CPO4643 Government and Politics of Russia Fall 2019

Instructor: Miroslav Shapovalov, mi918729@ucf.edu
Class Meets: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 13:30-14:20 BA0218
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 15.30-17.00;
Credit: 3 Hours
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Course Description:

Study of the origins, institutions, and functioning of the Russian system, including the lingering influence of the old order on domestic and foreign policy. Occasional

Purpose of the course:

This course is designed to introduce undergraduate students to the government and politics in Russian Federation since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It focuses on principles, organization, and functions of national government, major political and economic developments, and foreign policy of the Russian Federation.

Course Objectives:

On completing this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the theory and organization of the Russian national government
- Understand the factors that shape Russian domestic politics
- Read and discuss academic texts pertaining to topics of Russian government and politics
- Critically analyze contemporary events and developments in Russian foreign policy based on public information

Course Materials. Required Text:

Politics in Russia, by Thomas Remington; Routledge, 7th edition, 2016. ISBN 978-0205005796.
Available online free of charge through UCF Library website.

Recommended Books:

Developments in Russian Politics, by Richard Sakwa. 9th edition, 2019. ISBN 978-1478004806
Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia? By Karen Dawisha. Simon & Schuster, 2015. ISBN 978-1476795201
Putin's Wars: The Rise of Russia's New Imperialism, by Marcel H. Van Herpen. 2nd edition. Rowman & Littlefield, 2015. ISBN 978-1442253582
The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin, by Steven Lee Myers. Knopf Doubleday Publishing, 2015. ISBN 978-0307961617
Russian Foreign Policy : Interests, Vectors, and Sectors, by Nikolas K. Gvosdev and Christopher Marsh. Cq Press, 2013. ISBN 978-1452234847

Other Materials:

Students will be assigned additional articles and/or multimedia materials available through UCF library and posted on the Webcourses platform. The materials are assigned at the beginning of each week. These articles will be part of the class and are expected to be used in preparation for tests, midterm assignment and the final exam. In-class discussions will also draw on these materials extensively.

Description of assignments

Class participation: The course material is delivered in form of lectures. However, the students are expected to be engaged in presentation of the material by answering instructor's questions and discussing and explaining concepts to each other.
Review of news articles: At the beginning of each class we shall spend five to ten minutes discussing recent development in Russian domestic and foreign affairs using familiar news websites as well as English versions of Russian news websites.

Useful Russian news sources (in English):

- Medusa news portal: https://meduza.io/en
- Russia Insider: https://russia-insider.com/en
- TASS Russian News Agency: http://tass.com/
- Pravda Report: http://www.pravdareport.com/
- Russia Today – Daily News: https://www.rt.com/

In-class discussions: starting with week 4 students will have weekly classes dedicated to discussing the topics they have studied during the week. Discussions are aimed at developing students' skills of analyzing complex theoretical and political environments, articulating and defending their point of view or apply the knowledge to offer solutions to cases in Russian policy-making put forward by the instructor. Detailed description of each discussion and materials recommended to prepare for it is posted online at the beginning of each week.

Tips for class participation:

Not every class participation advances the learning process. While informed answers and comments that demonstrate a student's knowledge of the material are encouraged, opinion-based answers not supported by sufficient reasoning or relevant facts will not earn you participation points. Consider the following example of good and bad question answers:

Question: *How did Gorbachev lose power?*

Insufficient answer:

He was unpopular after the reforms that he introduced in the country, so his allies had locked him away in his residence and turned to Eltsin who took power in Russia and decided to dissolve the Soviet Union to make things better.

This answer demonstrates some resemblance to what have transpired, but it is inaccurate in many respects and misses several important details.

Well-informed answer:

After Gorbachev introduced popular elections in all Soviet republics, Boris Yeltsin was elected the head of Russian SSR. He then had decided to create state presidency in Russia which led to a conflict of power: while Gorbachev remained the president of the Soviet Union, Boris Yeltsin became the president of Russia – the largest subject of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev, pushed by the communist party, tried to oppose Yeltsin and his radical economic reforms in Russian parliament, but was voted out. As a compromise he then decided to draft a new union treaty with would give more power to the republics and also keep the supranational authority. The communists had sabotaged the signing ceremony by isolating Gorbachev at his residence and then tried to cease power in the Union in what was called "August Putsch". They lost, and Gorbachev was discredited which gave Eltsin the opportunity to do what he wants.

This answer has some inconsistencies, but one can see the causal chain of events that led to Gorbachev's demise. A good answer like this one does not have to be long or very-well detailed, but it is required to be logical, consistent, and informative.

