SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

Russia has taken strides to regain its status of a superpower. Vladimir Putin has seized Crimea, his troops are in eastern Ukraine, and his strategic bombers often fly toward the airspace of such countries as Sweden, Norway, and Iceland. He is popular at home and seems confident in public. But the fighting in Ukraine has revitalized NATO, antagonized the United States, energized the European Union, Poland, and the Baltic republics. Western sanctions have contributed to the weakening of the Russian economy. In 2015 GDP dropped 3.7 percent, and the ruble lost much of its value: in 2013 $1 sold for 30-32 RUB, but in 2016 $1 traded for 66-77 RUB.

Russia’s population has declined from 151 million in 1990 to 142 million in 2016; there are 11.6 births and 13.69 deaths per 1,000 population annually. Men in Nepal and Papua New Guinea live longer than do men in Russia. The country is rich in natural gas and oil, and energy production tends to be profitable. However, for Russia to enjoy prosperity, oil would have to sell at c. $115 per barrel or more and it now (August 2016) sells at $41.

This course will analyze the careers of Vladimir Putin, Boris Yeltsin, and Mikhail Gorbachev. It will examine the impact of organized crime, public health, and environmental crises on today’s Russia. We will study the fate of other players on the Russian political scene, such as the oligarchs Khodorkovski, Abramovich, and Berezovsky. It will be noted that today 110 Russian billionaires, all friends of Mr. Putin, own 35 percent of Russia’s wealth.

In addition, the course will critically engage the following questions: the Soviet totalitarian system came to an end a quarter of a century ago. How different is the new regime? Russian citizens are now generally free to express their political views but almost all media belong to the Kremlin. Power remains vested in the hands of a ruling class that has squandered away much of Russia’s wealth and channeled state resources into private accounts at home and abroad. Corruption is a serious problem: in 2016 Transparency International listed Russia as being 119th on the Corruption Perception Index scale, same as Sierra Leone. Over $300 billion are said to be spent annually on bribes for state officials. The country’s political and security relations with the United States and the EU countries have declined during the past several years. Journalists and critics of the Kremlin have been murdered.

Finally, the course will deal with US-Soviet and US-Russian competition in the field of intelligence. A 2010 roundup of a large group of Russian illegals operating in the United States embarrassed Moscow’s intelligence professionals. To even the score the fugitive Edward Snowden, whose revelations embarrassed Washington, has been granted temporary political asylum in Moscow.
REQUIRED READINGS


ADDITIONAL READINGS are assigned from the following books that are available on the Blackboard:


Murray Feshbach, *Russia’s Health and Demographic Crises: Policy Implications and Consequences* (Washington: The Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute, 2003).


IMPORTANT DATES

- 6 September 2016: First day of class
- 19 September 2016: Last day to add a course
- 12 October 2016: Last day to drop a class without a W
- 25 October 2016: The midterm hand out
- 1 November 2016: The midterm essay due
- 10 November 2016: Last day to drop the class with a W
- 8 December 2016: Last day of class, the final hand out
- 21 December 2016: The final essay due
OFFICE HOURS

I am available for consultations during my office hours, every Tuesday and Thursday from 0915 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. My office is at 154 Bay State Road, room 101. I am also happy to speak with you before and after each lecture. If you are unable to see me during my office hours, send me an email, and I will be happy to make a prompt arrangement for us to meet within a few days.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be a take-home midterm and a take-home final examination. Both involve a five-page analytical essay on a theme you will choose from a list of three topics. The topics are selected to provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate your command of the material covered in class. Your essay has to demonstrate that you have developed a critical understanding of the assigned texts and are familiar with the points made during class lectures and discussions. You should be able to engage the texts and lecture themes and also to develop and present your own point of view.

You are also asked to select one of the lecture dates and start the class with a short (10-15 min) summary of the most current Russia-related events. A sheet with available dates will be circulated; please sign up early.

Finally, there will be several short reading quizzes before some lectures. Their purpose is to test your familiarity with the assigned texts. Attendance is required.

Attendance and active participation are required. I start each lecture with a review of the material covered so far. Please come prepared to be challenged.

