

**Department of International Studies
Rhodes College
Fall 2010**

Russia and the Soviet Successor States

M-W-F 2-2:50pm
Kennedy 208

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Buckman 118
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Course Description:

This course is a general introduction into the political, cultural, social and historical background of Russian and post-Soviet successor states' domestic and foreign politics. It will enumerate the wide spectrum of political forces (groups, concepts, persons, issues) active in the area today.

The past two decades have brought enormous changes to Russia and the other countries of Eurasia. Designed with those changes in mind, the course program aims to strike a balance between the need for intellectual flexibility and the need for academic structure. The largest emphasis is on the study of Russia, but attention is also given to the non-Russian regions of the former USSR.

The course is by its nature an interdisciplinary one, incorporating a great deal of historical background since it is difficult to understand modern Russian and post-Soviet politics separately from their roots as well as social and cultural contexts.

Required Books:

Bressler, Michael (2009). *Understanding Contemporary Russia*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Lewis, David (2008). *The Temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mankoff, Jeffrey (2009). *Russian Foreign Policy: Return of Great Power Politics*. Rowman and Littlefield.

Readings marked with * can be found on the course's Moodle site.

Additional readings will be assigned as required.

Course Requirements:

Quizzes: There will be seven unannounced quizzes in this class. The lowest score of these will not be included in the final grade for this component of the course. Make-up quizzes will be allowed only if students have documented excuses.

Exams: There will be two exams in this course: a mid-term and a final. The mid-term will take place on October 6th; the final will take place on December 15th). It will not be comprehensive.

Research Paper: Each student will write a paper on a topic of their choice, approved by the instructor. The length of the paper should be approximately 10 pages. The paper is due on November 22nd. Further details on the paper will be provided at a later time.

Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to attend class regularly and participate in the class discussion. Students who accumulate more than four unexcused absences will have their grade for this component reduced by ten percent for each absence.

Quizzes	25%
Mid-Term Examination	25%
Final Examination	25%
Research Paper	20%
Attendance and Participation	5%
Total	100%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%	C+	78-79	D-	62-60
A-	92-90	C	77-73	F	60-
B+	88-89	C-	72-70		
B	87-83	D+	68-69		
B-	82-80	D	67-63		

Course Policies:

Make-up Exams: There will be no make-up exams unless the instructor has been notified ahead of time. If a student cannot attend an examination, s/he must advise the instructor as soon as possible, and prior to the day of the exam. If the student has a valid and documented excuse, s/he will be allowed to take the exam before the regularly scheduled exam time.

Papers: Late papers will be lowered by three percent (3%) for each day they are late. Papers submitted a week after their due date will not be accepted. If the student has a valid and documented excuse and has notified the instructor ahead of time, s/he may be allowed to submit the paper at a later time.

Papers submitted electronically will not be accepted. Students must submit their written work to the professor in hard copy.

All written work must be typed using Times New Roman font, size 12 pt., double-spaced, with up to 1" margins. Wikipedia, MSN Encarta, Britannica Online are **NOT** acceptable sources!

Tardiness: Entering or leaving the room while class is in progress is not acceptable, so please plan your arrival to the classroom accordingly. Doing so signals disrespect to the instructor and to fellow students alike, and suggests that this is class is not a high priority to the student. Students who arrive late or leave early will not be allowed to sign the attendance sheet.

Honor Code: It is understood that the students will observe the honor code of Rhodes College. Any evidence of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will result in a failing grade and notification of college officials.

Disabilities: Every effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities. To do so as effectively as possible, students who need special accommodations should identify themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the semester

Laptops and cell phones: Students who use laptops in class must do so exclusively for the purpose of note-taking. Surfing the web, emailing, or playing computer games in class conveys disrespect to your fellow students as well as the instructor, and can be disruptive for the entire class.

Please turn off your cell phones before the class begins and refrain from using laptops during class.

This syllabus is subject to change.

