

Russian and Post-Soviet Politics (POSC 152-1001); Spring 2006; M,W 2:25-3:40
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Office Hrs.: M,W 10-12:00, 3:45-4:45; and by appt.

**An exchange between Larry King and Russian President Vladimir Putin, September 8, 2000
(less than a month after the Kursk submarine accident):**

King: "Let's get to the part that may not have been enjoyable. What can – what happened? You tell me. What happened with the submarine?"

Putin: "It sunk."

Current Russian joke: "2015. The United States. A helicopter lands, and Putin jumps out.

Reporters ask him: "What happened to Russia, Mr. Putin?"

Putin replies: "It sunk."

Overview: One of the most powerful states in the history of the world, the Soviet Union disappeared rather suddenly, and rather quietly. In this course, you will be studying the Soviet Union and the states — particularly the Russian Federation (Russia) — that emerged from its collapse. POSC 152 is a comparative politics course, and we will thus focus primarily on domestic politics and policy rather than international relations and foreign policy.

Readings: A number of the readings for the course are available through the library's "class reserves" webpage. Readings not on reserve are available via the Internet or in the following three books, which you are required to buy: Dale Herspring, ed., *Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect Present, Uncertain* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); Thomas F. Remington, *Politics in Russia* (New York: Pearson/ Longman, 4th edition, 2006), and Mark A. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics: A Comparative Approach* (New York: Longman, 2003). Do not fall behind in the readings. We will discuss them in class.

Requirements and Grading: Attendance is required. More than six absences will result in your final semester grade being lowered by one grade (B to BC, for example) for *each* additional absence. You will also be expected to have completed the assigned readings before class. There will be *two in-class midterms* as well as a *short writing assignment* (due late in the semester) and a final exam. The short writing assignment will account for 10% of your final semester grade, the two midterms 20% each, and the final exam 40%. Class participation will make up the remaining 10% of your grade. In addition to its impact on your discussion grade, and its direct impact on your final semester grade if you miss more than six times, attendance will also be used to bump you up or down at the end of the semester if you are otherwise between two grades. Cheating, plagiarism, etc. will not be tolerated and can result in a semester grade of F. Do not test me on that one; you will not like the outcome.

Following Current Events: Those of you expecting a "current events" course will be partially, but only partially, disappointed. The first few weeks cover pre-Soviet and Soviet history. It continues to be impossible to understand the problems facing the successor states today without understanding the roots of those problems. Like it or not, history is the mother of political science, and Soviet legacies continue to affect the post-Soviet states. We will also spend a good deal of time on concepts and theories that comparative politics scholars emphasize.

That said, we will also spend time analyzing recent happenings in Russia and the other post-Soviet states. You should read newspapers like the *New York Times*, news magazines like the *Economist*, and take advantage of reputable online news outlets (such as msnbc.com). The following sites are a sample of additional places where you can follow events in the Eurasian region online:

<http://www.rferl.org>; <http://www.einnews.com/russia/>; <http://www.eurasianet.org>; <http://www.tol.cz>. A professor (and occasional co-author of mine) at the University of Kansas also runs the most impressive list of Web links available on Eurasia at: http://www.ku.edu/~herron/html_index.htm

LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

*=Readings from books to be purchased; all other readings are on reserve.

PART I: THE SOVIET SYSTEM AND ITS COLLAPSE

Week 1 (Jan 18): INTRODUCTION AND COURSE OVERVIEW

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 1.

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 1.

*D. Herspring, "Introduction" in *Putin's Russia*, ch. 1.

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics: Structures and Choices*, ch. 2 (pp. 37-41 only).

Week 2 (Jan 23-25): THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE, MARXISM, AND THE 1917 REVOLUTIONS

Theme: Geography and politics.

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 2 (pp. 31-32 and "Close Up 2.1" only).

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 2 (pp. 17-24 only), ch. 3 (pp. 40-44 only).

And finish readings from Week 1.

Recommended reading:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics: Structures and Choices*, ch. 2 (pp. 10-23 only), ch. 3 (pp. 18-20 only).

Ronald G. Suny, *The Soviet Experiment* (1998), chapters 1-2.

K. Marx and F. Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," available at the Marxist Internet

Archive: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/index.htm>

Week 3 (Jan 30-Feb. 1): FROM LENIN TO STALIN: SUCCESSION, TERROR, AND WWII

Theme: Totalitarianism.

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 2 (pp. 32, 35 only).

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 3 (pp. 44-46 only).

E. Ginzburg, *Journey into the Whirlwind* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1967), pp. 3-97.

Recommended reading:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (pp. 13-16 only).

