

**PSC 2366-10-86770 Government and Politics of Russia**  
**An upper-level undergraduate lecture course**  
*Mondays and Wednesdays 2:20-3:35pm in Funger 223*

*Instructor: Henry E. Hale, hhale@gwu.edu*

With thousands of nuclear warheads, some of the world's largest oil and natural gas reserves, territory spanning 1/7 of the globe's land mass (and growing?!), the world's eighth largest economy, 140 million people, and a UN Security Council veto, Russia is surely one of the states in which developments can most directly affect the lives, liberties, and opportunities of Americans and others around the world. In this course, students will examine the driving forces behind Russian politics, in particular examining how Russia's political system really works and how its experience relates to that of other countries. Students will have the chance to learn about Russian politics through not only lectures and readings, but also relevant films, in-class discussion, and in-class exercises. They will read the works of leading experts (both Russian and non-Russian) and colorful autobiographical material.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By successfully completing this course, students will (1) know key information about Russia's political system; (2) know the viewpoints of leading Russian and Western analysts of Russian politics; (3) analyze this information and these viewpoints; (4) apply their knowledge and analysis to key questions of Russian politics in different settings; and (5) discuss Russian politics intelligently, actively, and creatively.

### **GRADING SYSTEM**

#### ***Exams:***

**20% Midterm**

**35% Final** (comprehensive, covering the entire course)

#### ***Classroom Participation:***

**5%** (attendance and participation in assigned classroom activities)

***Exercises:*** Each student is required to participate in five in-class *Exercises*. These Exercises are designed to cap the course's five main thematic parts and are scheduled at the end of each part. The professor, taking into account preferences as best possible, will assign each student to play a "lead" role in one of the Exercises and a "participant" role in the rest. Grades for the Exercises consist of three components:

**20% Research Paper.** Students playing lead roles will be assigned to write 1500-word research papers (about 5 pages) on assigned topics related to the roles the students will play. The papers are due at the start of class on the day of the relevant Exercise.

**10% In-Class Performance in Lead Role.** This includes a presentation and responses to others.

**10% Reaction Memos by Non-Lead Participants (4 memos, 2.5% each).** All students not playing the lead role for each Exercise will be required to write a "Reaction Memo" (maximum 1 page) on a question about the exercise that the professor specifies. These should directly respond both to what the lead students said in class during the Exercise and assigned readings, and must be submitted to the TA by email no later than 11:59 pm the day after the Exercise.

### **CLASS POLICIES**

- **Grading Policy:** "B+" refers to work that fulfills all the requirements of a given assignment and does so well. Grades of A- and A are reserved for truly outstanding work, for which all students will be encouraged to strive. Grades of B or lower indicate that the assignment has not been adequately performed to the full extent expected, although a straight B indicates that the work still has significant merit whereas a D should serve as a strong warning to seek help.
- **Absences** will result in "zero" grades for participation and any activity that day. To be excused from attendance of a given class, a student must notify the professor with an acceptable excuse *prior* to the start of that day's class unless, in the professor's judgment, advance notification was impossible. For

religious holidays, as per university policy, students must notify the instructor during the first week of the semester about any class session that will be missed. If a student is to miss an examination or in-class exercise for illness or any reason other than religious observance, documentation (e.g., from a doctor) must be provided in order to avoid getting a zero grade for that day's activities.

- Students are responsible for keeping track of any announcements, including possible changes in the syllabus or office hours, made in class or on Blackboard by the instructor or teaching associate.
- Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the professor privately in the first week of the semester to discuss specific needs. Please also contact the Disability Support Services office at (202) 994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>.
- The university will schedule a final exam for December 10-18. You should plan to be on campus for that entire period and a couple days after (in case you need a make-up exam)--taking the exam early will not be allowed.
- Academic integrity: This class abides by the GW Code of Academic Integrity, which states that "Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." The rest of the code can be found at: <http://studentconduct.gwu.edu/>.
- The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers assistance at all hours every day to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. This includes crisis and emergency mental health consultation as well as confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. See: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices>.
- Security: In case of emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.
- Writing assistance can be obtained through (1) The University Writing Center, on the first floor of Gelman Library, room 103, available to help students one-on-one with their writing; or (2) The Language Center, 216 Philips Hall, which can help non-native speakers of English.
- Students are strongly advised to consult the Gelman Library Contemporary Russian Politics Resource Page (<http://libguides.gwu.edu/aecontent.php?pid=153618>) when doing research for their papers. GW is fortunate to have a great expert on Russia, Mark Yoffe, who manages it and other collections.

