



**Russia and the USSR: 1800-Putin**  
**Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**HIST 3513/5513**  
**Fall 2025**

**Contact Information**

Instructor: Dr. John Ashbrook

Office: 215 O'Donohoe Hall

Office Hours: MW 1-2pm; TR 930-11am; or by appointment

Office Phone: (940) 397-4153 or (434) 386-1750 (cell)

E-mail: [john.ashbrook@msutexas.edu](mailto:john.ashbrook@msutexas.edu)

**Course Description**

In August 2008 Russian soldiers, ostensibly in reaction to Georgian troops entering South Ossetia, invaded Georgia in support of a separatist movement in the region. This instability in a country seeking NATO membership worried many Americans who remember the Soviet Union as the “Evil Empire.” Some argue that this recent aggression illustrates Russia’s historical predilection for expansionism embedded in its political culture. Russia’s further incursions into Ukraine in 2014 and 2022, exacerbated this tense situation and perceptions of Russian aggression, and refocused American foreign policy into a new “cold war” that pits the US against the totalitarian regimes of Vladimir Putin and his ally Xi Jinping. This course is meant to examine the history and foreign policy of the Russian empire from 1800 to 1917, the USSR from 1917 to 1991, and the successive administrations of the new Russian state after 1991. It begins with the reigns of Paul I and Alexander I and continues into the current presidency of Putin. A number of questions and problems will be addressed, which include, but are not limited to the following:

What shaped the foreign policy and tsarist rule of Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century? How and why did the state undergo a series of reforms and counter-reforms? Why did Russia increasingly depend on Western European funds and support? What was the impact of the First World War on tsarist Russia and how did the threat of conflict influence Soviet policy? How did the bolshevik and Stalinist systems differ? What was the Stalinist revolution and how did it shape the soviet system? How did World War II change the Soviet Union and why did Stalin and his successors feel the need to maintain a “European Empire”? How was the Stalinist system reformed and why? What was the Khrushchevian “thaw,” and did this precipitate the rise of the generations of 1956 and 1968 and the appearance of dissident movements? Did these reforms and movements lead inexorably to the collapse of the USSR? How did governing philosophies enable and restrict Soviet and post-Soviet leaders? How and why did the Soviet Union collapse and what have been the major themes and issues that confronted the new Russian Confederation? Why was Yeltsin’s Russia rife with corruption? Did this contribute to the rise and expansionist

policies of Vladimir Putin? How does history shape the very recent conflicts in Georgia and the Ukraine?

This course will also introduce some of the tools and methodologies used by historians to analyze the past. We will deal with a number of primary documents, which historians use and interpret to create contested histories. This is meant to get the students actively involved in historical analysis and critical thinking. It is also meant to introduce students to the historian's craft, showing them how and why historians practice their discipline.

Unfortunately, a one-semester course cannot hope to give adequate attention to every significant aspect of this dense and complex history, even assuming we could agree on what was 'significant'. Therefore, I will not present you with a chronological survey of Russian and Soviet history from roughly 1800 to the invasion of the Ukraine in 2022. Instead of building a single grand narrative, we will examine history from a number of vantage-points and through a number of themes from different perspectives.

### **Objectives**

The course objectives are simple and clear. First, the student will be expected to learn a general timeline of Russian history from 1800 to the present, focusing on major events and personalities (this doesn't mean memorization of dates, but instead a general knowledge of what things happened before others and how these events influenced those that followed). A solid knowledge of facts is essential before more complex historical problems can be explored and analyzed. Much of this will be the student's responsibility since the lectures and discussion will deal mostly with themes or events of great importance during the timeframe in question. It is hoped that at the completion of the course, the students should be able to:

- 1) discuss the historical and international consequences of Russian history in the modern period;
- 2) identify the overt and underlying forces that drove and shaped Russian culture, society, politics, and science and technology in this period;
- 3) discuss the transformation of the Russian and Soviet governments in people over 200 years; and
- 4) understand the failed experiences of tsarist, communist, and democratic rule that led to the current domination of the state by the neo-imperial Vladimir Putin.

