

Dr. Jeffrey T. Leigh, Ph.D.

HIS373/573
Soviet History
Spring 2023
Room: CCC 238
M, W 2:00-3:15 pm

REQUIRED TEXTS

- N.V. Riasanovsky and M.D. Steinberg. A History of Russia, 8/e. Oxford U.P. ISBN 9780195341973
- V.A. Kivelson and R.G. Suny. Russia's Empires, 1/e. Oxford U.P. ISBN 9780199924394
- Alexander Solzhenitsyn. One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich. Berkley; Reprint edition. ISBN 978-0451228147
- There will also be readings on the class Canvas site.

HOW TO CONTACT THE PROFESSOR

Office Hours: Room 471 Collins Classroom Center, M, W 1:00-1:45, after class, and by appointment

E-mail: jleigh@uwsp.edu

OBJECTIVES

The content goal of this course is to familiarize the student with the major contours of the experiences of the peoples that formed the Soviet Union and, primarily, the Russia Federation thereafter. We will treat issues of politics, economics, diplomacy, war, and social, cultural, and intellectual change and continuity, placing particular importance on developing an understanding of the development of the concept of nation-state and empire in these lands and what it means to have attempted to implement a truly revolutionary ideological agenda. In this process, we will be discussing the relationship between culture, ideology, personality, and the contingent nature of historical development.

Because the essence of history is not memorization but understanding, we will spend much of our time discussing the broad significance of important events and trends. Single topics can usually be placed under a number of the above-mentioned categories and the impact of events taking place in one country is often felt far beyond its borders. By the end of the course, students will have a firm grasp of the broad outlines of Russian history and a perspective from which to assess the continuing dynamics of this volatile region.

It is expected that students will have completed all readings and be prepared to discuss the course materials each week before class meets.

EVALUATIONS

Grades will reflect performance on the following:

- **Five Papers** **50 points**
 - Each of the papers will be (5-7 pages, double spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins) will answer a single essay question supplied in the syllabus. Students must follow commonly accepted standards for citing published sources. Use whatever citation system you prefer (e.g. Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.) The most important issue is that I can easily find your sources. The use of outside sources is allowed, but students will be graded exclusively upon how well they analyzed and synthesized the materials supplied through reading assignments and lectures/discussions during the course. **Students may not seek assistance from anyone other than the instructor and the university tutoring center. Never work together on your papers.** Late midterm papers will be marked down at 1/3 a letter grade per day, with the first late day beginning at midnight on the day it is due. If you need an extension for a reason that could not be foreseen (e.g., illness, changes in your work schedule, family issues, etc.) see me and we will figure out whether an accommodation is possible. Normal issues involving having assignments due in other classes is insufficient grounds for an extension. There will be no late papers for the final.

- **Classroom participation,** **10 points**
 - The participation grade reflects attendance and performance in the classroom. All students will receive no lower than a C for participation if they attend all class periods. There are, of course, instances when an absence is unavoidable. In such cases, the instructor must be informed of the nature of the unavoidable absence, preferably in advance. Excused absences will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Participation grades higher than a C will be based upon active involvement in classroom discussions. Active involvement is defined as verbal participation in the classroom. Each class period, individuals who verbally participate will receive either an A or B based upon their verbal participation. Final participation grades will be based upon the average of these daily grades. While the quality of participation is noted, student participation is not to be understood as an examination. It is not essential that you have a "polished" statement on the course materials or a "correct" answer to my questions in order to participate. Often your questions are of equal pedagogical benefit. Active involvement and interaction are the goals of this grading mechanism. The participation grade is designed for the purpose of recognizing the very important learning that goes on in the classroom, which might not fully appear in your written work.

All grades will be recorded on the following percentage scale:

Grade	Percent
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A	95
A-	91
B+	88
B	85
B-	81
C+	78
C	75
C-	71
D+	68
D	65
F	55

Final grades will be determined by averaging these grades, with the final grade rounded up or down based upon its proximity to these percentages.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If students need an accommodation because of a disability, if they have emergency medical information that I should be aware of, or if they need special arrangements in the case of an evacuation, please contact me at the earliest possible convenience.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

All conditions contained in the student handbook related to academic dishonesty will be in effect during the semester. It would behoove students to familiarize themselves with these conditions. Cheating will not be tolerated. See the special sheet on plagiarism.

CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS

It is conceivable that necessary alterations to the syllabus will arise during the course of the semester. These will be communicated to the students with as much advance notice as possible.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Week 1

- Jan 23: **Introduction**
- Jan 25: **The Tsarist System and Economic Change**
Riasanovsky, Ch 32
CANVAS: Rowley, *Russia's Crisis*

Week 2

- Jan 30: **Challenges Facing Russia in the Early Twentieth Century Russia**
Riasanovsky, Ch 33, pg 456-463
CANVAS: *Resolution by Peasants, Instruction from Workers, Women's Petition*
- Feb 1: **The Russo-Japanese War and Revolution of 1905**
Riasanovsky, Ch 30 and 31, pg 400-413
CANVAS: *Fundamental Laws*

Week 3

- Feb 6: **The Great War and the Revolution of March 1917**
Riasanovsky, Ch 34
Kivelson, Ch 9, pg 255-275
CANVAS: *The Act of Abdication*
- Feb 8: **The Struggles of the Provisional Government**
CANVAS: *The April Thesis, Kornilov's Appeal, The Final Days, and What Is To Be Done.*

Week 4

- Feb 13: **The Great October Revolution and Bolshevik Power Institutionalized**
Riasanovsky, Ch 35 and 36, pg 487-492
CANVAS: *Marples: Kerensky, Documents 8-14.*
- Feb 15: **The Russian Civil War**
Riasanovsky, Ch 36, pg 492-503
Kivelson, Ch 9, pg 275-280
CANVAS: *Lenin on the Civil War*
- Feb 16: 11:59 pm **First Paper Due**

Week 5

- Feb 20: **War Communism and the NEP**
Riasanovsky, Ch 36, pg 503-506
Kivelson, pg 280-295
CANVAS: *Marples: Documents 15-17, 19, 20*

Feb 22: **The Rise of Joseph Stalin**
Riasanovsky, Ch 36, pg 506-510
Kivelson, pg 280-295
CANVAS: *Lenin's Testament*

Week 6

Feb 27: **Stalinist Economics**
Riasanovsky, Ch 37, pg 511-522
CANVAS: *Speech by a Stakhanovite's Wife, Resistance to Soviet Policies in the Countryside, Lev Kopelev*

Mar 1: **Stalinist Politics**
Riasanovsky, Ch 37, pg 522-528
Kivelson, pg 295-311
CANVAS: *The 1936 Constitution of the USSR, Report on Ethnic Conflict*

Week 7

Mar 6: **Soviet Foreign Policy before Operation Barbarossa**
Riasanovsky, Ch 38, pg 529-537

Mar 8: **Operation Barbarossa**
Riasanovsky, Ch 38, pg 537-541
CANVAS: *Lyons Ch 10, Deak Ch 4, Popular Reactions*

Mar 9: 11:59 pm **Second Paper Due**

Week 8

Mar 13: **From Stalingrad to Berlin**
Riasanovsky, Ch 38, pg 537-541
CANVAS: *Lyons Ch 16, Hoffman, Wieder, Neumann*

Mar 15: **Allied Diplomacy and the Soviet Home Front**
Riasanovsky, Ch 38, pg 541-546
CANVAS: *Molotov, Stalin, Metropolitan Sergii*

Spring Break: Mar 20-25

Week 9

Mar 27: **Post-War Soviet Domestic and Foreign Policy**
Riasanovsky, Ch 39

Mar 29: **The Spread of Communist Governments in Europe and Asia**
Kivelson, pg 311-317
CANVAS: *Perry, Ch. 7, #1-2*

