Russia and the West
POS UG4875
Spring 2019
Mon. and Wed. 2:40-3:55pm
Room: TBA
Prof. Kimberly Marten
Office: Milstein Center 1106

Office Hours:
Most Tuesdays, by appointment through my Google calendar account:
(Note: please be sure your own Google calendar is open, and set to the US East Coast time zone.)
https://calendar.google.com/calendar/selfsched
ssltoken=UU40NUVZZE42NkInfGRiZmF1bHR8ZGJhZWE3MTNhM2Q3M2JkYQ3ZDNkZTlmMkT7
email: km2225@columbia.edu
Twitter: @KimberlyMarten

Course Description
Throughout history Russia has had an ambiguous relationship with the Western world. Sometimes the West has been vilified as a threat or an enemy, and other times it has been held up by Russians as a model to emulate. Russia and the West have never treated each other with indifference, and this love/hate relationship is in full force today. Historical memories and parallels abound in popular discussions. In this course, we will examine why this has been the case and what it means for Russian foreign and security policy today. Drawing on contributions from philosophers, historians and international relations scholars and practitioners, we will discuss whether Russia’s interaction with the West has been driven by realist great power considerations, by a cultural cycle of Orthodox Slavic nationalism or “Eurasianism” vs. pro-Western internationalism, by domestic political and economic interests, or by the idiosyncratic visions and interests of individual Russian leaders—and in turn, how choices made by the West have affected all these things. Students will be encouraged to come up with their own answers to these riddles, in class discussions and assignments including a final independent research paper. This is not a survey course, but no background knowledge is required—only a deep interest in understanding Russia and its relationship to the West. There are no prerequisites.

Learning Objectives
Students who complete this course successfully will be able to:
• Demonstrate broad factual knowledge of selected key current and historical Russian political, foreign policy, and security issues.
• Apply causal theories drawn from the political science literature and other sources, to analyze, compare, and evaluate events and trends in Russian relations with the West.
• Synthesize facts and arguments across cases in order to reason critically and argue creatively, through both in-class oral discussions and written assignments.
• Perform rigorous and independent research, including through use of sources available electronically through the Columbia Library system.
• Write a compelling independent research paper.

Course Requirements and Grading
All written assignments will be submitted online via Courseworks/Canvas. Assignments should be double-spaced to allow room for comments, and must be in either Word or PDF format. Please note that undergraduate and graduate students will be graded separately (in other words, undergraduates are not competing against the graduate students in the course.)
Midterm Exams: All students will complete two take-at-home midterm exams, writing an essay of approximately 1,000 words each time. The first midterm, focusing on theory, will be due at 5pm on Sunday, Feb. 24. The second midterm, focusing on the legacies of imperial and Soviet history, will be due at 5pm on Sunday, April 7. In each case, questions will be emailed to students at least two weeks in advance.

Research Paper: All students will turn in a 1- to 2-page, well-reasoned research proposal on their paper topic (format to be discussed in a separate handout), based on extensive preliminary research. It is due by 5pm on Friday March 15, the day before Spring Break officially starts. All research papers are due via Courseworks at noon on the last day of class, Monday May 6.

Undergraduate students will complete an independent research paper of approximately 3,000 words (10-12 double-spaced pages), comparing at least two theories or arguments of the student’s choice, to explain one or more Russian or Soviet foreign policy outcome or event of the student’s choice.

Graduate students will complete an independent research paper of approximately 5,000 words (15-20 double-spaced pages), on a topic related to course materials that they choose in consultation with Prof. Marten. Grad students must make significant use of Russian/Soviet primary-source materials, such as memoirs, press reports or television interviews, government documents, etc. Students who read Russian are encouraged to use these sources in the original; students who do not read Russian are expected to use English translations of Russian materials that are available on CLIO.

Final Exam: All students will complete a take-at-home final exam, completing two essays of 1,000 words each (2,000 words total). On one question there will be a choice of current events topics from the last third of the semester; the second, comprehensive course question about the future trajectory of Russia and the West will be assigned to all. The exam will be due via Courseworks at the date and time set by the university for the final exam in this course: Wednesday May 15 at 4pm (please note the earlier hour; Barnard rules require all take home finals to be due at the close of the regularly scheduled exam). Questions will be emailed to students at least two weeks in advance.