### **Student Participation**

Students will be held responsible for their own education. I am a harsh taskmaster and do not accept excuses that tend to be pervasive in today's society. You are adults, and with age comes responsibility for your own actions or lack thereof. Active student participation in learning (which includes careful reading of ALL assignments, classroom engagement, attentive note taking, and participation in discussions), the maintenance of a weekly study schedule, the completion of ALL assignments in a timely manner, adequate preparation for exams, and, when necessary, individual post-exam consultation with the instructor, are essential to meeting the learning outcomes of the course. However, even if you turn in all assignments, pass your exams, and participate in discussions, you are not guaranteed a "good grade". A is a designation for

superior work and B for good work. If your work ethic, written work, and test taking efforts are merely satisfactory, you will EARN a C. The bare minimum earns a D.

### **Textbooks**

- 1) Walter Moss, *A History of Russia*, vol. II since 1855, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ISBN: 1843310341
- 2) David Rowley, *Exploring Russia's Past*, Vol. 2: Since 1856 (Prentice Hall, 2005), 9780130947024

### **Academic Integrity, Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

**Notice:** Understand the following – it applies to all assignments. If you, in any instance, “cut and paste” from any internet source without citing that source (plagiarism) or use unapproved internet sources, you will fail the assignment in question, including if you cheat in any way on a **draft** you turn in. This includes, but is NOT LIMITED to, use of an **AI program** for any reason; plagiarism of any form; having someone else do any of the work (research or writing), etc. Depending on the severity of the offense, the professor reserves the right to employ any or all university sanctioned disciplinary actions, of which I will pursue prosecution to its furthest extent.

### **Grading**

In the past, I've used a number of different assignments to evaluate student learning and retention. However, this semester I am employing assignments and evaluation as my mentors evaluated me as an undergraduate, which held me accountable for my own performance.

<b>Assignments (undergraduate students)</b>	<b>Percentage of grade</b>
Exams (2) 20% each. Take home, essay exams	40%
Analytical book review. Student selects a book which must be approved by instructor no later than September 15 at 5pm. Final review due Oct. 25 at 5pm. [approximately 1200 words]	20%

<b>Assignments (undergraduate students)</b>	<b>Percentage of grade</b>
Active participation and attendance (includes pop-quizzes, summaries, and in-class assignments)	20%
Final research paper on topic approved by professor by September 20 at 5pm. Draft due Nov. 10. Final paper due Dec. 8 by 5pm. [between 3600 and 4500 words]	20%

<b>Assignments (graduate students)</b>	<b>Percentage of grade</b>
Exams (2) 20% each. Take home, essay exams	40%
Analytical, comparative book review. Students select two books, which must be approved by instructor no later than September 15 at 5pm. Final review due Oct. 25 by 5pm. [approximately 1500- 1800 words]	20%
Active participation and attendance (includes pop-quizzes, summaries, and in-class assignments)	20%
Final research paper on topic approved by professor BEFORE September 20 at 5pm. Draft due Nov. 10. Final paper due Dec. 8 by 5pm. [between 4000 and 4800 words]	20%

Final Grade	Percentage
A	90% plus

Final Grade	Percentage
B	80 – 89.9%
C	70 – 79.9%
D	60 – 69.9%
F	Less than 60%

Two essay exams will be distributed one week before their due dates. They are meant to be exercises in not only assessing your knowledge and understanding of the topics presented in class and in the readings, but also in research and argument construction. You will craft answers to the questions and use your notes and research to answer fully and accurately. You may use the readings, lecture, discussion notes, and research from CREDIBLE sources to answer these questions as long as those sources are cited. Internet resources NOT from an academic resource or website are suspect and should be avoided as are supposedly “academic” works from **polemicists** like Howard Zinn and other sloppy historians.

