This course deals with some of the core global political events of the 20th century—the rise of the USSR, born in the October Revolution of 1917, from "outlaw" state before World War II, to global superpower in strategic parity with the United States by the 1970s; its rapid strategic and diplomatic decline toward unprecedented -- and peaceful-- collapse in 1991; and the emergence of a new Russia seeking its place on the international scene of the 21st century.

After an initial review of enduring geopolitical realities that have influenced foreign policy perceptions, opportunities and constraints in pre-Soviet imperial Russia, the Soviet Union and the post-USSR Russian Federation, we will devote several weeks to exploring the development of Soviet foreign policy from isolation through engagement in World War II, into the post-1945 Cold War and its variations under Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, culminating in the USSR's maximum power-projection capabilities of the late 1970's. Attention then turns to the unraveling of seemingly stable policies in the early 1980s as the Soviet Union confronted new challenges from a US (NATO, "West" in general) as the presidency shifted from Carter to Reagan, and the Soviet shift to "new thinking" in the foreign policy realm under Gorbachev—a shift, reflecting changed domestic priorities, which failed to save the USSR from collapse in 1991.

The latter half of the course engages the issues of policy formulation, interests, assets and liabilities in Russian foreign relations, emerging under Yeltsin, re-shaped in the post 9/11/01 world under Putin, and again put into flux in 2008 by the Russian-Georgian conflict and the global economic crisis of autumn... Attention will be devoted to relations with the ex-Soviet republics of the "near abroad," to East-West issues (Russian-American relations, NATO and EU expansion), to Russian policy toward the Pacific Rim, and to the emergence 2000-2008 of another new Russia, rich/powerful via high world energy prices, assertive in foreign policy as it witnessed reverses in the development of democracy and the rule of law in domestic affairs—and now challenged by a rapidly darkening world economic picture.

Four books, listed below, have been ordered for required purchase. As you will see, one relates to the Soviet period (MacKenzie) and THREE "tilt" more toward the post-Soviet era. The Soviet period shaped the makers of, and contenders over, the content and direction of Russia's post-1991 foreign policy. The domestic politics of Russia's political and economic adjustments, which influence—directly and indirectly—foreign policy as well, are intertwined with the legacy of 1917-1991. The "story" of Soviet foreign policy, then, is more than simply a prelude to Russia's foreign policies: it is a critical and essential key to making sense of them, as responses to new realities inconceivable in 1985.

David MacKenzie, FROM MESSIANISM TO COLLAPSE: SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY, 1917–1991
Nicolai N. Petro and Alvin Z. Rubinstein, RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY: FROM EMPIRE TO NATION-STATE
Dmitri Trenin, THE END OF EURASIA: RUSSIA ON THE BORDER BETWEEN GEOPOLITICS AND GLOBALIZATION
Andrei P. Tsygankov, RUSSIA’S FOREIGN POLICY: CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN NATIONAL IDENTITY

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, in addition to regular class attendance and participation, and keeping up with the readings:

- TWO half-hour “semi-midterms” —2/11, 3/18
- a FINAL EXAMINATION Tues. May 4, 3-5

Half-hr exams are made up of objective questions— the two semi-MTs account for roughly half, the final the other half, of the course grade.
IR-PO 375/sp 2010/class schedule & readings:

1/14 Empires Gained and Lost: Perspectives and Issues in Russian and Soviet Foreign Policy (Trenin, Intro)

1/19-21 Revolution, Ideology and the Diplomacy of Survival: 1914-1921 (MacK, chs. 1, 2)

1/26-28 Consolidation, Crisis, War: 1921-1941 (MacK, chs. 3-6, P&R, ch. 2)

2/2-4 Grand Alliance to Cold War: 1941-1953 (MacK, chs. 7, 8, P&R, ch. 3)

2/9-11 Peaceful Coexistence and Adventurism: The Khrushchev Era, 1953-1964 (MacK, chs. 9, 10) (EXAM 1—Thurs)

2/18 Global Power Achieved: The Brezhnev Years (MacK, ch. 11, P&R, ch. 4) (no TUES class)


3/2-4 Gorbachev: Superpower in Retreat, 1985-1991 (MacK, ch. 13; Tsygankov, ch. 2)

3/16-18 From The Ashes: A New Russia Seeks a Policy (P&R, ch. 5, Trenin, chs. 1, 2, Tsygankov, ch. 3) EXAM 2 / Thurs.

3/23-25 Moscow and the "Near Abroad": Shards of Empire (P&R, ch. 6, Trenin, chs. 3, 4)

3/30-4/1 Russia and Europe: NATO, the Late "Soviet Bloc," the West (P&R, ch. 8, Trenin, ch. 6)

4/6-8 Russia and the Far[ther] East (P&R, ch. 9, Trenin, ch. 5)


4/20 Nostalgia, Pragmatism, Assertiveness: Russia Redefines Itself (Trenin, ch. 7 and Conc.; P&R, ch. 14; Tsygankov, ch. 5) (no THURS class)

4/27-29 2010 and Beyond: The Putin “Succession” and the Russian
Future (Tsygankov, ch. 6)

Three books are required:

Read them! To prepare for a
- ONE-HOUR midterm MON JUNE 8
- TWO-HOUR final WED JUNE 24