The rest of Ginzburg (requires purchase of the book; it is not on reserve).

C. Friedrich and Z. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), chs. 1, 27.

For fun readings/viewings:

G. Orwell, *Animal Farm* (requires purchase of the book; it is not on reserve).

G. Orwell, *1984* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949).

The film *Closet Land* (1991), with Madeleine Stowe and Alan Rickman.

FYI New Research:

I. Thatcher, "Stalin and Stalinism: A Review Article," *Europe-Asia Studies* 56/6 (Sep 2004): 907-932.

Week 4 (Feb 6-8): KHRUSHCHEV TO GORBACHEV: FROM OPTIMISM TO STAGNATION, AND RENEWED OPTIMISM TO COLLAPSE

Themes: *The economic inefficiency (and political efficiency) of the Soviet planning system; nationalism.*

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 2 (35-53 only), ch. 4 (pp. 93-102 only).

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 3 (pp. 46-59 only).

A. Genatulin, "Rough Weather," in Goscilo and Lindsey, eds., *Glasnost: An Anthology of Russian Literature under Gorbachev* (1990), pp. 303-365.

"Life in a Soviet Factory: Combines Forever," *The Economist*, December 22, 1990.

Ronald G. Suny, *The Soviet Experiment* (1998), chapters 20-21.

Recommended readings:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 2 (pp. 4-10 only), ch. 6 (p. 55 only).

L. Barrington, "Nationalism and Independence," in Barrington, ed., *After Independence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), pp. 3-30.

PART II: POST-SOVIET RUSSIAN POLITICS

Week 5 (Feb 13-15): THE SOCIAL CONTEXT IN RUSSIA: ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND IDENTITY STRUCTURE

Themes: *Economic development and class structure, political culture, and identity politics.*

FEBRUARY 13 (MONDAY): MIDTERM EXAM #1 (ON WEEKS 1-4), IN CLASS.

Readings:

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 4 (pp. 24-38 only).

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 2 (86-92 only), ch. 5.

*B. Lanin, "Putin and Culture," *Putin's Russia*, ch. 5.

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 3 (pp. 41-45 only), ch. 4 (pp. 40-48 only), and ch. 5, (pp. 51-55 only).

Recommended Readings:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 3 (pp. 1-18, 21-33 only), ch. 4 (pp. 1-29 only), and ch. 5, (pp. 1-41 only).

S. Whitefield, "Political Culture and Post-Communism," in Whitefield, ed., *Political Culture and Post-Communism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 1-14. Available online at: <http://www.palgrave.com/pdfs/1403945209.pdf>

R. Suny, "Russia's Identity Crisis," in Brown, ed., *Contemporary Russian Politics: A Reader* (2001), pp. 363-366.

FYI New Research:

Z. Barany and R. Moser, *Ethnic Politics after Communism* (Cornell University Press, 2005).

J. Wilhelmson, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: The Islamisation of the Chechen Separatist Movement," *Europe-Asia Studies* 57/1 (January 2005): 35-59.

Week 6 (Feb 20-23): THE RUSSIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM, PART I, YELTSIN VS. THE PARLIAMENT, A NEW CONSTITUTION, AND “HYPER-PRESIDENCY”

Theme: Presidential versus parliamentary systems, and the strange hybrid Russian case.

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 3 (pp. 48-68 only), ch 6 (pp. 146-174 only), ch. 8.

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, chs. 5-6.

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (pp. 51-53 only), ch. 7 (pp. 60-64 only).

Recommended Readings:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (pp. 1-4, 19-21, 27-40 only), ch. 7 (pp. 1-48 only).

Week 7 (Feb 27-Mar 1): THE RUSSIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM, PART II: ETHNO-FEDERATION, INTEREST GROUPS, POLITICAL PARTIES, AND ELECTIONS:

Theme: Ethno-federalism as a “solution” to the problems facing multicultural states, electoral arrangements, party systems, and “free and fair” elections.

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 3 (pp. 68-80 only), ch. 4 (pp. 103-121 only), ch. 6.

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 4 (pp. 63-74), ch. 7.

*N. Petrov and D. Slider, “Putin and the Regions,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 12.

*J. Kipp, “Putin and Russia’s Wars in Chechnya,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 11.

*T. Remington, “Putin, the Duma, and Political Parties,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 3.

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (pp. 53-54 only), ch. 9 (pp. TBA).

Recommended Readings:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (pp. 21-26 only), ch. 9 (pp. TBA).