The book review may be a new exercise to some in the class. This is **NOT a book report**. Reviews are critiques of books, in which the reviewer briefly describes the main thesis and the points the author uses to prove his or her argument. Once this is done, the reviewer critiques the book (is the argument believable, well researched, persuasive, well-written). Does the author fulfill his or her stated or implied purpose? Is the argument subtle or ham-fisted? I will provide a “how to” sheet with a barebones description of how to do a short academic review. I suggest you use review essays from an academic journal (such as the *American Historical Review*) to get a feel for what they are meant to do.

The book you will review will be one chosen by the student and approved by the professor no later than September 5 at 5pm. I suggest you select a book on the topic of your research paper for the course. This way you are doing work that is directly relevant to your research project. No late work will be accepted.

The research paper will be one on a topic of interest to you. You must select a topic and have it approved no later than September 15 at 5pm. Whatever topic you suggest, I advise you to start very, very early in the semester. I am draconian when it comes to due dates and tend not to be sympathetic toward excuses. Early work is encouraged. Please use the Writing Center on campus if you fear your written skills are not up to par. Also, it is recommended you meet with me to discuss your topic and your rough outline. I need to know your argument and which points you will highlight to prove your point. Don’t be shy with me. I am approachable and informal and was once a student myself.

Discussion is an essential part of the course; therefore, all students are expected to attend class and participate actively. Learning requires active engagement from each student. To ensure that you have read the assignments, a **summary** of the readings will be due at the beginning of each class in which those particular works are discussed. Undergraduates are expected to do about 100-150 words TOTAL for all readings (except for Rowley), while graduate students will do 100 words on EACH reading assigned (except for Rowley) to them specifically.

Intellectual engagement with the material can occur only if class members are present. Poor attendance will affect your grade in two ways:

- 1) If you are absent, you will not earn any credit for discussion or participation on that day, hence you lower your discussion/participation grade.
- 2) More than three (3) unexcused absences in the regular lecture will result in a letter grade reduction for the course. Each absence thereafter will again **lower the final grade one letter**. Seven unexcused absences will result in an automatic 'F' for the course. The instructor has the sole right to determine the validity of any excuses for absence. In general, only medical problems severe enough to require a doctor's care, pre-approved college events, or emergencies qualify as legitimate excuses (proof must be provided).

If you can't commit, there's no reason to take the course.

The course schedule is divided into daily topics. The readings for that day must be completed before that day's discussion.

### **Extra Credit**

I do NOT offer extra credit. DON'T ASK.

### **Make Up Work/Tests**

I will only allow make up work if there is a legitimate excuse for missing a scheduled assignment. I have the sole discretion in determining whether or not an absence is excused. University functions approved by the administration counts. Other reasons must be documented in some acceptable form or fashion (proof) must be presented.

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

I use MSU's D2L program to post documents or give assignments. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication between student and professor. In the first week, I will post the syllabus and the terms for the course. You can log into **D2L** through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor. I will put a few required readings on D2L (see schedule below) during the semester.

### **Online Computer Requirements**

It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. *Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.* Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!

### **Institutional and COVID Policies**

In general, the class policies concerning COVID are those implemented by MSU Texas and are subject to change as university policy changes. Please check university policies throughout the semester. Below are listed some of the things you should be aware of.

- 1) This is a face-to-face course. I will NOT be livestreaming the course unless a student tests positive or must go into quarantine due to exposure by an infected individual. It is the student's responsibility to inform me, in writing (email is fine), of the situation. I will implement livestreaming within two class sessions to accommodate the sick or quarantined students.
- 2) Due to the policies on social distancing and attendance, seating charts and seat assignments will be used in this course. Each student must sit in a desk or chair with an affixed sticker allowing seating. That desk or chair cannot be moved for any reason and attendance will be taken by seating chart. Once you select a desk, you must sit in that desk and that desk alone throughout the semester.
- 3) Due to the possibility of a campus shut-down, the students are responsible for owning or having access to the necessary equipment and software to continue this course via distance learning. Below are the MINIMUM requirements as determined by the university.

