Politics of Former Soviet States
Political Science 347
Summer 2013

Prof. Scott Cooper
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Phone: 422-4053
Office: 762 Kimball Tower
Office Hours: 12-1 MWF, or by appointment

If you can’t come during my office hours, contact me to set up another time. Don’t be afraid to come see me.

Prerequisites:
Poli Sci 150 or 350 recommended
Poli Sci 200 recommended

Knowledge of the Russian language is not a prerequisite, but we will use some Russian terms (e.g., perestroika) to describe key events and concepts. If I use a term in lecture that you are not familiar with, please remind me to write it on the board and define it.

Subject Matter and Course Goals:
This course examines the politics of all fifteen newly independent countries that emerged from the disintegration of the Soviet Union. These are an incredibly diverse group on many dimensions—including size and power, economic conditions, political behavior and institutions, geography, religion, language, and culture—but they can be studied together because of their common heritage within the Soviet Union, and, for most, within the Russian Empire. We will begin by looking at their common history, but the bulk of our time will be spent comparing these countries’ post-Soviet transformations. What kinds of political structures have they adopted? What have been the patterns of politics? How have their economies and societies changed over their two decades of independence? At the same time, we must also consider the interaction between these formerly united republics. What are the patterns of conflict and cooperation? What ties have they formed with Russia, the dominant regional power, and with countries beyond the borders of the old Soviet Union?

Notice that this is not a course exclusively in Russian politics, although Russia will be emphasized. This is a course in comparative politics, examining similarities and differences across the full spectrum of Soviet successor states. We will obviously only scratch the surface of many interesting and important issues, but the goal is to help you acquire a foundation for continued study of this fascinating region throughout your life.
Grading:
10% Exam 1
30% Exam 2
30% Final Exam
15% Participation and Reading Response Essays
15% Short Paper

All Exams are given in class. Exams will consist primarily of short answer and short essay questions. In preparing for exams, general understanding is useful, but does not substitute for a firm grasp of the details. You will need to pay close attention to both lectures and readings to do well on exams. Notice that, according to BYU policy, “satisfactory” or “average” work merits a C grade. Only “good” or “excellent” work merits higher grades.

Because the course is organized so that later topics build on earlier topics, all the exams will be comprehensive. However, the focus of each exam, including the final, will be the most recent material. You may not use cellphones or electronic devices during exams. Remember also that according to BYU policy the final exam cannot be given early; please make your travel plans accordingly.

You are required to turn in 12 Reading Response Essays: 6 on Russia and 6 on the other countries. Specific dates and topics will be announced in class. Each essay should be about 1½ pages (typed and double spaced). The goal is to help you in your preparation, so that you will be better able to participate in our class discussions. As a result, each assignment is due in class on the day indicated in the syllabus: late assignments cannot be accepted (even if your computer crashes or car breaks down). You will be able to choose which assignments to complete, but it is your responsibility to make sure that you turn in all twelve. I encourage you to start turning in assignments early in the semester, in case unforeseen circumstances force you to skip later assignments.

This course will also include opportunities for class discussion of these important issues and ideas. Regular preparation for and participation in class discussions is crucial to your learning. For this reason, I will evaluate Participation (on a -1 to +3 scale) to encourage everyone to join our discussions. As with the exams, quality will outweigh quantity.

Attendance in class is expected. I will not take attendance every day, but may do so at any time. If you are unable to be in class for non-voluntary reasons (i.e., illness, death in the family, BYU travel), please send me a brief email or voicemail explaining why you were unable to be in class.

The Short Paper is intended to help you become a country expert on a country, other than Russia, that you are not already familiar with. You may not write on a country in which you have lived—e.g., a country where you served an LDS mission. You will sign up for one of the fourteen post-Soviet states other than Russia. Topics will include economic policy, security policy, democratization, national identity formation, human rights, and so on. Papers should be about 8
pages and should make explicit comparisons to Russia or other countries in the region. Deadlines will be staggered according to when we discuss your country in class.

Finally, you should remember that all forms of cheating, including plagiarism, are grave violations of the standards of any university. In my time at BYU, I have had to give failing grades as a result of academic dishonesty, and I will do so again if necessary. BYU’s Academic Honesty Policy is in the catalog and on the web at http://honorcode.byu.edu. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic honesty in this class, please don’t hesitate to ask me.

**Readings:**
The reading load for this course is heavy, especially in Summer term. In the compressed version of this course, you should expect to read more than 250 pages per week. All readings should be done before class. There will be 2 required books:

Catherine Danks, *Politics Russia*, 2009 (Pearson Longman)


There will also be a painfully large packet of required readings available on Learning Suite or at the Joseph F. Smith Building copy center (B115 JFSB).

**Other University Policies:**
Federal law and BYU policy provide protections for students against sexual discrimination and harassment (including student-to-student harassment) and also require reasonable accommodation of students with disabilities. If you feel you have encountered sexual harassment or discrimination, please talk to me, the Equal Employment Office (422-5895), or the Honor Code Office (422-2847). If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767) and discuss it with me.
PART ONE: SOVIET HERITAGE

Remember: Reading questions for every reading are on Learning Suite.