Class participation: Discussion is an important component of this course. Students are expected to attend all class sessions, to have completed the assigned course readings before class, and to be prepared to comment on assigned readings. Roll will be taken. Please email Prof. Marten in advance if you must miss class. Everyone is allowed to miss one class without penalty, for any reason. If you must miss more than one class, please plan to submit a one-page answer to one of the day’s discussion questions to make up for class participation that day.

For many classes Prof. Marten will hand out discussion questions in advance. Most class sessions will have Prof. Marten lecturing for the first 30-45 minutes, with open discussion to follow. For this reason, the use of laptops and other electronic devices in class is forbidden except under special circumstances, and except on Jan. 30, when you are encouraged to bring your laptop to follow along Prof. Marten’s discussion of research resources. If you must use a laptop regularly, please talk to Prof. Marten first, and please sit at the back of the room so that your screen does not distract others.

Grading:
- Midterm exam 1 (due Sunday, Feb. 24): 10% of total course grade
- Research proposal (due Friday, Mar. 15): 5% of total course grade
- Midterm exam 2 (due Sunday, April 7): 15% of total course grade
- Research paper (due Monday, May 6): 25% of total course grade
- Final exam (due Wednesday, May 15): 25% of total course grade
- Discussion participation: 20% of total course grade

Barnard Honor Code
All assignments in this class are to be completed in accordance with the Barnard Honor Code,
All assignments in this class are to be completed in accordance with the Barnard Honor Code, whether or not the student is a Barnard student, with expectations outlined in the following paragraph. **Any student who violates the Honor Code on any assignment will face dean’s discipline at her or his home college, and will earn a failing grade in the course.**

Students affirm that all work turned in is their own, and that they have fully and accurately cited every written source, including web-based sources and unpublished sources (such as prior student papers), used in their writing. Students are encouraged to consult with each other to get feedback as they are writing their independent research proposals and research papers. Students are allowed to consult with anyone they like as they begin thinking about their midterm and final exam essays, but **no further collaboration is allowed once they begin outlining and writing** those essays. In other words, both the argumentative structure and the wording of those essays must be completely the student’s own work.

All students may use the Barnard and Columbia Writing Centers with no restrictions.

“Plagiarism” is the use of someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution. It is, at its core, the act of falsely implying or claiming credit for intellectual work that someone else did. All students receive in-depth briefings on plagiarism and proper citation techniques as part of their introductory days at Barnard and Columbia; any student who has any remaining questions about proper citation technique or about how to avoid plagiarism should discuss these questions and concerns with Prof. Marten before turning in the assignment in question. Plagiarism is often committed as an act of desperation under pressure. **If you ever feel so pressured on an assignment that you are tempted to plagiarize, please contact Prof. Marten instead.** Together we can work out a fair extension on a deadline, to ease your panic.

**Academic Accommodations Statement**

If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations in this course, you must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting accommodations will need to first meet with an ODS staff member. Once registered, students are required to request accommodation letters each semester to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to contact ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please see Prof. Marten to schedule a meeting outside of class in which you can bring your faculty notification letter and we can discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. Barnard ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 009/008. **Please note that time-and-a-half disability accommodations do not usually apply to take-home assignments; please explicitly discuss with ODS the fact that this class has no in-class exams.**

**Barnard Wellness Statement**

It is important for students to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors they may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself—your own health, sanity, and wellness—your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these websites:

- [http://barnard.edu/primarycare](http://barnard.edu/primarycare)
- [http://barnard.edu/counseling](http://barnard.edu/counseling)
- [http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about](http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about)
- [Stressbusters Support Network](http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about)

**Readings**

Students should finish the assigned readings before class, so that we can discuss them in class. On longer and complex assignments in particular, students are not expected to read things word-for-word. Instead, it is important to learn the skill of strategic skimming—reading for the key
Many assignments are found on CLIO, the Columbia Library online system. They are easily accessible to anyone with a Columbia or Barnard ID. Start by searching by the article title to see if it comes up; if it does not, try putting in the journal title, and then searching chronologically within the journal for the date the article was published. Please access PDF versions of articles when available, so that you can cite specific page numbers in exam essays that might use them. Other items, such as book chapters, have been uploaded as PDFs to the Courseworks Files webpage for the course. Some items are available on the open web.