#### **HARDWARE:**

PC Desktops and laptops (Use Windows' Operating System and PC Info to find your hardware information if you are unsure)

- a) Intel Core (i3, i5, i7) processors; 4th generation or newer
- b) 4 GB of RAM, 8 GB of RAM is highly recommended
- c) 256 GB SSD Storage
- d) Dual Band spectrum (2.4 GHz and 5 GHz) with 802.11ac or 802.11n

Mac desktops and laptops (Use Apple's About this Mac feature to find your hardware information)

- a) Intel Core (i3, i5, i7) processors; 4th generation or newer
- b) 4 GB of RAM, 8 GB of RAM is highly recommended
- c) 256 GB SSD Storage
- d) Dual Band spectrum (2.4 GHz and 5 GHz) with 802.11ac or 802.11n

**PLEASE NOTE!!!: Chromebooks are not recommended, as they will not work with D2L. You have been warned now, so do NOT expect me to make accommodations if distance learning is implemented during the semester.**

#### **SOFTWARE:**

Minimum Software requirements

Operating Systems:

- a) Windows 10 (1709)
- b) macOS 10.13 (High Sierra)

Web browsers:

- a) Internet Explorer 11 (Windows)
- b) Microsoft Edge
- c) Safari
- d) Firefox
- e) Chrome

Conferencing Software:

- a) Microsoft Teams
- b) Zoom Web Conferencing
- c) Skype for Business
- d) Web X

Other supported hardware and software options are located at <https://msutexas.edu/it/assets/files/basic-software-and-hardware-list.pdf>

- 4) If absence due to COVID infection or exposure occurs, it must be documented by the university. If you cannot make office hours, call during posted times only for immediate concerns. Otherwise, email or call to make a face-to-face or electronic meeting.
- 5) All documents relating to the course will be available on D2L. Check regularly.

### **Instructor Class Policies**

**Conduct:** All students are expected to act as responsible adults. Any disruptions or distractions will be dealt with in an appropriate manner. Below you will find general guidelines covering certain actions and/or behaviors that are to be avoided. As a general rule any behavior that disrupts the administration of this class will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request that the offending student leave the classroom. Furthermore, the professor reserves the right to deduct points from the student's semester total or remove the student from the course. **Arriving late is considered a distraction.** If arriving more than five (5) minutes late – DO NOT enter the classroom.

**Electronic Devices, Texting, and Phones:** The use of tape recorders, iPods, mp3s, or any other recording device in class is **prohibited**. It is imperative that you turn off phones, all other communication devices, and electronic equipment before entering the classroom. The use of a telephone or texting device for any reason is prohibited. *On the first offense the student will be penalized 20 points on her or his participation score for the week. The second offense will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom. The professor reserves the right to expel and administratively withdraw a student from the class upon the third offense.*

**Laptops, Tablets, etc.:** You must obtain permission from the professor to use laptops, tablets, and phones (or any other device capable of accessing the internet) in the classroom. Recent scholarship suggests that laptops and tablets are **major distractions** to fellow students and in general do not enhance learning and/or the classroom experience. Furthermore, there will be no surfing, texting, emailing, etc. in the classroom, unless I specifically ask the students to do so.

**E-mail:** Note that e-mail correspondence is the most effective and convenient way in which to communicate with me outside the classroom. The professor/student relationship is professional by nature and, accordingly, your e-mail correspondence should be constructed professionally. Again, **DO NOT send me messages via D2L; only use my regular email for correspondence.**

**Attendance and your grade:** This course is structured so that it is to the student's advantage to attend class regularly. From past experience, students who choose not to attend on



a regular basis are not successful. I allow three, and only three unexcused absences. After that, each unexcused absence will result in a penalty to your participation grade. If you have a total of nine unexcused absences, you will not be able to pass the course.

**Withdrawals (Course Drop):** The professor is NOT responsible for student withdrawals. The student is responsible for meeting all academic deadlines including withdrawal deadlines.

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to Student Disability Office.

