

RHODES COLLEGE
FALL 2012
IMPERIAL RUSSIA
HIST 229

Prof. Tait Keller
kellert@rhodes.edu
Office: Buckman Hall 211
Office Hours: TR 12:30-2:30 and by appointment

Class Days: TR 9:30-10:45
Classroom: Buckman Hall 212

Course Description

How and why did Russia become the center of the world's largest land empire only to collapse so suddenly in 1917? Beginning the emergence of Rus and the development of the early Kievan and Muscovite states, this course delves into the Russian Imperial period, examining the growth of the Russian Empire and highlighting certain topics, including the quest for modernization; the relationship between Russia and the rest of the world (both East and West); the beliefs, traditions, religion, and way of life of the Russian people; radical movements; and the revolution that brought down the Romanov dynasty. We will focus especially on aspects of Russian culture: literature, painting, and music.

Course Objectives

The learning objectives for the course are three-fold:

- The first objective is learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view, with a focus on sharpening higher level thinking skills.
- The second objective is developing skill in expressing yourself in orally or in writing, with a focus on improving your written communication.
- Learning about Russia's historical development fulfills the third objective, which is gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trend) and building your knowledge base.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades in the course will be based on several components. The first is spirited participation in the discussions, which includes four short reflections on our readings. The third will be two analytical papers. The last two components will be a midterm and a final exam.

I. Participation

The success of the course depends on your active participation, which also happens to make up a big part of your grade. I expect you to come to class prepared, having done the assigned reading and eager to participate in the discussion. After each discussion I will record a grade for each of you. You get 0 if you don't show up, 50 if you do, 70 if you open your mouth (yawning doesn't count), and more if you say something useful. Unexcused absences will negatively impact your final grade.

To encourage dialog, you will make weekly contributions to the Moodle discussion section. You may respond to one of the questions that I will pose on the discussion thread, comment on someone else's point, or pose your own question. Your contribution is due by **9:00 am Thursday**.

II. Analytical Papers

Paper topics are drawn from the assigned readings and require no additional research. The paper assignments are intended to encourage your close and critical reading of the course readings, as well as to give you practice in developing an effective written argument.

The papers will be 1250 words in length, double spaced, and follow the Chicago documentation style. In no event should your essay be longer than 1500 words; I look for cogency, not length. You must have a title page with a creative and intriguing title, your name, and word count. Please remember to number the pages consecutively and staple your paper - no binders or paper clips.

A writing style guide is available on Moodle to assist you when you proofread your papers. Be sure to follow the style guide and make note of typical mistakes undergraduates often make in their papers. Your grade will suffer if you commit these mistakes. No, this is not an English course, but you cannot do good history without writing competently.

I will be delighted to discuss your paper with you and to read and comment on your rough draft or outline. Be aware that late papers will be penalized. Extensions will be granted only in dire—and documented—emergencies. The papers will be due on **September 25** and on **November 13**.

III. Exams

The exams will test your mastery of the course material. You will be responsible for all material covered in the lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. The exams will be a combination of identifications, short answers, and essay questions. Review sheets will be available on Moodle. The midterm exam will be held on **October 11** and the final exam on **December 11**.

The final grade for the class will be established as follows:

Participation	25%
Analytical Papers	30%
Midterm exam	15%
Final exam	30%

Grading Scale:

A	Outstanding
B	Above Average/Very Good
C	Average/Good
D	Below Average/Poor
F	Fail

A (93-100); A- (90-92); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72) and so on. Any number below 60 will be marked as an F

***NOTE:** All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Failure to complete any of the course requirements by **December 11** may result in a final course grade of F.

Required Texts (in order texts are read)

James Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*

Alexander Pushkin, *The Captain's Daughter*

Nadezhda Durova, *The Cavalry Maiden*

Nikolai Gogol, *The Overcoat and Other Short Stories*

Leo Tolstoy, *Hadji Murad*

Vera Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*

Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*

All of these titles are on sale at the bookstore and on reserve in the library. You can also find all these books used (read: much cheaper) at online bookstores. You are welcome to read these books in any edition, condition, or language.

****NOTE:** We will also read extensively from the following textbook:

James Cracraft, *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia*

The price of the new version is outrageous and so I did not order it for the bookstore. But I strongly encourage you to buy a used version, which you can find online for a much lower price.

Course Policies – read these all carefully

Special Needs and Accommodations: I am strongly committed to accommodating students with disabilities, and ask your cooperation in making sure that I am aware of any such accommodation you might need. All accommodation requests are the responsibility of the student. For more information, please contact Student Disability Services (SDS) to alert them of any needs you may have.

Moodle: All students in the class are automatically registered for this course on Moodle. When you log on to Moodle and access the site for this course, you will find all course materials, including this syllabus, readings, and guidelines for assignments.

Email: All email correspondence will be sent to your Rhodes email account. It is your responsibility to check this account regularly. When writing me, I expect your emails to be professional.

Food, Drink, Tobacco: Drink is permitted in my classroom, but food and tobacco products of all kinds are prohibited.

Cell phones, Blackberries, ipods, and other such devices: Turn them off!

Sleeping in class is not permitted. Those who fall asleep will be subject to a rude awakening.