Tips for In-class discussion[1]:

1. Read the assignment. Class discussions are about a particular topic and based on the assigned materials.
2. Make notes for discussion.
    - Make notes on points about which you agree or disagree. This gives ideas to talk about if you are asked for your reaction to the topic.
    - Noting good and poor examples will also help you react to the topic.
    - Note ideas, points, concepts you do not understand. Use these notes as guides to formulate questions.
3. Get involved in class discussion. a. Get involved when—
    - Someone asks a question you can answer.
    - You can comment on what has already been said.
    - You can give information to clarify the topic or correct an error. or you can ask a thought-provoking question.
4. Make comments brief and to the point. It is better to say too little than too much.
5. Always direct your comments to the group.

Grading class participation: During lectures and in-class discussions I will mark students who actively answer to my questions or contribute to the discussion. In addition to asking questions open to the entire class I may also specific students to answer questions concerning study materials of the given week in order to ensure equal participation. It is your responsibility to stay prepared for each class.
Alternatives to class participation: A student has the option of either submitting discussion questions based on the assigned and additional material for specific classes (one week before the class) or writing a one-page after class reflection based on the material covered in the class and the following discussion. After class reports are to be submitted by midnight of the same day the class took place. The number of alternative assignments remains at the instructor's discretion and may be set and changed at any point in the semester.

Tests: students are expected to take two in-class tests that will test the understanding of the material covered in the previous weeks. Practice tests are posted online after a specific topic has been fully covered in class. Practice tests are not graded and are there to help you better remember the study material.

1Taken from the University of Iowa Counseling Service. See more at: https://counseling.uiowa.edu/self-help/tips-for-participating-in-class-discussions/

Midterm exam: A comprehensive in-class exam that focuses on testing the students' understanding and application of knowledge gained during the first half of the course.
Policy brief: Policy briefs are "concise summaries of a particular issue, the policy options to deal with it, and some recommendations on the best option"[2], aimed at policy makers, international organizations or state officials" At the end of the course the students are expected to produce a policy brief that addresses a major political or societal issue in Russian Federation and is aimed at informing either Russian or American government. The goal of the assignment is to develop students' skills of writing concise, well-informed arguments and delivering their opinions effectively. Even though policy briefs are shorter than a typical analytical or research article, the students are encouraged to start working on the assignment early in the semester by identifying the issue they want to address, gathering relevant information and choosing the recipient of the brief.

Target audiences of policy briefs do not have the time or inclination to read large detailed analyses, therefore policy briefs are usually not longer than 3000 words. There is no lower word limit but please remember that your goal is to adequately address a policy issue and offer relevant recommendations. These tasks can rarely be achieved by writing a short note.

During week 3 students will attend a **workshop** dedicated to examining different styles of policy briefs, learning about their key components, as well as what distinguishes policy briefs from analytical essays and how to effectively convey information through this particular kind of writing.

Important dates to remember:

- October 2, 5:00 PM: Policy brief topic submission deadline
- November 2, 5:00 PM. Policy brief draft submission deadline
- November 28, 5:00 PM Policy brief submission deadline

All submissions are made through Webcourses. Topic submission is mandatory. The students are also encouraged to discuss their topic of interest with me before the deadline. Submission of a draft policy brief is not mandatory; however, the students should use the opportunity to get feedback on their ongoing work in order to improve the final product. Drafts are not accepted after the indicated deadline. Finally, all policy briefs are expected to be submitted by November 28, 5 PM. Be advised that this course uses Turnitin service to check written submissions for plagiarism. Late submissions are not accepted except in extreme circumstances. For more information see "Make-up policy" section below.

Final exam: a comprehensive test that covers the entirety of the course's content.
The exam is taken in Webcourses between 6 am on Thursday, December 5th, and 3:50 pm on Wednesday December 9.

[2] Writing effective reports. Preparing policy briefs. Food and agriculture organization of the United Nations. Available online at: http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2195e/i2195e03.pdf

Course Schedule

Week 1

August 26: Introduction
Syllabus and general discussion.

August 28: Russia under Soviet Rule
Remington, Chapter 2, pp. 31-38.

August 30: Russia under Soviet Rule
Remington, Chapter 2, pp. 39-46.

Week 2

September 2: Labor Day, no classes.

September 4: Transition from Communism: Political Institutions and Economy
Remington, Chapter 2, pp. 47-55.

September 6: Transition from Communism: Political Institutions and Economy
Remington, Chapter 1, pp. 16-25.