**Grade Appeal Process:** Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University Undergraduate Catalog.

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1**

Aug 25: Introduction to Russian History: Tsarist Imperialism to 1800  
Rowley, 1-13

Aug 27: Paul I, Alexander I, and Nicholas I  
Moss (2DL readings from Volume 1), Chapters 18 and 19  
Moss (textbook): Chapter 1

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: John Curtiss, "The Army of Nicholas I: Its Role and Character," *The American Historical Review* 63 (4) (1958): 880-889. [D2L]

David Van Der Oye, "Russian Foreign Policy, 1815-1917," in Dominic Lieven (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Russia*, Volume II (Cambridge University Press, 2006): 554-574. [D2L]

### **Week 2**

Sept 1: Labor Day, no class

Sept 3: Economic, Social, and Cultural Aspects of Russia: 1800-1855  
Moss (2DL readings from Volume 1), Chapters 20 and 21

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Walter Pintner, "The Social Characteristics of the Early Nineteenth-Century Russian Bureaucracy," *Slavic Review* 29

(3) (1970): 429-443. [D2L]

### Week 3

Sept 8: Alexander II and the Partial Attempt to Reform Russia

Moss, Chapter 2

Rowley, Chapter 12

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Alfred Rieber, "Alexander II: A Revisionist View," *The Journal of Modern History* 43 (1) (1971): 42-58. [D2L]

**You MUST have approval for book(s) for review by 5pm today.**

Sept 10: Alexander III and Nicholas II and the Reaction to and against Reform

Moss, Chapter 3

Rowley, Chapter 13

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Theodore Weeks, "Russification: Word and Practice, 1863-1914," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 148 (4) (2004): 471-489. [D2L]

### Week 4

Sept 15: Russian Imperial Policy under Father and Son (Alex III & Nick II) to 1905

Moss, Chapter 4, 6, and 7

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: P. Streich and J. Levy, "Information, Commitment, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 12 (4) (2016): 489-511. [D2L as Russo-Japanese War article]

Sept 17: Revolutions and War

Moss, Chapter 5

Rowley, Chapter 14

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Barbara Engel, "Not by bread alone: Subsistence riots in Russia during World War I," *Journal of Modern History* 69 (4) (1997), 696-721. [D2L]

Joshua Sanborn, "Unsettling the empire: Violent migrations and social disaster in Russia during World War I," *Journal of Modern History* 77 (2) (2005), 290-324. [D2L]

**BOOK CHOICE FOR REVIEW MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5PM!**

### Week 5

Sept 22: The 1917 Revolutions in Depth

Moss, Chapter 8

Rowley, Chapter 15

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Fedor Gaida, "The Provisional Government's Mechanism of Power," *Russian Studies in History* 41 (2003), 52-72. [D2L]

Jonathan Daly, "Bolshevik Power and Ideas of the Common Good," *Modern Age* 54 (1-4) (Winter-Fall 2012), 77-88. [D2L]

**FINAL PAPER TOPIC MUST BE APPROVED BY 5PM!**

Sept 24: Civil War in Russia: Reds vs. the Whites

Moss, Chapter 9

Rowley, 155-178

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Finlay Cormack, "The Russian Civil War: The White's War to Lose," *Retrospective Journal* (12/13/2020), <https://retrospectjournal.com/2020/12/13/the-russian-civil-war-the-whites-war-to-lose/>

Nicolas Werth, "Crimes and Mass Violence of the Russian Civil Wars (1918-1921)," *Mass Violence & Résistance* [online journal (21 March 2008)], <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/en/document/crimes-and-mass-violence-russian-civil-wars-1918-1921.html>

**Week 6**

Sept 29: The Rule of Lenin, the NEP, and the Rise of Stalin

Moss, Chapter 10

Rowley, Chapter 16

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Thomas Remington, "Institution Building in Bolshevik Russia: The Case of 'State Kontrol'," *Slavic Review* 41 (1982), 91-103. [D2L]

Oct 1: Early Stalinism, 1928-1941

Moss, Chapter 11

Rowley, Chapter 17

Roman Serbyn, "The Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933 as genocide in the light of the UN Convention of 1948," *Ukrainian Quarterly* 62 (2) (2006), 181-204;

<https://khpg.org/en/1204069771>

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: David Shearer, "Social disorder, mass repression, and the NKVD during the 1930s," *Cahiers Du Monde Russe* 42 (2-4) (2001), 505-534; <https://journals.openedition.org/monderusse/8465?lang=en>

**Week 7**

Oct 6: Soviet Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period

Moss, Chapter 12

Full Text of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact on internet

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Mark Haas, "Soviet Grand Strategy in the Interwar Years: Ideology as *Realpolitik*," in Jeffrey Taliaferro, et al. (eds.), *The Challenge of Grand Strategy* (Cambridge University Press, 2012): 279-307 [available on **ebook** at library website].

