

Political Science 3626

Russian Foreign Policy

Spring 2014

Course Info

Instructor: Steven Wilson

Place: McBryde 212

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:00AM - 9:15AM

Office Hours: 9:30AM-11:00AM Tuesdays and Thursdays in 506 Major Williams Hall

Contact Info: Email: slw42@vt.edu Phone: 540-231-1854

Objectives: This course explores Russian foreign policy in the contemporary world, with an eye ever on the deep historical context that informs the relationships between nations, and the unique Russian position as a bridge between the West and the East.

Textbooks

The course has two required text books, which will be supplemented by a selection of additional readings that will be available electronically throughout the semester. The two required texts are:

Robert Donaldson & Joseph Noguee. *The Foreign Policy of Russia*

Andrei Tsygankov. *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*

Assignments & Grading

Reading will be assigned for each class. Students should come to class having read the assigned material and being ready to discuss it. Lectures will be designed to supplement the material covered in the readings, and both will be reflected on the exams. Please come to office hours (or schedule a meeting with me if you have a conflict) if you have any trouble understanding the material, or if you have any questions about the course at all as the semester progresses.

The course will have two exams (a midterm and a final), a research paper that will be completed in stages through the semester, a presentation (on current events), and a quiz. The proportion each of these is worth to the final grade is listed below:

Map Quiz (5%) (Thursday, January 30th)
Historical Paper (10%) (Thursday, March 20th)
Midterm (20%) (Thursday, March 6th)
Contemporary Paper (10%) (Thursday, April 17th)
Presentation (10%) (In class, throughout semester)
Journal Entries (10%) (throughout semester)
Final Paper (15%) (Due at the start of the final class: Tuesday, May 6th)
Final Exam (20%) (Monday, May 12th 2:05PM to 4:05PM)

Presentations

Students are expected to read the news, and keep up on current events involving Russia. Beginning in the second week of the semester, each class will begin with one or two students giving presentations on Russian current events. Each student will present once during the semester, and will be responsible for identifying the most important Russian news story of the day, explaining its importance, how it fits into what we've discussed in the class, and what differing opinions are on the story.

Papers

The papers will be written in stages over the course of the semester. In the first two weeks of the semester, students will identify a research question they want to answer, and turn in a summary of the question and their approach to it. Throughout the semester, students will identify scholarly literature relevant to their question, and write journal entries summarizing the arguments and how they apply to their paper. In addition, two short papers will be turned in building up to the final paper. One will be providing a historical background to their research question, one on the contemporary background of their question. Each of these papers will be 1000 words. The final paper will be 4000 words, which includes the previous two papers.

When grading papers, if you write less than the minimum length, you will be graded out of the percent of the assignment that you did. For example, if for one of the 1000 word papers you only turn in a 700 word paper, I will grade you out of 70%.

Course Schedule

The schedule for the semester is listed below, along with the assigned readings for that week.

Week 1: Introduction

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 1

Week 2: Early History

Tsygankov, Chapter 1

Week 3: The Imperial Period

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 2

Week 4: The Early Communist Period

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 3

Week 5: The Cold War

Tsygankov, Chapter 2

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 4

Week 6: The End of Communism

Tsygankov, Chapter 3

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 5

Week 7: Midterm

No Reading

Week 8: The Former Empire

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 6

Week 9: The Former Bloc

Tsygankov, Chapter 4

Week 10: Latin America & Africa

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 8

Week 11: The Muslim World

Tsygankov, Chapter 5

Week 12: The East

Tsygankov, Chapter 6

Week 13: The West

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 7

Week 14: International Organizations

Donaldson & Noguee, Chapter 9

Week 15: The Future

Tsygankov, Chapter 7

Week 16: Review

Tsygankov, Chapter 8