Possible, pp. 79-104

In-Class Quiz on Words Will Break Cement and Nothing is True and Everything is Possible

Nov 22  Assessing the Present-Day Role of Law
Mirovalev, “Russia Weighs Anti-Terrorism Law Criticized as Draconian,” Los Angeles Times, June 27, 2016

Nov 24  THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

PART IV: IS RUSSIA MAKING A TRANSITION TO A MARKET ECONOMY?

Nov 29  Starting Point: Plans and Markets in Theory
Lindblom, Politics and Markets, pp. 33-46, 78-85
Millar, The ABCs of Soviet Socialism, pp. 3-33

PAPERS DUE IN CLASS

Dec 1  The Reality of the Planned Economy
Ledeneva, Russia’s Economy of Favors, pp. 1-9, 28-52

Dec 6  Perestroika: Trying to Make the Planned Economy Efficient
Hewett, Reforming the Soviet Economy (1988), pp. 303-33
Smith, The New Russians, pp. 179-205
Dec 8  Privatization: The Impact of Market Reforms
Brady, *Kapitalizm*, pp. 7-43

Dec 13  Post-Privatization Reality
Brady, *Kapitalizm*, pp. 135-42, 206-7
Ledeneva, *Russia’s Economy of Favors*, pp. 175-92
Desai & Idson, *Work Without Wages*, pp. 48-59

Dec 15  “Recovery” Under Putin: Real or Illusory?
Wegren, ed., *Return to Putin’s Russia*, Chapter 8
“Putin Extends the Food Embargo Until 2018,” *Moscow Times*, June 29, 2016

FINAL EXAM:  TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016  2:45 – 4:45PM