**FIRST EXAM TO BE EMAILED TO STUDENTS BY NOON**

Oct 8: World War II, 1941-1945

Moss, Chapter 13

Kerstin Bischl, "Presenting oneself: Red Army soldiers and violence in the Great Patriotic War, 1941-1945," *History* 101 (346) (2016), 464-479. [D2L]

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Geoffrey Roberts, "Ideology, Calculation, and Improvisation: Spheres of Influence and Soviet Foreign Policy, 1939-1945." *Review of International Studies* 25 (1999): 655-673;

<https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/15222753.pdf>

**Week 8**

Oct 13: The Early Cold War, 1945-1953 (the death of Stalin)

Moss, Chapter 14

Rowley, Chapter 18

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Mark Kramer, "Stalin, Soviet Policy, and the Consolidation of a communist bloc in Eastern Europe, 1944-1953," available at [https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/evnts/media/Stalin_and_Eastern_Europe.pdf)

[1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/evnts/media/Stalin_and_Eastern_Europe.pdf)

[public/evnts/media/Stalin\\_and\\_Eastern\\_Europe.pdf](https://fsi-live.s3.us-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/evnts/media/Stalin_and_Eastern_Europe.pdf)

**FIRST EXAM MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOON!!! HARD-COPY.**

Oct 15: The Tito-Stalin Break: Fissures in the Second World

Jeronim Perović, "The Tito-Stalin Split," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 9 (2) (2007): 32-63. [D2L]

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Nataliia I. Egorova, "Stalin's Foreign Policy and the Cominform, 1947-53," in Francesca Gori and Silvio Pons (eds.), *The Soviet Union and Europe in the Cold War, 1943-1953* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1996): 197-207. [D2L]

**Week 9**

Oct 20: Economic, Social, and Cultural Transformations in the USSR to 1953

Moss, Chapters 15 and 16

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Lewis Siegelbaum, "Migration and Social Transformation in Soviet Society, 1917-1941," in Silvio Pons and Stephen Smith (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Communism* (Cambridge University Press, 2017): 327-347. [D2L]

Lewis Siegelbaum, "The 'flood' of 1945: regimes and repertoires of migration in the Soviet Union at war's end," *Social History* 42 (1) (2017): 52-72. [D2L]

Oct 22: Power Struggles and the Khrushchev Era, 1953-1964

Moss, Chapter 17

Rowley, Chapter 19

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Mark Kramer, "The Early Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and Upheavals in East-Central Europe," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 1 (2) (1999), 3-38. [full text online from MSU library]

Peter Boyle, "The Hungarian Revolution and the Suez Crisis," *History* 90 (300) (2005), 550-565. [D2L]

## Week 10

Oct 27: Brezhnev, Stagnation, and the rule of Gerontocracy, 1964-1985

Moss, Chapter 18

Rowley, Chapter 20

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Jiri Valenta, "Revolutionary Change, Soviet Intervention, and 'Normalization' in East-Central Europe," *Comparative Politics* 16 (1984), 127-151. [D2L]

**BOOK REVIEW DUE BY 5PM!**

Oct 29: Gorby and the Fall of the USSR, 1985-1991

Moss, Chapter 19

Rowley, Chapter 21

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Kristian Petrov, "Construction, reconstruction, deconstruction: The fall of the Soviet Union from the point of view of conceptual history," *Studies in East European Thought* 60 (2008), 179-205. [full text online from MSU library]

## Week 11

Nov 3: The Fall of Eastern Europe, 1989-1991

Crampton, 391-415. [D2L]

