Overview: This course provides a broad introduction to the politics and international relations of Russia, with a focus on the Putin era.

Course Requirements: Students are encouraged to attend the class’s synchronous sessions, but recordings of them will be available for those who cannot. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings before the start of each class session, and be prepared to discuss them.

Two midterm exams and one final exam: 30% of grade each. All exams are take-home.

Class participation: 10% of grade.


Other readings listed can be accessed as indicated on the syllabus.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments:

8/24 M Introduction

8/26 W Tsarist Era
Hosking, Russian History, pp. 1-96

8/31 M Soviet Era 1917-1952
Hosking, *Russian History*, pp. 97-111
McMahon, *The Cold War*, pp. 1-55

9/2 W    Soviet Era 1952-1985
Hosking, *Russian History*, pp. 112-120
McMahon, *The Cold War*, pp. 56-142

9/7 M    Labor Day: No Class

9/9 W    Gorbachev Era
Hosking, *Russian History*, pp. 120-130
McMahon, *The Cold War*, pp. 143-168

9/14 M    Yeltsin Era

9/16 W    Putin (and Medvedev) 1999-2012

9/21 M    Putin 2012-2020
Taylor, *The Code of Putinism*, pp. 78-165

9/23 W    Putin and Societal Issues
“Climate Change and Russia,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 243, 2019;
“Russian Youth,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 245, 2020;
“Need-based Social Policies,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 249, 2020

9/28 M    Domestic Political Scenarios Discussion
FIRST MIDTERM POSTED ON BLACKBOARD (due M 10/5 by 10:30 am)

9/30 W    Putin and Foreign Policy: The Setting
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 1-43
10/5 M  Putin and Europe I
FIRST MIDTERM DUE BY 10:30 am)
Stent, *Putin's World*, pp. 44-109

10/7 W  Putin and Europe II
Stent, *Putin's World*, pp. 110-139

10/13 T  Putin and the “Near Abroad”
Stent, *Putin's World*, pp. 141-174

10/14 W  Putin and Ukraine
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 175-207

10/19 M  Putin and China
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 208-234

10/21 W  Putin and Other Asian Countries
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 235-257

10/26 M  Putin and the Middle East
SECOND MIDTERM POSTED ON BLACKBOARD (due M 11/02 by 10:30 am)
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 258-292

10/28 W  Putin and Africa/Latin America
Arnaud Kalika, “Russia’s ‘Great Return’ to Africa?” IFRI, April 2019;
Matters, June 3, 2019;
Andrei Piatakov, “Russia and Latin America in the 21st Century: A Difficult Rapprochement,”
IFRI, July 2020

11/2 M  Putin and Bush/Obama/Trump
SECOND MIDTERM DUE BY 10:30am)
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 293-343

11/4 W  Special Topic: US-Russia Relations after 11/3 election

11/9 M  Russia and the Saudi-Russian Oil War
Joshua Yaffa, “How the Russian-Saudi Oil War Went Awry—For Putin Most of All,” *The New Yorker*, April 15, 2020

11/11 W  Russia and the Covid-19 Pandemic
“Russia and the Covid-19 Pandemic,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 251, 2020

11/16 M  Military Matters
“Security Issues,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 237, 2019

11/18 W  Russia in a Changing World

11/23 M  Putin until 2036?

11/25 W  Thanksgiving Break: No Class

11/30 M  Foreign Policy Scenarios Discussion
FINAL EXAM POSTED ON BLACKBOARD (due W 12/9 by 10:30 am)

12/2 W  Whither Russia?
Stent, *Putin’s World*, pp. 344-361

12/9 W  FINAL EXAM DUE BY 10:30 AM

**Students with Disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible and contact the Office of Disability Resources at (703) 993-2474 or ods@gmu.edu. All academic accommodations must be arranged through this office.

**Honor Code:** George Mason University has an Honor Code which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. See honorcode.gmu.edu for more detailed information.

**Enrollment:** Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes.

**Last Day to Add:** August 31, 2020
**Drop Deadlines:** September 8, 2020 with 100% tuition refund;  
September 15, 2020 with 50% tuition refund;  
September 28, 2020 with no refund

**Selective Withdrawal Period for Undergraduates:** September 29-October 28, 2020