Syllabus on Revolutionary and Communist Russia

This course explores the major historical developments in Russia and the USSR since the Revolution of 1905. Topics include the fall of the tsarist autocracy, the Bolshevik victory, the social and cultural consequences of revolutionary change, Stalinism, de-Stalinization, the “nationality question,” and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Required reading:
Nicholas V. Riasanovsky and Mark D. Steinberg, A History of Russia since 1855, VOLUME TWO, 8th edition (Oxford University Press, 2010) ISBN10:0195341996 – Only those students who do not already have the full 8th edition of Riasanovsky and Steinberg should buy this book


Primary sources available through Seventeen Moments in Soviet History

Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:50 am in Armitage 220

Course requirements:
Attendance and participation (10% of final grade)
Students are expected to attend each and every scheduled class, to arrive on time, to come prepared in terms of the reading and writing assignments, and to participate in class discussions. There will be no use of cell phones or other communication devices during
class: students are to turn off their communication devices before they come into the classroom. If students use laptops in class, they are to sit in the back row so that what’s on their screen does not distract other students, and they are expected to use their laptops only for taking notes or viewing materials for the course. There are no excused absences: students simply lose 10 points out of 100 every time they are absent and when they leave class without informing me in advance. Students also lose points every time they are late. Courtesy dictates that students should not walk in and out of the room during class time, and also that those who cannot attend a scheduled class should let me know via email or voicemail prior to that class.

**Comments on assignments in Riasanovsky and Steinberg** (1 point each for a total of 10 points)  
Ten times over the course of the semester on the dates specified in the syllabus, students are to hand in typewritten and double-spaced comments that provide (1) *in their own words* one historical fact/phenomenon they found particularly striking from the pages assigned in our text (with specific page references); (2) an observation with reference to history about what was so interesting about that fact/phenomenon; and (3) a question about a relevant *historical* problem from the chapter. If a student is absent, that student’s comments on *A History of Russia* will only be accepted if a hard copy was left for me in my Cooper Street mailbox or sent to me via email in a readable Word file before the start of class on the day they are due. (There are 12 opportunities for turning in comments on our text. Students are welcome to avail themselves of all these for a full 12 points, or they may choose to write only a total of ten comments.)

**Comments on our secondary sources** (3 points each for a total of 18 points)  
Every two weeks, students are to choose one of the two assigned secondary sources and hand in typewritten and double-spaced comments on the date specified for that particular article. Students will write three full paragraphs: the 1st paragraph *in their own words* will summarize and elaborate the author’s main point, i.e., it will articulate the author’s overall historical argument; the 2nd paragraph will summarize and consider the main primary sources the author relied on as evidence for the article, i.e., how does the author know what s/he knows?; and the 3rd paragraph will comment on the relevance of the article to that week’s unit on Russian history. If a student is absent, that student’s comments on our secondary sources will only be accepted if a hard copy was left for me in my Cooper Street mailbox or sent to me via email in a readable Word file before the start of class on the day they are due.

**Quizzes** (17% total)  
There will be four short quizzes on Ginzburg, Leder, and Zamiatin.
**Midterm examination** (10% of final grade)
The midterm will cover the first half of the course, and it will consist of historical identifications, questions on the secondary sources, and a primary source that students will be asked to annotate.

**Final paper** (20% of final grade)
Students will write a six-to-seven page paper that analyzes and compares two primary sources in *Seventeen Moments in Soviet History*. Specific guidelines for this assignment will be posted on Sakai Resources. A list of sources is due in class on April 11. The paper itself is due on the last day of class.

**Final examination** (15% of final grade)
The final will focus on the second half of the course and follow the structure of the midterm, but it will also include an essay question relevant to the term as a whole.

**Introduction**
*Tuesday, January 22*
The course and its requirements

**The 1905 revolution and the Great War**
*Thursday, January 24*
Read *A History of Russia*, 400-420 (optional but recommended: 421-463)
*Comments on Stockdale due in class (or you may wait and comment on Hemenway next Thursday)*

*Jan. 28 is the last day for undergrads to drop a course without a grade of W*

**The road to revolution in 1917**
*Tuesday, January 29*
Read *A History of Russia*, 464-486
Read and be prepared to discuss these four primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1917: Abdication Manifesto; A Dual Power; The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution; Order No. 1
*Comments on 464-486 due in class
*Jan. 29 is the last day for undergrads to add a course to receive 80% tuition refund*

*Thursday, January 31*
Read in Sakai Resources under “Secondary sources”: Elizabeth Jones Hemenway, “Nicholas in Hell: Rewriting the Tsarist Narrative in the Revolutionary *Skazki* of 1917,” in *Russian Review* v. 60, no. 2 (April 2001): 185-204
*Comments on Hemenway due in class (if you did not comment on Stockdale)*
*Jan. 31 is the last day to withdraw from all classes to receive 80% tuition refund
Feb. 3 is the last day to change Fall 2012 grades of TZ or Inc before they turn into F’s*
The Bolshevik victory and its aftermath
Tuesday, February 5
Read *A History of Russia*, 487-504
Read and be prepared to discuss these five primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1917: The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power; Letter of Protest; Theses on the Constituent Assembly; Labor, Discipline, Order; Order for Intensified Red Terror
*Comments on 487-504 due in class
Thursday, February 7
*Comments on Raleigh due in class (or you may wait and comment on Ball next Thursday)