FYI New Research:

E. Chebankova, “The Limitations of Central Authority in the Regions and the Implications for the Evolution of Russia’s Federal System,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 57/7 (November 2005): 933-949.

H. Hale, “The Makeup and Breakup of Ethnofederal States: Why Russia Survives Where the USSR Fell,” *Perspectives on Politics* 3/1 (2005): 55-70.

Week 8 (Mar 6-8): THE POLITICS AND ECONOMICS OF ECONOMIC REFORM, OR HOW NOT TO PRIVATIZE A SOCIALIST ECONOMY

Theme: The politics and economics of post-Communist economic reform.

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 7.

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 8.

*J. Millar, “Putin and the Economy,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 7.

*S. Wegren, “Putin and Agriculture,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 8.

C. Gaddy and B. Ickes, “What Went Wrong: Russia’s Virtual Economy,” *Analysis of Current Events*, vol. 10, nos. 9-10 (Sept./Oct. 1998), pp. 3-4, 6.

Y. Zarakhovich, “Q&A: Putin’s Critical Adviser” *Time* (online edition), Dec. 31, 2005, available at: <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1145192,00.html?cnn=yes>.

Recommended Readings:

*P. Rutland, “Putin and the Oligarchs,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 9. (We will be reading this in Week 13).

M. Goldman, “Putin and the Oligarchs,” *Foreign Affairs*, Nov/Dec 2004.

NO CLASS, MARCH 13-15 (SPRING BREAK).

PART III: POLITICS IN THE OTHER EURASIAN STATES

Week 9 (Mar 20-22): THE BALTIC STATES: FOCUS ON LATVIA AND ESTONIA

Theme: European integration versus (or via?) the integration of ethnic minorities.

March 20 (Monday): MIDTERM EXAM #2 (ON WEEKS 5-8), IN CLASS.

Readings:

- *M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 9.
- J. Dreifelds, "Latvia," *Nations in Transit*, 2005, 356-379.
- L. Barrington "Estonia," *Nations in Transit*, 2005, pp. 236-257.

Recommended Reading:

- L. Barrington, "Understanding Citizenship Policy in the Baltic States." In T. Alexander Aleinikoff and Douglas Klusmeyer, eds., *From Migrants to Citizens: Membership in a Changing World*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace/Brookings Institution Press, 2000, pp. 253-301.
- T. Clark, "Nationalism in Post-Soviet Lithuania: New Approaches for the Nation of 'Innocent Sufferers,'" in Barrington, ed., *After Independence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), pp. 162-186.

FYI New Research:

- D. Budryte, *Taming Nationalism: Political Community Building in the Post-Soviet Baltic States* (Ashgate, 2005).

Week 10 (Mar 27-29): THE REST OF WESTERN EURASIA: FOCUS ON UKRAINE.

Themes: Connections with and attitudes about Russia; Communists in positions of power 15 years after the collapse of the USSR; the Orange Revolution.

Readings:

- *M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 10.
- *T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 9 (Close-Up 9.1 [pp. 267-271 only]).
- T. Kuzio, "Kravchuk to the Orange Revolution: The Victory of Civic Nationalism in Post-Soviet Ukraine," in Barrington, ed., *After Independence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), pp. 187-224.
- O. Sushko, "Ukraine," *Nations in Transit*, 2005.
- TBA short reading on Ukraine's parliamentary elections.

Recommended Readings:

- L. Barrington, "Views of the Ethnic 'Other' in Ukraine," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 8/2 (Summer 2002): 83-96.
- L. Barrington, "Russian-speakers in Ukraine and Kazakhstan: 'Nationality,' 'Population,' or Neither?" *Post-Soviet Affairs* 17/2 (April-June 2001): 129-158.

FYI New Research:

- A. Aslund and M. McFaul, eds., *Revolution in Orange: The Origins of Ukraine's Democratic Breakthrough* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).

Week 11 (Apr 3-5): THE CAUCASUS: FOCUS ON GEORGIA

Themes: Ethnic and “civil” conflict; Russian involvement in the affairs of its neighbors.

Readings:

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 11.

S. Jones, “Georgia: Nationalism from under the Rubble,” in Barrington, ed., *After Independence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), pp. 248-276.

G. Nodia, “Georgia, in *Nations in Transit*, 2005, pp. 258-281.

Recommended Readings:

Eric Miller, “Smelling the Roses: Eduard Shevardnadze’s End and Georgia’s Future,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 51/2 (2004): 12-21.