## READINGS

Students are expected to have read the readings listed for each lecture *before* class on the day of that lecture. Lectures will not simply repeat readings, but will assume knowledge of the reading material, so understanding lectures will depend on doing readings on schedule. In-class activities will also often require familiarity with the readings. To help you budget your time, estimates of the number of pages for each reading are given in brackets (for example, for the second class meeting, on August 27, the assigned reading by yours truly (*Patronal Politics*) is 22 pages long). How to view the films will be announced in class or on Blackboard. All readings will be available through Blackboard or direct links provided except:

To be available for purchase at the GW Bookstore and/or on reserve at Gelman Library:

- **Treisman**: Daniel Treisman, *The Return* (NY: Free Press, 2011)
- **Putin**: Vladimir Putin, *First Person* (NY: PublicAffairs, 2000)
- **DRP8**: White, Sakwa, & Hale, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 8* (Durham: Duke U. Press, 2014) [**IMPORTANT: This book is brand new and will be released on September 18; please plan to buy it at that time**]

**CLASS SCHEDULE****1. Mon 8/25 - Introduction: Patronalism in Russia****2. Wed 8/27 - Empire, Communism [27]**

- Henry Hale, *Patronal Politics* (NY: Cambridge U. Press, 2015), Chapter 3. [22]
- *The Onion*, “My Dumb Century,” selected articles. [5]

**\*\* Mon 9/1 - LABOR DAY (class does not meet) \*\***

**PART I: POLITICAL ECONOMY****3. Wed 9/3 - The Soviet Economy and the Need for Reform [120]**

- Putin, pp.3-122 [120]

**4. Mon 9/8 - The Politics of Reform in the 1990s [85]**

- Heinz Kohler, “Stalin’s Economic System,” in *Comparative Economic Systems* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1989), pp.136-55. [20]
- Treisman, Chapter 2. [39]
- Jagdish Bhagwati, “Shock Treatments,” *The New Republic*, March 28, 1994, pp.39-43. [5]
- Jeffrey Sachs, response to Bhagwati, and Bhagwati’s rejoinder, *The New Republic*, April 25, 1994, pp.4-5. [2]
- Dmitri Glinski-Vassiliev and Peter Reddaway, “The Ravages of Market Bolshevism,” *Journal of Democracy*, v.10, no.2, April 1999. [15]
- Vladimir Popov, “Russia’s Mortality Crisis” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 127, October 2010, [http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm\\_127.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm_127.pdf) . [4]

**5. Wed 9/10 - Oligarchs [43]**

- View the following film prior to class: *Tycoon: A New Russian* (in Russian: “Oligarkh”), 2002, directed by Pavel Lungin.
- Treisman, Chapter 6. [43]

**6. Mon 9/15 - Oil, Gas, and Putin’s Political Economy [60]**

- DRP8, Chapter 11, Philip Hanson, “Managing the Economy.” [20]
- Treisman, Chapter 7. [22]
- Thane Gustafson, “Putin’s Petroleum Problem,” *Foreign Affairs*, v.91, no.6, November/December 2012, pp.83-96. [14]
- Juliet Johnson, “Mission Impossible,” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.196, June 2012, <http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/pepm196.pdf> . [6]

**7. Wed 9/17 - EXERCISE 1**

- *Group 1: papers due by beginning of class*

**8. Mon 9/22 - PONARS EURASIA POLICY CONFERENCE AT GW**

*Class will not meet today. Instead, all students should register in advance and attend at least one panel at the conference, which will feature many of the world’s top experts on Russian politics, including from Russia itself. The assigned reading for today is at least three PONARS Eurasia Policy Memos that are posted online in advance for the conference. Information on the conference and the Policy Memos can be found at [www.ponarseurasia.org](http://www.ponarseurasia.org) or as presented in class prior to this date. Students may be asked to write about it in class on Wed, 9/24.*