GRADING

Midterm: 30 percent
Final: 40 percent
Reading quizzes: 20 percent
Current events presentation: 10 percent.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT CODE

It is your responsibility to know and understand the provisions of the Academic Conduct Code; a copy can be obtained on the website of the CAS Dean’s Office. Please consult http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Please come to see me (154 BSR) as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester to discuss how you can best profit from taking this course. I will be happy to match your scholarly interests and professional plans for the future with the requirements of this course.
# REÉMERGENCE OF RUSSIA

## Course Outline

### Fall 2016

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26. 8 December From Magnitsky to Crimea and Eastern Ukraine
Lecture 1
6 September
Introduction

Description of the course & discussion of required readings; course requirements, attendance, readings, policy on incompletes, and grading.

Lecture 2
8 September
Ukraine: Is It Important?

Judah, *Fragile Empire*, 84-86.
Snyder, “The Battle in Ukraine Means Everything.”
European Values, “The Ukrainian Crisis: The Most Frequent Myths and Lies.”
Wilfred Martens Centre, “Caught in the Act.”

Lecture 3
13 September
Putin: From the KGB to St. Petersburg


Lecture 4
15 September
Putin: In St. Petersburg


Lecture 5
20 September
Putin: In the Kremlin


Lecture 6
22 September
Putin: Taking Over

Dawisha, *Putin’s Kleptocracy*, 224-265
Satter, *Darkness at Dawn*, 5-23.
Lecture 7
27 September
Putin: War on Terror


Dawisha, *Putin’s Kleptocracy*, 266-312.

Lecture 8
29 September
Political Deaths: Litvinenko and Politkovskaya, et al.


Regarding Litvinenko: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD8a9j6S-jQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gD8a9j6S-jQ)

Harding, “Litvinenko: The Man Who Solved His Own Murder.”

Lecture 9
4 October
Organized Crime: *Vorovskoy mir*


[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imNE5CEjZW4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=imNE5CEjZW4)

Lecture 10
6 October
Russia’s Medical Crisis

Eberstadt, *Russia’s Peacetime Demographic Crisis*, 7-60, 281-300.

Lecture 11
13 October
Russia’s Environmental Crisis

Feshbach, *Russia’s Health and Demographic Crises*, 51-89.

Chernobyl and the “White Gold” Disasters: Destruction of the Aral Sea. See the websites of the BBC and other reputable news organizations.
Lecture 12
18 October
Spy Wars: A Short Introduction

Bagley, Spy Wars: 3-27, 197-230.

Lecture 13
20 October
Two Perspectives on the Tolkachev Case

Royden, “Tolkachev, A Worthy Successor to Penkovsky: An Exceptional Espionage Operation.”

Fischer, “The Spy Who Came in for the Gold: A Skeptical View of the GTVANQUISH Case.”

Lecture 14
25 October
KGB v. CIA: Protecting/Catching Aldrich Ames

Grimes and Vertefeuille, Circle of Treason, 112-182.

Fischer, “Spy Dust and Ghost Surveillance.”

Lecture 15
27 October
RYaN, KAL 007, and Able Archer 1983


General Mielke on RYaN, Wolf on RYaN.

Lecture 16
1 November
Gorbachev’s Rise to Power

Brown, The Gorbachev Factor, 24-88.

Lecture 17
3 November
The Gorbachev Experiment

Lukes, “Changes in the Decision-Making Apparat.”
Lecture 18
8 November
Yeltsin and the Collapse of the Old Regime

Lecture 19
10 November
The August 1991 Coup d’État
Klebnikov, *Godfather of the Kremlin*, 72-76.

Lecture 20
15 November
The Elections of 1996
Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 325-364

Lecture 21
17 November
Yeltsin and the Oligarchs

Lecture 22
22 November
Boris Berezovsky
Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 127-149.

Lecture 23
29 November
Mikhail Khodorkovsky
Hoffman, *The Oligarchs*, 100-126.
Judah, *Fragile Empire*, 55-84.
Lecture 24
1 December
Putin’s Vertical of Power

Judah, Fragile Empire, 90-166.

Lecture 25
6 December
Putin’s Troubled Return

Bennetts, I’m Going to Ruin Their Lives, 149-170, 171-186. The book is available in the Library and can be read online:


Lecture 26
8 December
From Magnitsky to MH17 and Crimea


Bellingcat Investigation, “MH17: Potential Suspects and Witnesses from the 53rd Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade.”