Week 10

- Apr 3: **Khrushchev: Stalinism after Stalin (?)**
Riasanovsky, Ch 40, pg 559-565
CANVAS: *Khrushchev, Andor Heller, The Soviet Army, Milovan Djilas*
- Apr 5: **Brezhnev and Normalization**
Riasanovsky, Ch 40, pg 565-587
CANVAS: *Burlatskii, The "New Soviet Man,"*

Week 11

- Apr 10: **Soviet Society**
Riasanovsky, Ch 41, pg 588-601
Kivelson, pg 317-328
CANVAS: *The "New Soviet Man"*
- Apr 12: **Soviet Culture**
Riasanovsky, Ch 41, pg 601-616
Solzhenitsyn, all

Week 12

- Apr 17: **The Gorbachev Reforms**
Riasanovsky, Ch 42
Kivelson, pg 329-363
- Apr 19: **The Collapse of Communism in Europe**
Riasanovsky, Ch 42, pg 624-639
Kivelson, pg 329-363
CANVAS: *Opposition to Gorbachev*
- Apr 20: 11:59 pm **Third Paper Due**

Week 13

- Apr 24: **Yeltsin's Russia**
Riasanovsky, Ch 43, pg. 641-657
Kivelson, Ch 12, pg 364-368
CANVAS: *Gaidar, Remnick, and Tretyakov on Yeltsin, Yeltsin's Inaugurating, Orlando Figes, Eliot Borenstein*
- Apr 26: **Growing Opposition to Yeltsin**
CANVAS: *Irina Sandomierskaia*

Week 14

- May 1: **Putin's Russia**
Riasanovsky, Ch 43, pg. 657-680 and CH 44
Kivelson, Ch 12, pg 368-402

May 3: **Putin's Foreign Policy**
Riasanovsky, Ch 43, pg. 657-680

May 4: 11:59 pm **Fourth Paper Due**

Week 15

May 8: **Putin's War Against Ukraine**

May 10: **Last Day**

Final Exam

May 16: **Turn in Final Paper:** 2:30 pm

How to write an essay

The Thesis Statement: The most important part of any essay is the thesis statement. The thesis statement usually consists of a single sentence at the end of the first paragraph. Its objective is to tell the reader the purpose of the essay. In the case of an essay exam, it answers the exam question. When beginning an essay, make certain that you have a simple, clear thesis statement. Not only will this guide the reader through the essay, but it will also help you to organize your writing.

Organization and Clarity: The entire essay must be organized to support the thesis statement. The purpose of the first paragraph, the introduction, is to introduce your reader to the subject. The main body of your essay (often three paragraphs for an exam question) illustrates the thesis statement. In these paragraphs you develop the idea(s) that you introduced in the thesis sentence. Each paragraph must be clearly relevant to the thesis statement. This is most easily accomplished by including a topic sentence in each paragraph. The topic sentence functions in much the same way as the thesis sentence. It defines the paragraph and should make the connection between the paragraph and the thesis statement clear. Do not include material that is irrelevant to the thesis. Such material 'muddies' the paragraph with unnecessary information and takes the reader's attention away from your purpose. Concentrate on clarity. Spelling, grammatical and syntactical mistakes also make the essay difficult to comprehend and therefore detract from its quality.

Evidence: Evidence is the information you present to support your thesis. Each paragraph must include sufficient evidence to show that you have a solid understanding of the assigned material and can relate it to the question. Factual mistakes and vague statements detract from an essay, but not nearly so detrimentally as analytical errors. Make certain that the evidence you present supports your thesis. As mentioned above, the inclusion of irrelevant details does not improve the essay.

The grading of all essays will be based on the criteria mentioned above. The essay must have a thesis statement, be logically and clearly organized and include sufficient information to support the thesis. The assignment of a letter grade will be based on how well you have fulfilled these requirements. In answering an essay question, the most important task is to answer the question. Do not make the mistake of 'data dumping,' simply throwing down all the information you know related to the topic. All information must be shown to be relevant. Spend a couple of minutes thinking about the question, write an outline, and then construct your essay with the question in mind. Refer to the question after you have written the essay so that you are certain that you have answered it.