The New Economic Policy (NEP) and political conformity
Tuesday, February 12
Read *A History of Russia*, 505-506 and 588-606
Read and be prepared to discuss these three primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1921: What Are We Fighting For?; On the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in our Party; Protocol of the Meeting of the Politburo
*Comments on 505-506 and 588-606 due in class
Feb. 13 is the last day to withdraw from all classes to receive 60% tuition refund
Thursday, February 14
*Comments on Ball due in class (if you did not comment on Raleigh)

The revolution in culture
Tuesday, February 19
Read *A History of Russia*, 606-616
Read and be prepared to discuss these two primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1924: Vodka, the Church and the Cinema; Leninism and Workers’ Clubs
*Comments on 606-616 due in class
Thursday, February 21
*Read and be prepared to discuss Zamiatin, and expect a quiz worth 4 points
*Comments on Edgar due in class (or you may wait and comment on Clements next Thursday)
The rise of Stalin
Tuesday, February 26
Read *A History of Russia*, 506-510
Read and be prepared to discuss these four primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1924: Letter to the Thirteenth Party Congress; On the Death of Lenin; The Theory of Permanent Revolution; Speech to the Fourteenth Party Congress
*Comments on 506-510 due in class
*Feb. 27 is the last day to withdraw from all classes to receive 40% tuition refund

Thursday, February 28
*Comments on Clements due in class (if you did not comment on Edgar)

The Stalin Revolution
Tuesday, March 5
Read *A History of Russia*, 511-522
Read and be prepared to discuss these three primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1929: Speech to the First Congress of Shock Brigades; Problems of Agrarian Policy in the USSR; A Day in Magnitogorsk
*Comments on 511-522 due in class

Thursday, March 7
*Comments on Viola due in class (or you may wait and comment on Thurston on March 28 after spring break)

Looking at Stalinist Russia through American eyes, part one
Tuesday, March 12
*Read and be prepared to discuss Leder, 1-181, and expect a quiz worth 4 points

Midterm
Thursday, March 14

Spring break
Monday, March 18-Friday, March 22

The Terror and Soviet society
Tuesday, March 26
Read *A History of Russia*, 522-528
Read and be prepared to discuss these four primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1936: On Deficiencies in Party Work and Measures for Liquidating Trotskyites and other Double-dealers; Operational Order; Letter to Presidium of Supreme Soviet; Letter to TsK VKP(b) on removal of Ezhov

*Comments on 522-528 due in class

**Thursday, March 28**


*Read and be prepared to discuss Ginzburg, and expect a quiz worth 5 points

*Comments on Thurston due in class (if you did not comment on Viola)

**Soviet Russia at war**

**Tuesday, April 2**

Read *A History of Russia*, 529-546

Read and be prepared to discuss these four primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1943: Radio Address to the Soviet People; Report by Wehrmacht Officer on Massacre in the Ukraine; Blockade Diary; From the Report of L.B. Beria to I.V. Stalin, V.M. Molotov and A.I. Malenkov

*Comments on 529-546 due in class

**Thursday, April 4**

Read in Sakai Resources under “Secondary sources”: P.M. Polian, “First Victims of the Holocaust: Soviet-Jewish Prisoners of War in German Captivity,” in *Kritika* v. 6, no. 4 (Fall 2005): 763-787

*Comments on Polian due in class (or you may wait and comment on Brandenberger next Thursday)

**The postwar clampdown**

**Tuesday, April 9**

Read *A History of Russia*, 547-558

Read and be prepared to discuss these three primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1947: Interview on Churchill’s Iron Curtain Speech; Against Formalistic Tendencies in Soviet Music; To the Editor of *Izvestiia*

*Comments on 547-558 due in class

_Apr. 9 by 5 pm is the last opportunity to drop and receive a W_

**Thursday, April 11**


*Comments on Brandenberger due in class (if you did not comment on Polian)

*List of two primary sources for final paper due in class
De-Stalinization and Khrushchev
Tuesday, April 16
Read *A History of Russia*, 559-565 and 575-587
Read and be prepared to discuss these five primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1954, 1961, and 1968: Minutes, Third Session, Plenary Session of the Central Committee; Conversation at the Manege Exhibit; Stalin’s Heirs; The International Obligations of Socialist Countries; A Week Like Any Other
*Comments on 559-565 and 575-587 due in class

Thursday, April 18
Read in Sakai Resources under “Secondary sources”: Steven A. Barnes, “In a Manner Befitting Soviet Citizens’: An Uprising in the Post-Stalin Gulag,” in *Slavic Review* v. 64, no. 4 (Winter 2005): 823-850
*Comments on Barnes due in class (or you may wait and comment on Risch next Thursday)

Brezhnev and the “years of stagnation”
Tuesday, April 23
Read *A History of Russia*, 565-575
Read and be prepared to discuss these three primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1973: Progress, Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom; Letter to the Soviet Leaders; Popular Anecdotes
*Comments on 565-575 due in class

Thursday, April 25
*Comments on Risch due in class (if you did not comment on Barnes)

Looking at Stalinist Russia through American eyes, part two
Tuesday, April 30
Read and be prepared to discuss Leder, 181-332, and expect a quiz worth 4 points

Mikhail Gorbachev, *perestroika*, and the collapse of the Soviet Union
Thursday, May 2
Read *A History of Russia*, 617-639
*Comments on 617-639 due in class
Read and be prepared to discuss these six primary sources in *Seventeen Moments* under 1985 and 1991: Conversation of Members of the Union of Writers of the USSR with M. Gorbachev; Declaration on the National Sovereignty of Latvia; Eltsin’s Election Platform; Message to the Soviet People from the State Committee for the State of Emergency; the Minsk Agreement; Resignation
*Final paper due in class
Final examination
Tuesday, May 14 from 9-12 in ATG 220