## **PART II: RUSSIA AS A FEDERAL, MULTINATIONAL STATE**

### **9. Wed 9/24 - Chechnya [48]**

- Treisman, Chapter 8. [48]

### **10. Mon 9/29 - Federalism in the 1990s [38]**

- Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, "Central Weakness and Provincial Autonomy: Observations on the Devolution Process in Russia," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, v.15, no.1, January 1999, pp.87-106. [20]
- Theodore Gerber and Sarah Mendelson, "How Russians Think About Chechnya," PONARS Policy Memo no.243, January 2002, [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/pm\\_0243.pdf](http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/pm_0243.pdf). [8]
- Putin, pp.165-74. [10]

### **11. Wed 10/1 - Reining in the Governors [17]**

- Grigorii Golosov, "The Regional Roots of Electoral Authoritarianism in Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, v.63, no.4, June 2011, pp.623-39. [17]

### **12. Mon 10/6 - Center-Periphery Relations under Putin [47]**

- DRP8, Chapter 10, Darrell Slider, "A Federal State?" [20]
- Elise Giuliano and Dmitry Gorenburg, "The Unexpectedly Underwhelming Role of Ethnicity in Russian Politics 1991-2011," *Demokratizatsiya*, v.20, no.2, Spring 2012, pp.175-88. [14]
- Kimberly Marten, "Russia, Chechnya, and the Sovereign Kadyrov," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no. 116, October 2010, [http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm\\_116.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm_116.pdf). [5]
- Sufian Zhemukhov, "Why Young People Turn to Islam in the North Caucasus," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.30, August 2008, [http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm\\_030.pdf](http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/pepm_030.pdf). [4]
- Jean-François Ratelle, "The Insurgency in the North Caucasus," *Russian Analytical Digest*, no.131, July 8, 2013, pp.5-8, accessible at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?id=17933>. [4]

### **13. Wed 10/8 - EXERCISE 2**

- *Group 2: papers due by beginning of class*

### **14. Mon 10/13 - MIDTERM EXAM**

## **PART III: THE CENTER**

### **15. Wed 10/15 - Constitution [40]**

- DRP8, Chapter 2, John Willerton, "The Hegemonic Executive." [20]
- DRP8, Chapter 3, Thomas Remington, "Parliamentary Politics in Russia." [20]

### **16. Mon 10/20 - Putin [58]**

- View the following CBC documentary film prior to class: *The Putin System*, 2007, directed by Jean-Michel Carré and Jill Emery, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5RkomlRpKA>.
- Treisman, Chapter 3. [43]
- Putin, pp.182-88, 200-7. [15]

**17. Wed 10/22 - The Tandem [40]**

- Treisman, Chapter 4. [40]

**18. Mon 10/27 - Instruments of Control: Media and Force Agencies [76]**

- DRP8, Chapter 8, Sarah Oates, "Russia's Media and Political Communication in the Digital Age." [20]
- Christopher Walker and Robert Orttung, "Breaking the News," *Journal of Democracy*, v.25, no.1, January 2014, pp.71-85. [15]
- Brian Taylor, *State Building in Putin's Russia* (NY: Cambridge U. Press, 2011), Chapter 3. [41]

**19. Wed 10/29 - EXERCISE 3**

- *Group 3: papers due by beginning of class*

**PART IV: SOCIETY IN RUSSIAN POLITICS****20. Mon 11/3 - Parties: United Russia and the Rest [46]**

- DRP8, Chapter 5, Henry Hale, "Russia's Political Parties and Their Substitutes." [20]
- DRP8, Chapter 12, Svetlana Stephenson, "Society and Social Divisions in Russia." [20]
- Regina Smyth, "Beyond United Russia," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.302, September 2013, [http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Peppm\\_302\\_Smyth\\_Sept2013.pdf](http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Peppm_302_Smyth_Sept2013.pdf). [6]

