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 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. The second writing assignment requires students to write an essay (8-9 pages) based on Putin Country by Anne Garrels (the “Garrels Paper”). Details about the requirements for the Garrels paper are on the course web page. This paper must be submitted in class on Tuesday, November 19th. Students interested in receiving honors credit for the course must consult with the instructor by September 19th, to set up additional assignment(s).

Course requirements for graduate students are detailed on a separate syllabus.

Grades: Final grades will be calculated on the following basis: final exam (30%), mid-term exam (25%), Garrels paper (20%), in-class quizzes on the readings (5%), participation paper (10%), and class participation (10%). There will be at least three in-class quizzes with simple multiple choice questions. One is scheduled for October 8th, and will cover the readings on Sofia Petrovna, Gulag Archipelago, and Secondhand Time. The other two will be announced.

Readings: A reading packet has been prepared and is posted on the course website. If desired, students can get a hard copy of this reader by going to the Law School Copy Shop, located on the ground floor of the law school, or ordering a copy on the Copy Shop’s website (https://law.wisc.edu/copyshop/course_packet_request.html). The cost is $33. Students should purchase all of the following books. They are available at the University Bookstore:

Lydia Chukovskaya, Sofia Petrovna (Northwestern University Press, 1994)
Anne Garrels, Putin Country: A Journey Into the Real Russia (Picador, 2017)
**Course Credit-Hour Expectations:** This is a 3-credit course. It meets for two 75-minute sessions each week over the fall semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, assignments, studying, etc.) for about 3 hours out of the classroom for every class period.

**Learning Outcomes for Russian Politics:**
- Increase knowledge of the trajectory of political life in Russia from 1917 through the present
- Learn the theoretical and institutional underpinnings of democracy, markets and the rule of law, and how to structure an argument as to the presence or absence of these institutions
- Improve oral advocacy skills through classroom discussion

**Academic Integrity Statement:** By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW Madison’s community of scholars in which all academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student’s educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. https://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php

**Diversity & Inclusion:** Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. https://diversity.wisc.edu/

Please notify the instructor within the first two weeks of class of any specific days that you will need to miss a class due to religious observances.
PART I: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Sept 5  Introduction
Transcript of interview with Putin, June 26, 2019, Financial Times
Frye, “Putin Touts Russia as a Great Power. But He’s Made It a Weak One,” Washington Post, June 6, 2019

Sept 10  Revolution: Lenin Comes to Power – The Creation of the USSR
McAuley, Soviet Politics, ch. 1-2
Litveiko, “In 1917,” In the Shadow of the Revolution, pp. 49-65
Levada Center, Lenin’s Mausoleum, December 21, 2017

Sept 12  Becoming a World Power: The Soviet Union Under Stalin
McAuley, Soviet Politics, ch. 3-4
Figes, The Whisperers, pp. 122-132
Levada Center, “Perceptions of Stalin,” April 14, 2018

Sept 17  Muddling Through: The Soviet Union Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev
McAuley, Soviet Politics, ch. 5-6
Kramer, “A River of Pictures of the Dead from Russia’s Sacred War,” New York Times, May 11, 2018
Young, Growing Up in Moscow: Memories of a Soviet Girlhood., pp. 116-42

Sept 19  The Unraveling of the Soviet’s Union Under Gorbachev & the Revival of Russia Under Yeltsin
McAuley, Soviet Politics, ch. 7-8
Alexievich, Secondhand Time, pp. 20-24, 135-7
Yablokova, “15 Years On, Coup Is a Dim Memory,” Moscow Times, Aug. 18, 2006
Applebaum, “Russia's Agent of Change; For All His Flaws, Boris Yeltsin Started Something Big,” Washington Post, April 24, 2007 [Western perspective on Yeltsin at the time of his death]
Lipman, “Yeltsin the Revolutionary,” Washington Post, April 25, 2007 [Russian perspective on Yeltsin at the time of his death]
Sept 24 Understanding Russia’s Place in the World: The Soviet Legacy
Arbatov, The Soviet Viewpoint, pp. 53-59
MacFarquhar, “At Summit Meetings, Kremlin Often Tried to Steamroller U.S. Presidents,” New York Times, July 14, 2018

Sept 26 Understanding Russia’s Place in the World: The Post-Soviet Reality
Wegren ed., Putin’s Russia, chapters 10 & 11
Ryzhkov, “Why We Should Welcome Russia Rejoining PACE [Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe],” Moscow Times, June 26, 2019

Oct 1 Contemporary Challenges
Wegren ed., Return to Putin’s Russia, chapters 1, 6 & 8
Alexievich, Secondhand Time, pp. 297-301
Kramer, “As Rural Wages Crater, Russian Doctors Leave or Take to the Streets,” New York Times, May 26, 2019

PART III: IS RUSSIA MAKING A TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY?