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Vladimir Tismaneanu, "The Revolutions of 1989: Causes, Meanings, Consequences," *Contemporary European History* 18 (3) (2009): 271-288,

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/contemporary-european-history/article/revolutions-of-1989-causes-meanings-consequences/5A1CAA38FE5BB1BDE3D618A70C9F006F>

Nov 5: Changes in the Economy, Society, and Culture from 1953-1991

Moss, Chapters 20 and 21

Rowley, Chapter 22

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: George Breslauer, "Soviet Economic Reforms since Stalin: Ideology, Politics, and Learning," *Soviet Economy* 6 (3) (1990): 252-280. [D2L]

## Week 12

Nov 10: Yeltsin's Russia, 1992-2000

Moss, Chapter 22

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: David Rivera and Sharon Rivera, “Yeltsin, Putin, and Clinton: Presidential Leadership and Russian Democratization in Comparative Perspective,” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (3) (2009): 591-610. [D2L]

Nov 12: The Rise and Early Rule of Vladimir Putin, 2000-2012

Donald Kelley, *Russian Politics and Presidential Power: Transformational Leadership from Gorbachev to Putin* (CQ Press, 2016): 236-287. [D2L, Putin I]

Roy Allison, “Russia Resurgent? Moscow’s Campaign to ‘Coerce Georgia to Peace’,” *International Affairs* 84 (6) (2008), 1145-1171. [D2L]

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Angela Stent, “Restoration and Revolution in Putin’s Foreign Policy,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 60 (6) (2008), 1089-1106. [D2L]

S. Mohsin Hashim, “‘High Modernism’ and its limits—Assessing state incapacity in Putin’s Russia, 2000-2008,” *Communist and Post-communist Studies* 50 (3) (2017): 195-205. [D2L]

### Week 13

Nov 17: Putin’s Second Rise to Power and Imperial Revival, 2012-2022

Donald Kelley, *Russian Politics and Presidential Power: Transformational Leadership from Gorbachev to Putin* (CQ Press, 2016): 236-287. [D2L, Putin II]

Daniel Treisman, “Why Putin took Crimea,” *Foreign Affairs* 95 (3) (May/June 2016) [D2L]

**POLISHED DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5PM!**

Nov 19: War in the Ukraine, 2022-present

Elias Götz and Per Ekman, “Russia’s War Against Ukraine: Context, Causes, and Consequences,” *Problems of Post-communism* 71 (3) (2024): 193-205. [D2L]

GRADUATE STUDENT READING: Polina Zavershinskaia, “State’s Legitimization of Violence through Strategic Narration: How the Kremlin Justified the Russian Invasion of Ukraine,” *The International Spectator* 59 (2) (2024): 18-36. [D2L]

### Week 14

Dec 1: Discussion on final paper

**FINAL EXAM TO BE EMAILED TO STUDENTS BY NOON**

Dec 3: Discussion on final exam and review

**FINAL PAPER DUE ON DEC. 8 BY 5PM**

For the graduate students enrolled in the course: you are responsible for all the above assignments, including the take home exams. Below are the additional assignments you must meet to successfully complete this course.

As for the book review: This will be a comparative book review in which you select 2 books and do a comparative analysis of the two. You will evaluate which of the two books is a better historical work. To compare apples to apples, you should pick two books that cover roughly the same topic in Modern Russian history. You may also make this a historiographic comparison in which the authors' arguments, styles of writing, sources, etc. are compared/contrasted. The word limit on this exercise is between 1500 and 1800 words.

As for the final research paper: I am expecting graduate level research and writing on this paper. The word limit on this exercise is between 4500 and 5400 words. As with the undergraduates, you will meet with me on book review selections and on the topic of your paper. I expect regular verbal reports on your research and writing progress throughout the semester.

Furthermore, as the undergraduates must do 100-word summaries of their combined readings, grad students are responsible for 100-word summaries of both the Moss readings AND the extra articles assigned for them. This way you can come to class prepared and be able to open some discussion on topics with which the undergrads might be unfamiliar.