Week 3

September 9: Transition from Communism: Political Institutions and Economy
Remington, Chapter 7, pp. 191-205.

September 11: Transition from Communism: Political Institutions and Economy
Remington, Chapter 7, pp. 206-214.

September 13: Workshop: writing a policy brief.

Week 4

September 16: Russia's Constitutional Order
Remington, Chapter 3, pp. 56-72.
Russian government structure http://government.ru/en/gov/

September 18: In-class discussion: Constitutions in comparison.

September 20: In-class test

Week 5

September 23: Russia's Constitutional Order
Remington, Chapter 3, pp. 66-72.
Russian government structure http://government.ru/en/gov/

September 25: Russian Federalism
Remington, Chapter 3, pp. 72-82.

September 27: In-class discussion: federalism under Yeltsin and Putin. Challenges and security risks.

Week 6

September 30: Political Participation and Recruitment; Vladimir Putin's Russia
Remington, Chapter 4, pp. 87-106.
15 Years of Vladimir Putin:15 ways he has changed Russia and the world
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/06/vladimir-putin-15-ways-he-changed-russia-world

October 2: Political Elites
Remington, Chapter 4, pp. 106-112

October 4: In-class discussion: evolution of political participation: trends, problems, and solutions.

Important: Policy brief topic submission deadline: Sunday, October 6, 5:00pm

Week 7

October 7: Political Culture and Public Opinion
Remington, Chapter 5, pp. 117-127.

October 9: Political Culture and Public Opinion
Remington, Chapter 5, pp. 127-132.

October 11: Russia's National Identity: The Soviet Union
Hopf. Social Construction of international Politics. pp. 39-81

Week 8

October 14: Political Culture and Public Opinion
Remington, Chapter 5, pp. 132-143.

October 16: Russia's National identity: 90's
Hopf. Social Construction of international Politics. pp.153-178, 179-194 (optional)

October 18: In-class discussion. Political culture and identity in Russia: then and now.

Week 9

October 21: Midterm Exam

October 23: Interest Groups and Political Parties
Remington, Chapter 6, pp.161-171.

October 25: In-class discussion: Third sector in Russia.

Week 10

October 28: Interest Groups and Political Parties
Remington, Chapter 6, pp. 171-178.

October 30: Interest Groups and Political Parties
Remington, Chapter 6, pp. 179-184.

November 1: In-class discussion: between United Russia and others: is there a difference?

Week 11

November 4: Politics and the Law
Remington, Chapter 8, pp. 219-228.

November 6: Politics and the Law
Remington, Chapter 8, pp. 228-237.

November 8. In-Class discussion: Putin: a comprehensive explanation

Important: Policy brief draft submission deadline: November 8, 5:00pm.

Week 12

November 11: Veterans Day, No classes

November 13: Politics and the Law
Remington, Chapter 8, pp. 237-245.

November 15: In-class discussion: Anti-corruption crusades. From Putin to Navalny.

Week 13

November 18: In-class test

November 20: Russia's Foreign Policy
Remington, Chapter 9, pp. 251-268.

November 22: November 25: Russia's foreign policy: South Ossetia, Crimea/Ukraine, and Syria.
Readings: TBA

Week 14

November 25: In-class discussion: Russian foreign policy thinking
I**mportant:** Policy brief submission deadline: November 26, 5:00 PM

November 27: Thanksgiving Wednesday, no classes.

November 29: Thanksgiving, no classes

Week 15

December 2: Final exam review

Final exam available: December 5th 00:00am – December 9th 3:50pm

Course Policies Grading Policies

(Class attendance*.10)+(Class participation*.10)+(test 2*.10)+(midterm exam*.20)+(policy brief* .15+(final exam*.25)= final grade

Attendance and participation – 20%
Two in-class tests – 20%
Midterm exam – 20%
Policy brief – 15%
Final exam – 25%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100
A-	90 – 92
B+	87 – 89
B	83 – 86
B-	80 – 82
C+	77 – 79
C	73 – 76
C-	70 – 72
D+	67 – 69
D	63 – 66
D-	60 – 62
F	59 and below

Federal Financial Aid Requirement
Beginning in the Fall 2014 semester, UCF must comply with a federal financial aid regulation that states that in order to receive federal aid, students must be actively academically engaged (according to a federal definition) in each course in which they are enrolled. As of Fall 2014, all faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. Without verification of this engagement, students will not receive their financial aid. In order to document that you began this course, you will be required to complete a short quiz in Canvas during the first week of classes. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of students' financial aid, or will mean that students will not receive their aid.