Oct 3 Defining Democracy & Applying it to Soviet and Post-Soviet Realities
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 8 Stalinist Terror: Authoritarianism in Action
Chukhovskaya, Sofia Petrovna
Excerpt from Stalinist criminal code (Article 58)
Solzhentsyn, Gulag Archipelago, pp. 60-68
Alexievich, Secondhand Time, pp. 32-3, 68-70, 176-85
Levada Center, “The Great Terror,” September 6, 2017 [public opinion poll results]

In-Class Quiz on Sofia Petrovna, Gulag Archipelago, and Secondhand Time
Oct 10  Demokratizatsiya: Institutional Innovations During the Gorbachev Era
White, *Russia’s New Politics*, pp. 1-33
Alexievich, *Secondhand Time*, pp. 58-63

Oct 15  Political Parties and Elections – Part I

Oct 17  Political Parties and Elections – Part II
Wegren, ed., *Putin’s Russia*, pp. 189-98
Reuter, “Political Parties,” in *Developments in Russian Politics 9*, pp. 42-53

Oct 22  Reinventing Legislative and Executive Power
Noble, “Parliamentary Politics in Russia,” in *Developments in Russian Politics 9*, pp. 56-66
Jarmas, “Families of Victims of Russia’s Mall Fire Are Angry. What Does This Mean for Putin’s Power?” *Washington Post*, March 29, 2018

Oct 24  Federalism: The Rise and Fall of Regional Leaders
Wegren, ed., *Putin’s Russia*, Chapter 2
Gershkovich, “‘Time for Radical Measures’: Lyubov Sobol Is Seizing the Protest Moment,” *Moscow Times*, July 30, 2019 [available on web site]

Oct 29  State-Society Relationship: Civil Society (part 1)
Wegren, ed., *Putin’s Russia*, Chapter 4
Chulkovskaya, “StopHam: The End of the Road for Russia’s Parking Vigilantes?” *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, April 4, 2016
Cichowlas, “Patriarch Kirill: From Ambitious Reformer to State Hardliner,” *Moscow Times*, April 14, 2017
Hartog, “What Happens to a Pollster When Russia Doesn’t Like the Results,” *The Guardian*, September 16, 2017
**Oct 31**

**Civil Society – part 2 (media & gender)**

Wegren, ed., *Putin’s Russia*, Chapters 5 & pp. 198-203

Taubman, *Gorbachev*, pp. 240-43 [Chernobyl]


Van Sant, “Russia Criminalizes the Spread of Online News Which ‘Disrespects’ the Government,” NPR, March 18, 2019


Spring, “Russia Had a #MeToo Moment,” *Moscow Times*, Nov. 7, 2018


**Nov 5**

**MID-TERM EXAM**

### PART III: IS RUSSIA MAKING A TRANSITION TO A MARKET ECONOMY?

**Nov 7**

**Starting Point: Plans and Markets in Theory & Reality**


Millar, *The ABCs of Soviet Socialism*, pp. 3-33


Ledeneva, *Russia’s Economy of Favors*, pp. 1-9


Voinovich, “Id Be Honest If They’d Let Me,” *Four Soviet Masterpieces* [on web]

**Nov 12**

**Perestroika: Trying to Make the Planned Economy Efficient**

Before class: listen to “The New Norm” – episode of Invisibilia (June 17, 2016) [deals with challenges to opening the first McDonald's in Moscow in 1991]

https://www.npr.org/programs/invisibilia/481887848/the-new-norm?showDate=2016-06-17 [listen to the first few minutes, then jump to minute 43 for this story]


**Nov 14**

**Privatization: The Impact of Market Reforms**


Alexievich, *Secondhand Time*, pp. 36-7
Nov 19  Post-Privatization Reality
Brady, *Kapitalizm*, pp. 135-42, 206-7
Ledenova, *Russia's Economy of Favors*, pp. 175-92
Desai & Idson, *Work Without Wages*, pp. 48-59

**GARRELS PAPERS DUE IN CLASS ON NOV 19TH**

Nov 21  “Recovery” Under Putin: Real or Illusory?
Wegren, ed., *Return to Putin’s Russia*, Chapter 7
MacFarquhar, “Putin or the World? Sanctions May Force Oligarchs to Choose,” *New York Times*, April 22, 2018
Kissi, “Amid International Pressure, Russia’s Economy is a Mix of the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,” CNBC.com, May 4, 2018
Kramer, “Selling Real Estate in Russia? Are You Insane, or Just Drunk?” *New York Times*, December 26, 2018

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

Nov 26  Starting Point: Defining the Rule of Law & the Role of Law During the Soviet Era
Fuller, *The Morality of Law*, pp. 33-41
Hendley, *Everyday Law in Russia*, pp. 1-5, 9-14
Excerpt from Stalinist criminal code (Article 58)
Excerpt from 1936 (Stalin) Constitution
Excerpt from the 1977 (Brezhnev) Constitution

Nov 28  Thanksgiving break – no class

Dec 3  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
Dec 5  
Reforms to the Legal System in Post-Soviet Russia  
Wegren, ed., Return to Putin’s Russia, Chapter 3  
Baker & Glasser, Kremlin Rising, pp. 231-50  
Excerpt from the 1993 (Yeltsin) Constitution

Dec 10  
Assessing the Present-Day Role of Law  
Hendley, Everyday Law in Russia, pp. 142-55, 165-78  
Pomerantsev, Nothing is True and Everything is Possible, pp. 79-104  
Rankin, “Russian ‘Gay Propaganda’ Law Ruled Discriminatory by European Court,” Guardian, June 20, 2017  
Lunkin, “Russia’s Crackdown on Jehovah’s Witnesses Hits Critical Milestone,” Moscow Times, February 7, 2019  
MacFarquhar, “They Killed Their Abusive Husbands. Their Acquittals Shocked Russia,” New York Times, September 8, 2018

FINAL EXAM: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2019  2:45PM – 4:45PM