COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is an introduction to politics and government in the USSR and Russia. The first part of the course will present a brief survey of Russian history and examine the political, social, cultural, and economic developments in Russia following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 extending through the eras of Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev. The second part will examine the dynamics of the Soviet political system by focusing on key institutions and processes, and the distribution of political, social, and economic power. The third part will examine the nature of continuity and change in the Soviet political system, Gorbachev's perestroika, glasnost, the August 1991 coup, and the subsequent collapse of the USSR. The fourth part focuses on the nature of transition politics in post-Soviet Russia under Yeltin. The fifth and perhaps the most challenging part of the course examines the complex political and socioeconomic change under Putin. Key topics include the ideological foundations of socialism; the Soviet system and its demise; the nature of Russia’s political transition; legislative-executive relations; parties and elections; the politics of socioeconomic reform; demography and health; federalism, regionalism, and foreign policy. Finally, we shall study the Russian experience in a comparative context and outline possible future scenarios for the development of Russia. We are going to study major theoretical and empirical issues in Russia’s dynamic political and socioeconomic reforms.

Class meetings will be a combination of lecture and discussion based on the assigned readings for each session; therefore, students are strongly advised to read these assignments before attending class. Please bring your questions in and participate in class discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENT AND GRADING POLICY

You are expected to (1) complete and study carefully all required reading; (2) address significant questions and articulate well-informed positions on key issues, (3) prepare two papers dealing with Russian politics, (4) analyze current development in Russia, and (5) participate in the College of Charleston Model United Nations on April 10-11, 2009.
You will be evaluated on the basis of one midterm exam (20%), one 10-12 page research paper (20%), a research presentation (10%), class participation including two written reports (20%), participation in the College of Charleston Model United Nations and a written report about your role in the model UN (10%), and a comprehensive final exam (30%). The lowest 10 percent of your grade will be dropped. The research paper is due on Tuesday, April 7. Detailed instructions about the papers will be given in class. All papers must include a complete list of references in a standard format. Please make sure that you give full credit to the authors of source materials. For your references and citations, please carefully study and follow the “Department of Political Science Guide to Referencing” (http://polisci.cofc.edu/PDF/POLSCitationGuide5-16-6.pdf). No late paper or exam will be accepted without prior written permission.

As the lectures and classroom discussions are an essential part of the course, attendance is mandatory. A class sign-up sheet will be distributed at the beginning of each class. You are allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences during the semester; additional absences, unless you can clearly prove personal emergencies or illnesses, will result in grade penalties.

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REQUIRED TEXTS


RECOMMENDED TEXTS


**COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

1. Introduction and Comparative Method
   - Hesli, Introduction and Chapter 1.
   - Thompson, Preface and Chapter 1.
   - Service, Introduction.
   (Deadline for completing the readings, January 15)

2. The Ideological Foundations of Socialism
   - Hesli, Chapter 2.
   - Service, Chapter 1.
   (January 20)

3. The Legacy of the Past and the 1917 Revolutions
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapter 2.
Thompson, Chapters 2-10.
Service, Chapters 2-8.
(January 22)

4. From Joseph Stalin to Leonid Brezhnev
Hesli, pp. 54-62.
Thompson, Chapters 11-13.
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapters 3-5.
Service, Chapters 9-20.
White, Chapter 1.
(January 29)

5. From Mikhail Gorbachev to Vladimir Putin
Hesli, pp. 63-73.
Thompson, Chapters 14-16.
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 1-3.
Marsh, Chapters 1-3.
Colton, the entire book.
(February 5)

6. Russia as a Multi-National State
Hesli, Chapter 4.
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapter 15.
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 10-12.
Service, Chapter 27.
(February 12)

7. Russian Political Culture
Hesli, Chapter 5.
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapter 11.
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapter 15.
Eckstein, Fleron, Hoffmann, and Reisinger, Chapters 1-6.
(February 17)

Midterm Exam: Tuesday, February 24.

8. Government Structures and Institutions in Comparative Context
Hesli, Chapter 6.
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapters 6-9.
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 4-6, and Appendix.
Herspring, Introduction, and Chapters 1-5.
White, Chapters 2-3.
9. Political Participation and Public Opinions  
Hesli, Chapter 7.  
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapters 10, 12, 13.  
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 8-9.  
White, Chapter 5.
(March 10) [Spring break, March 1-7]

10. Political Parties in Russia from a Comparative Perspective  
Hesli, Chapters 8-9.  
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapter 7.  
(March 17)

11. The Dynamics of Socioeconomic Reforms  
Hesli, pp. 233-244.  
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapter 14.  
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 13-14.  
Marshall Goldman, the entire book.  
Herspring, Chapters 6-7.  
Marsh, Chapters 4-5.  
White, Chapters 4 and 6.  
(March 24)

12. Foreign Policy, Military Reform, and Other Issues  
Hesli, pp. 244-263.  
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapter 16.  
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 16-18.  
Herspring, Chapters 8-9.  
White, Chapters 7-8.  
(April 2)

**Research Paper Is Due in Class, Tuesday, April 7.**

13. Democracy and Russia  
Sakwa, Russian Politics, Chapters 19-20.  
Eckstein, Fleron, Hoffmann, and Reisinger, Chapters 7-13.  
Fish, entire book.  
McFaul, Petrov, and Ryabov, entire book.  
(April 9)

14. Russia in Comparative Perspectives  
Hesli, pp. 413-416.  
Sakwa, Soviet Politics, Chapters 17-18.
Herspring, Conclusion.
Service, Afterword.
Marsh, Chapters 6-7.
Minton Goldman, pp. 88-268.
(April 16)

**Final Examination: Thursday, April 30, 2009, 8:00-11:00 am.**

The instructor reserves the right to assign additional required readings and make necessary adjustment in course outline.