June 24
Introduction, Syllabus
Rise and Fall of the Russian Empire
Shoemaker pp. 1-29

June 26
Revolution and Lenin
Shoemaker pp. 29-37
Soviet Politics Under Stalin
Shoemaker pp. 37-60

June 28
Soviet Politics After Stalin
Donald Kelley, Politics in Russia, 1999, ch. 5
Soviet Economy
Shoemaker pp. 60-78, 102-8

July 1
Gorbachev’s Revolution
Danks ch. 1
Disintegration of the USSR
Shoemaker pp. 130-33

Henry Hale, “The Makeup and Breakup of Ethnofederal States,”
Perspectives on Politics, March 2005

PART TWO: RUSSIAN POLITICS

July 3
EXAM 1 (beginning of class!)
Commonwealth of Independent States
Shoemaker pp. 133-40

Russian Constitution
Danks pp. 146-53

David Brooker, “Founding Presidents of Soviet Successor States,”
Demokratizatsiya, Winter 2004
July 5
Presidency: Yeltsin
Danks pp. 109-40, 143

Lee Hockstader, “Rough-Hewn Father of Russian Democracy,”

*The Onion*, “Society for Creative Anachronism Seizes Control of Russia,”
26 May 1999

Parliament and Parties
Danks pp. 154-70, ch. 12

July 8
**Policy Paper Sign-up: Turn in top 3 country choices**

Presidency: Putin
Shoemaker pp. 86-93

Richard Sakwa, “Regime Change From Yeltsin to Putin,” in *Russian Politics Under Putin*, 2004


Presidency: Medvedev and Putin
Danks ch. 16

Alexander Osipovich, “Putin, Not Medvedev, Remains Master of Russian Foreign Policy,” EurasiaNet, 7 May 2010


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<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 10</td>
<td>Center vs. Regions</td>
<td>Danks pp. 172-94, 199-202</td>
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<td>Chechnya and the Caucasus</td>
<td>Danks pp. 195-99, 238-41</td>
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<td>BBC News, “Timeline: Chechnya”</td>
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<td>July 12</td>
<td>Government and Economic Policy</td>
<td>Danks ch. 14</td>
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<td>Jerry Hough, <em>The Logic of Economic Reform in Russia</em>, 2001, ch. 2</td>
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<td>Privatization and Statism</td>
<td>Shoemaker pp. 116-20</td>
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<td>Danks pp. 63-74</td>
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July 15  Russian Economy in Comparative Perspective


Foreign Policy
Danks pp. 95-99, ch. 13

Andrei Tsygankov, “Vladimir Putin’s Vision of Russia as a Normal Great Power,” Post-Soviet Affairs, April-June 2005

Quentin Peel, “How Russia is Reasserting Itself,” Financial Times, 31 July 2007

July 17  Foreign Policy in the Near Abroad
Svante Cornell, “War in Georgia, Jitters All Around,” Current History, October 2008

Andrei Kazantsev, “Russian Policy in Central Asia and the Caspian Sea Region,” Europe-Asia Studies, August 2008


Media
Danks ch. 11


July 19  National Identity and Public Opinion  
Danks ch. 4


Charles Clover, 3 articles, *Financial Times*, October-December 2012

Exam Review

PART THREE: BALTIC DEMOCRACIES

July 22  EXAM 2

Baltic Politics and Foreign Policy

James Kurth, “Between Russia and the West,” *Current History*, Oct 1999


July 24  Holiday: No Class

July 26  Baltic Ethnic Politics
Wayne Thompson, *Nordic, Central, and Southeastern Europe*, 2012, pp. 143-54 (Latvia)


Baltic Economic Transition


PART FOUR: DIVIDED POLITIES

July 29  Schizophrenic Ukraine
Shoemaker pp. 155-77


Ukraine: Orange Revolution and Reversal

Neil Buckley and Roman Olearchyk, “Ukraine: A Nation on Guard,” Financial Times, 20 October 2010


July 31  Divided Moldova
Shoemaker pp. 178-92


Georgia: Ethnic Conflict and Divided Government
Shoemaker pp. 223-37


PART FIVE: AUTHORITARIAN POLITICS

Aug 2  Belarus: Europe’s Last Dictatorship
          Shoemaker pp. 141-54

          Grigory Ioffe, “Understanding Belarus,” Europe-Asia Studies, January 2004

          Alex Nice, “Playing Both Sides: Belarus Between Russia and the EU,”
          DGAPanalyse, March 2012

Central Asian State-Building
          Shoemaker pp. 286-98 (Uzbekistan)

          Edward Walker, “Islam, Islamism, and Political Order in Central Asia,”
          Journal of International Affairs, 2003

Aug 5  Central Asian Clans
          Shoemaker pp. 251-75 (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan)


          Philip Pan, “Russia Is Said to Have Fueled Unrest in Kyrgyzstan,”
          Washington Post, 12 April 2010

          Erica Marat, “Kyrgyzstan Marks the First Peaceful Transfer of Power,”
          Eurasia Daily Monitor, 2 December 2011

Central Asian Economies
          Shoemaker pp. 238-50 (Kazakhstan)

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<td>Aug 14</td>
<td><strong>11:00 am - 12:20 pm: FINAL EXAM</strong></td>
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