Course Schedule:

Section 1: Politics and Policies of the Russian Federation

8/25 Introduction to the Course

Geographical, Historical, and Social Context

8/27 Collins and Rojansky, "Why Russia Matters," Foreign Policy, August 2010.
Bressler, Ch. 2

8/30 Bressler, Ch. 3, pp. 33-60

9/1 Bressler, Ch. 3, pp. 60-90

Concepts and their analytical use

9/3 Linz, Totalitarianism*

9/6 **Labor Day**

9/8 Linz, The Perils of Presidentialism*; Bressler, Ch. 4

Structure and Performance of the Russian Economy

9/10 Bressler, Ch. 5

- 9/13 Bressler, Ch. 5 Cont'd
Nationalities and Ethnic Conflict
- 9/15 Bressler, Ch. 7
King and Menon, "Prisoners of the Caucasus: Russia's Invisible Civil War," *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2010 v. 89 no. 4.
Social Problems, Policies, and Politics
- 9/17 Bressler, Ch. 8
- 9/20 Bressler, Ch. 9
- 9/22 Bressler, Ch. 10
- 9/24 Bressler, Ch. 11
- 9/27 Bressler, Ch. 12
- 9/29 Bressler, Ch. 12 Cont'd
- 10/1 Shevtsova, What is the Matter With Russia?* Diamond, Thinking About Hybrid Democracies*
- 10/4 Mid-term exam review
- 10/6 **Mid-Term Exam**
Russia's Foreign and Security Policy
- 10/8 The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation
<http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/docs/2008/07/204750.shtml>
The National Security Concept of the Russian Federation 2009
Mankoff, Ch. 1
- 10/11 Mankoff, Ch. 2
- 10/13 Mankoff, Ch. 3
- 10/15 Mankoff, Ch. 4
- 10/18 **Fall Break**
- 10/20 Mankoff, Ch. 5
Miller, "Fear and Loathing in Central Asia," *Foreign Policy* August, 2010.
- Section 2: Politics and Policies Eastern European post-Soviet States**
- 10/22 *Ukraine: Democracy in Russia's Shadow*
Sasse, The Role of Regionalism*
Hale, Uses of Divided Power*
- 10/25 Motyl, Ukrainian Blues: Yanukovich's Rise, Democracy's Fall*
Zeihan, Ukraine's Election and the Russian Resurgence, www.stratfor.com
- 10/27 Ramet, The Baltics
- 10/29 Benes, Moldova's European Aspirations
- Section 3: Frozen Conflicts and Prospects for Democracy in the South Caucasus**
- 11/1 Cornell, War in Georgia*; Fairbanks, Georgia's Soviet Legacy*
The Economist, "Georgia's Mental Revolution," Aug. 19, 2010, www.economist.com

11/3 Azerbaijan and Armenia: An Intimate Quarrel
De Waal, "Caucasian Standoff," *Foreign Policy* June 2010.

Section 4: Politics and Policies of Central Asian States

11/5 Lewis, Ch. 1

11/8 Lewis, Ch. 2

11/10 Lewis, Ch. 3

11/12 *Movie: Shadow of the Holy Book*

11/15 Lewis, Ch. 4

Greenberg, "Between Uzbekistan and a Hard Place," *Foreign Policy*. August 2010.

Recknagel, "Can Kyrgyzstan Become a Democracy in Russia's Backyard" *Foreign Policy*, July 2010.

11/17 Lewis, Ch. 5

11/19 Lewis, Ch. 7, Cornell, Finding the Balance*

Social Relations and Problems

11/22 Lewis, Ch. 6; Sabadeo and Zanca, Ch. 19, 22*

Final Paper Due

11/24 **Thanksgiving Break**

11/26 **Thanksgiving Break**

11/29 Sabadeo and Zanca, Ch. 15, 16*

12/1 Sabadeo and Zanca, Ch. 6, 8, 11

12/3 *Nationalities and Ethnic Conflict*

12/6 Final Conclusions of the Course

12/8 Final Exam Review