Academic Integrity
The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) defines academic integrity as a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action.
http://academicintegrity.org/

UCF Creed: Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.
Integrity: I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.
Scholarship: I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.
Community: I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.
Creativity: I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.
Excellence: I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

The following definitions of plagiarism and misuse of sources come from the Council of Writing Program Administrators <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9> and have been adopted by UCF's Department of Writing & Rhetoric.

Plagiarism
In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers.

Misuse of Sources
A student who attempts (even if clumsily) to identify and credit his or her source, but who misuses a specific citation format or incorrectly uses quotation marks or other forms of identifying material taken from other sources, has not plagiarized. Instead, such a student should be considered to have failed to cite and document sources appropriately.

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating
UCF faculty members have a responsibility for your education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and when necessary respond to infringements of academic integrity. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty, where the final grade for this course will be preceded by the letter Z. For more information about the Z Designation, see http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/zgrade.

For more information about UCF's Rules of Conduct, see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/.

Unauthorized Use of Class Materials
There are many fraudulent websites claiming to offer study aids to students but are actually cheat sites. They encourage students to upload course materials, such as test questions, individual assignments, and examples of graded material. Such materials are the intellectual property of instructors, the university, or publishers and may not be distributed without prior authorization. Students who engage in such activity are in violation of academic conduct standards and may face penalties.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes
Third parties may be selling class notes from this class without my authorization. Please be aware that such class materials may contain errors, which could affect your performance or grade. Use these materials at your own risk.

In-Class Recording Policy
Outside of the notetaking and recording services offered by Student Accessibility Services, the creation of an audio or video recording of all or part of a class for personal use is allowed *only* with the advance and explicit written consent of the instructor. Such recordings are only acceptable in the context of personal, private studying and notetaking and are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the separate written approval of the instructor.

Course Accessibility Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Campus Safety Statement
Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise in our class, we will all need to work together. Everyone should be aware of the surroundings and familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.
In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.
Every UCF classroom contains an emergency procedure guide posted on a wall near the door. Please make a note of the guide's physical location and consider reviewing the online version at http://emergency.ucf.edu/emergency_guide.html.
Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes from each of your classrooms and have a plan for finding safety in case of an emergency. (Insert class-specific details if appropriate)
If there is a medical emergency during class, we may need to access a first aid kit or AED (Automated External Defibrillator). To learn where those items are located in this building, see http://www.ehs.ucf.edu/AEDlocations-UCF (click on link from menu on left). (insert class specific information if appropriate)

To stay informed about emergency situations, sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to my.ucf.edu and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the tool bar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on your Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including your e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."

If you have a special need related to emergency situations, please speak with me during office hours.
Consider viewing this video (https://youtu.be/NIKYajEx4pk) about how to manage an active shooter situation on campus or elsewhere.

Deployed Active Duty Military Students
If you are a deployed active duty military student and feel that you may need a special accommodation due to that unique status, please contact your instructor to discuss your circumstances.

Class Attendance
Attendance is not mandatory. However, if you do not attend the classes you will not be able to take part in class discussions and score attendance and participation points. Additionally, lectures cover material that you will not be able to find in the book, both the tests, the midterm, and the final exam will be partially based on the material from the lectures.

In recognition of various unexpected situations that can spontaneously occur in one's life, each student can skip two classes and the attendance grade will not be affected by the absence.

Make-up Policy
All major assignments are scheduled well in advance so that you can plan around these dates. No one may make up a test or a midterm exam at will. There are two exceptions.

First, for personal emergencies (medical problems), students should obtain a note from their physician. Second, for students with extra-curricular activities (athletic contests or other University-sponsored activities) that conflict with deadlines, arrangements for an alternate test date must be made at least a week in advance of the scheduled test or deadline. Students must provide verification of the activity in order to be eligible for an alternate test date. I reserve the right to select the content and format of the make-up assignment based on the material covered in the course. I do not accept p o s t - f a c t u m notifications.

Religious Holidays
The University of Central Florida welcomes diversity of religious beliefs and practices, recognizing the contributions differing experiences and viewpoints can bring to the community. There may be times when an academic or work requirement conflicts with religious observances and practices. If that happens, students may request reasonable accommodation of their religious practices. In all cases, you must put your request in writing and present it to the instructor at the beginning of the semester. The instructor or supervisor will review the situation in an effort to provide a reasonable accommodation when possible to do so without fundamentally altering a course or creating an undue burden for the department.

Changes in the syllabus and/or schedule may be made at anytime during the term by announcement of the professor. It is your responsibility to stay informed of any changes.