**21. Wed 11/5 - Elections and Voting [40]**

- DRP8, Chapter 4, Stephen White, "The Electoral Process." [20]
- DRP8, Chapter 6, Ian McAllister, "Voting Behavior." [20]

**22. Mon 11/10 - Russian Liberalism, the Protest Movement, and Civil Society [65]**

- DRP8, Chapter 7, Graeme Robertson, "Civil Society and Contentious Politics in Russia." [20]
- Vladimir Gel'man, "Cracks in the Wall: Challenges to Electoral Authoritarianism in Russia," *Problems of Post-Communism*, v.60, no.2, March-April 2013, pp.3-10. [8]
- Nicu Popescu, "Putinism under Siege: The Strange Alliance of Democrats and Nationalists," *Journal of Democracy*, v.23, no.3, July 2012, pp.46-54. [9]
- Henry Hale, "Yabloko and the Challenge of Building a Liberal Party in Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, v.56, no.7, November 2004, pp.993-1020. [28]

**23. Wed 11/12 - Russian Nationalism [27]**

- View the following documentary film prior to class: *Putin's Kiss* (directed by Lise Birk Petersen, 2012).
- Oxana Shevel, "Russian Nation-Building from Yel'tsin to Medvedev: Ethnic, Civic, or Purposefully Ambiguous?" *Europe-Asia Studies*, v.63, no.2, 2011, pp.179-202. [24]
- Marlene Laruelle, "Anti-Migrant Riots in Russia: The Mobilizing Potential of Xenophobia," *Russian Analytical Digest*, no.141, December 23, 2013, pp.2-4, accessible at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?id=17933> . [3]

**24. Mon 11/17 - EXERCISE 4**

- *Group 4: papers due by beginning of class*

**PART V: PUTINISM 3.0****25. Wed 11/19 - The Putin Restoration [50]**

- Regina Smyth and Irina Soboleva, “Looking Beyond the Economy: Pussy Riot and the Kremlin’s Voting Coalition,” *Post-Soviet Affairs*, December 2013. [16]
- Valerie Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin* (NY: Oxford U. Press, 2014), chapter 2.
- Brian Taylor, “Putin’s Crackdown,” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.277, September 2013, [http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm\\_277\\_Taylor\\_Sept2013.pdf](http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm_277_Taylor_Sept2013.pdf) . [5]
- James Richter, “Civil Society and the Second Putinhchina,” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no.276, [http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/pepm\\_276\\_Richter\\_Sept2013.pdf](http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/pepm_276_Richter_Sept2013.pdf) . [5]
- Robert W. Orttung, “Navalny’s Campaign to be Moscow Mayor,” *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 136, September 16, 2013, pp.2-5, accessible at <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?id=17933> . [4]

**26. Mon 11/24 - Links between Domestic Politics and Foreign Relations [60]**

- DRP8, Chapter 13, Margot Light, “Foreign Policy.” [20]
- Treisman, Chapter 9. [30]
- Kimberly Marten, “A New Explanation for Russian Foreign Policy: The Power of Informal Patronage Networks,” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no. 274, September 2013, [http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm\\_274\\_Marten\\_Sept2013.pdf](http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm_274_Marten_Sept2013.pdf) . [5]
- Andrew Barnes, “How Much Would It Hurt? Exploring Russia’s Vulnerability to a Drop in Energy Prices,” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no. 295, September 2013, [http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm\\_295\\_Barnes\\_Sept2013.pdf](http://ponarseurasia.org/sites/default/files/policy-memos-pdf/Pepm_295_Barnes_Sept2013.pdf) . [5]

**\*\* Wed 11/26 - THANKSGIVING BREAK: Class does not meet \*\***

**27. Mon 12/1 - Russia in Comparative Perspective [69]**

- DRP8, Chapter 9, Kathryn Hendley, “Assessing the Rule of Law in Russia.” [20]
- Treisman, Chapter 10. [49]

**28. Wed 12/3 - EXERCISE 5**

- *Group 5: papers due by beginning of class*

**FINAL EXAM: TBA**