K. Yalowitz and S. Cornell, “The Critical but Perilous Caucasus,” *Orbis* 48/1(2004): 105-116.

FYI New Research:

J. Wheatley, *Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution* (Ashgate, 2005).

Week 12 (Apr 10-12): CENTRAL ASIA: FOCUS ON UZBEKISTAN.

Themes: Authoritarianism; energy politics; new “allies” of the United States in the War on Terror.

Readings:

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 12.

M. Olcott, *Central Asia’s Second Chance* (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), ch. 2 (“Central Asia: The First Ten Years of Independence”).

M. Assenova, “Uzbekistan,” *Nations in Transit*, 2005, pp. 704-731.

TBA reading on Kyrgyzstan.

Recommended Readings:

Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (16-19 only).

The rest of Olcott’s book (requires purchase of the book; it is not on reserve).

PART IV: SELECTED TOPICS IN RUSSIAN AND POST-SOVIET POLITICS

Week 13 (Apr 17-19): POST-SOVIET REGIME TRANSITION

Theme: Stages of, and factors affecting, democratization; Russian media; is Russia a democracy?

April 17: NO CLASS (EASTER BREAK).

Readings:

*T. Remington, *Politics in Russia*, ch. 8.

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 4 (pp. 75-83).

*T. Colton and M. McFaul, “Putin and Democratization,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 2.

*M. Lipman and M. McFaul, “Putin and the Media,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 4.

*P. Rutland, “Putin and the Oligarchs,” *Putin’s Russia*, ch. 9.

Recommended readings:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 6 (pp. 5-12 only), ch. 11 (pp. TBA).

R. Orttung, “Russia,” in Jeannette Goehring and Amanda Schnetzer, eds., *Nations in Transit*, 2005 (Rowman & Littlefield, Inc, 2005), pp. 498-521.

S. Blank, “Is Russia a Democracy and Does it Matter?,” *World Affairs*, 167/3: 125-136.

FYI New Research:

M. Steven Fish, *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

A. Jack, *Inside Putin's Russia: Can There Be Reform without Democracy?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Week 14 (Apr 24-26): POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT: COULD IT GET ANY WORSE?
Themes: The intersection of nationalism and environmentalism; Russia's population shortage.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT: Due April 26 (Wednesday), in class:

Write a letter to your US Congressional Representative or either of your US senators about a particular issue or problem in Russia or another of the states that were once part of the Soviet Union. The issue or problem can be in the arenas of economics, the environment, domestic politics, or foreign policy. Discuss the issue or problem, what you think *our* government should do to help address this issue or problem, and *why*. The letter must be typed, *single-spaced*, and no more than two pages.

Readings:

*D. Powell, "Putin, Demography, Health, and the Environment," *Putin's Russia*, ch. 6.

V. Shlapentokh, "Russia's Demographic Decline and the Public Reaction," *Europe-Asia Studies* 57/7 (November 2005): 951-968.

E. Wiedemann, "Cold War Legacies: Nuclear Waste in the Russian Arctic," *Der Spiegel* (international online edition), December 12, 2005, available at:
<http://service.spiegel.de/cache/international/spiegel/0,1518,390715,00.html>.

C. Pala, "Environmental Restoration: To Save a Dying Sea," *Science*, Feb. 18, 2005, pp. 1032-1034. Available at: <http://0-www.sciencemag.org.libus.csd.mu.edu/cgi/reprint/307/5712/1032.pdf>.

Recommended readings:

L. Barrington, *Comparative Politics*, ch. 2, Box: "The Environment and State Sovereignty" (pp. 19-20 only).

M. Feshbach, "Russia's Population Meltdown," *The Wilson Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 15-21.

PART V: CONCLUSION

Week 15 (May 1-3): CAN WE DO BETTER THAN EINSTEIN?: USING THE PAST AND PRESENT TO PREDICT THE FUTURE OF RUSSIAN & POST-SOVIET POLITICS

Readings:

*M. Cichock, *Russian and Eurasian Politics*, ch. 13.

V. Putin, "State of the Nation Address," July 25, 2005. Available at:
http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031_type70029_87086.shtml.

N. Diuk, "The Next Generation," *Journal of Democracy* 15/3 (2004): 59-66.

Recommended readings:

T. Kuzio, "Transition in Post-Communist States: Triple or Quadruple?," *Politics* 21/3 (2001): 169-178.

FYI New Research:

A. Politkovskaya, *Putin's Russia: Life in a Failing Democracy* (Henry Holt, Co, 2005).

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 9, 8:00 a.m.

* "I never think of the future. It comes soon enough." Albert Einstein, Interview, December 1930.