Honor Code: I believe in the College's standards of academic honesty, and I enforce them vigorously and to the letter. Be aware of those standards, and observe them. Plagiarism and cheating are easy to detect; so are papers pulled off the Internet. If I suspect that you have cheated or plagiarized another's work, I will discuss this matter with you. If I am not satisfied, I will report your case to the Honor Council for due process. I always recommend failure for the course when I submit a file. The bottom line is this: do your own work. You are spending your time and money to be here and learn. Don't waste either by plagiarizing or cheating.

A Word on Grading:

Papers will be evaluated on four main criteria: thesis, organization, evidence, and style. In general, a paper that does a very good job in each category is a 'B'. A paper that almost does is a 'B-', and a paper that performs well in each category and goes beyond in one category is a 'B+'. A paper that is satisfactory but weak in one or two categories is a 'C'. A 'D' paper is weak in three or more categories, or omits one criterion completely. Papers without notes crediting sources and location quotations, paraphrases, and allusions will receive, at best, a grade of 'D'. An 'A' range paper performs outstandingly well in each category, and achieves something extraordinary in two or more categories.

Remember that a grade does not reflect process (it does not measure whether you worked hard) and it certainly does not reflect a value judgment about you as a person. A grade constitutes an evaluation of the quality and analytical rigor of the thesis, organization, evidence, and style of a single piece of work.

I will be delighted to discuss your papers with you. Be advised however that grades, once assigned, are not subject to change. I also will not communicate grades over email or the telephone. The most important part of the grading process is not the grade, but the comments you will find on your papers when you pick them up.

I do not give "I" (incomplete) grades. Late work, except in documented cases of bereavement, major injury, or catastrophic illness, will suffer a substantial and progressive reduction in grade. Therefore, please plan ahead and do your work on time.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS
(subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Lectures, Discussions, Readings, and Papers
WEEK 1	Thurs	Aug 23	Welcome!
WEEK 2	Tues Thurs	Aug 28 Aug 30	Locating the Russian Empire The Muscovite Heritage Readings: Mark Bassin, "Russia Between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space," <i>Slavic Review</i> (1991) Selections from <i>Major Problems</i> Excerpts from The Domostroi
WEEK 3	Tues Thurs	Sept 4 Sept 6	Peter the Great The Petrine Revolution Reading: James Cracraft, <i>The Revolution of Peter the Great</i>
WEEK 4	Tues Thurs	Sept 11 Sept 13	Catherine the Great Enlightened Absolutism and the Social Order Reading: Alexander Pushkin, <i>The Captain's Daughter</i>
WEEK 5	Tues Thurs	Sept 18 Sept 20	Reform and Reaction under Alexander I The Origins of the Intelligentsia Readings: Selections from <i>Major Problems</i> Anna Labzina, <i>Days of a Russian Noblewoman</i> (selections) Aleksandr Nikitenko, <i>Up from Serfdom</i> (selections)

First analytical paper due: Tuesday, September 25

WEEK 6	Tues Thurs	Sept 25 Sept 27	Russia and the French Revolution The War of 1812 Reading: Nadezhda Durova, <i>The Cavalry Maiden</i> Website: 1812 War Gallery (peruse): http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/
WEEK 7	Tues Thurs	Oct 2 Oct 4	Nicolas I and Official Nationality The Decembrists Readings: Nikolai Gogol, <i>The Overcoat</i> Selections from <i>Major Problems</i>
WEEK 8	Tues Thurs	Oct 9 Oct 11	Alexander II and the Great Reforms MIDTERM EXAM

Fall Break October 13-16

WEEK 9	Thurs	Oct 18	Empire-Building Reading: Leo Tolstoy, <i>Hadji Murad</i>
WEEK 10	Tues Thurs	Oct 23 Oct 25	Populists, Terrorists, and Reactionaries Revolutionary Dreams Reading: Vera Figner, <i>Memoirs of a Revolutionist</i>

WEEK 11 Tues Oct 30 Cultures and Confessions in the Empire
 Thurs Nov 1 From Peasant to Proletarian
 Readings: Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*
 Semen Kanatchikov, *A Radical Worker in Tsarist Russia* (selections)

WEEK 12 Tues Nov 6 The Revolution of 1905
 Thurs Nov 8 Towards a Civil Society?
 Film: *Battleship Potemkin*
 Readings: Selections from *Major Problems*
 [The Russian Fundamental Law](#)
 [Programs of the Political Parties](#)

Second analytical paper due: Tuesday, November 13

WEEK 13 Tues Nov 13 The Eastern Origins of the Great War
 Thurs Nov 15 Generals and Grunts
 Readings: W. Bruce Lincoln, *A Passage through Armageddon*, selections
 Joshua A. Sanborn, "The Mobilization of 1914 and the Question of the
 Russian Nation," *Slavic Review* (2000)
 The Willy-Nicky Letters

WEEK 14 Tues Nov 19 Shattering an Empire
 Readings: W. Bruce Lincoln, *A Passage through Armageddon*, selections
 Excerpts from S. Ansky, *The Enemy at his Pleasure*
 Joshua Sanborn, "Unsettling the Empire: Violent Migrations and Social
 Disaster in Russia during World War I," *Journal of Modern
 History* (2005)

Thanksgiving Break November 21-25

WEEK 15 Tues Nov 27 The End of Autocracy
 Thurs Nov 29 Ten Days that Shook the World
 Film: *October*
 Readings: Selections from Lenin's Writings

WEEK 16 Tues Dec 4 Review

**FINAL EXAM
 Tuesday, December 11
 5:30 PM**