Course readings are subject to change in response to current events, or as new academic articles are published. Therefore please consider this syllabus a living document that may change as the semester progresses.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Please read these pieces before our first class if possible.

Columbia Library online (CLIO):
Stephen M. Walt, “One World, Many Theories,” *Foreign Policy* 110 (Spring 1998): 29-46. Note: even though this piece is old, and concentrates on issues that are long past, many of the theoretical themes it raises are still used by international relations scholars today—and the competing theories are explained well here. We will be returning to this framework all semester.

Section I. Theoretical Models: Does Putin Matter? Does Trump?

Jan. 28: The theory of realism and Russian foreign policy.

CLIO:

Open web:

CLIO:

Note: at the start of class today, Prof. Marten will review some of the most important and relevant research sources available to you via the Columbia Library web portal. Hence attendance at this class session is absolutely mandatory, because you will be expected to use these sources in your research papers.

Courseworks Files:

Open web:
Feb. 4. Case-study: Russia and Syria: realism vs. patronage politics.

**CLIO:**

Kimberly Marten, “Informal Political Networks and Putin’s Foreign Policy: The Examples of Iran and Syria,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 62 (2015): 71–87. (Note: This was published before Russia’s September 2015 military intervention in Syria.)

**Open web:**


Feb. 6. No class meeting. Prof. Marten is giving a talk at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Please use this extra time to start preliminary thinking about, and research on, your research paper topic.

Feb. 11. Individual psychology: theories of decision-making and the role of personality.

**Courseworks Files:**

**CLIO:**


**CLIO:**

Fyodor Lukyanov, “Putin's Foreign Policy: The Quest to Restore Russia’s Rightful Place,” *Foreign Affairs* 95, no. 3 (May/June 2016): 30-37.

Feb. 18: Constructivism part II: Slavophiles and Westernizers.

**Courseworks Files:**
Feb. 20: Constructivism part III: The Eurasianists.

Courseworks Files:

CLIO:

Courseworks Files:

SUNDAY FEB 24: Midterm 1 due on Courseworks.

Feb. 25: Case-study: Russia and the intervention in Ukraine, part I: what happened when.

Courseworks Files:

CLIO:
Samuel Charap & Timothy J. Colton, “Breaking Point,” chap. 3 in Everyone Loses: The Ukraine Crisis and the Ruinous Contest for Post-Soviet Eurasia, Adelphi Series [electronic journal—note, this was also published as a book, but the Adelphi Series version is accessible online] 56, no. 460 (2016): 113-50. (This provides a definitive description of exactly what happened when in the Ukraine crisis.)

Open web:

Feb. 27: Interlude: what actually happened in the 1990s with NATO expansion?

CLIO:

Open web:

Mar. 4: Case-study: Russia and the intervention in Ukraine, part II: why it happened.

CLIO:
John J. Mearsheimer, “The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin,” Foreign Affairs, Sept./Oct. 2014; and the response, Michael McFaul; Stephen Sestanovich; John J. Mearsheimer,

**Section II. Tsarist and Soviet Experiences with the West: Selected Historical Legacies**

**Mar. 6: Peter the Great and Catherine the Great: the opening to the West.**

**Courseworks Files:**

**Open web:**


**Mar. 11: The Decembrists, Nicholas I, and Alexander II (part 1—we will be returning to Alexander II when we talk about Gorbachev): repression and reform.**

**Courseworks Files:**
Riasanovsky and Steinberg, pp. 316-36, 363-75.

**Open web:**

**Mar. 13: Stalin: Popular villain, or misunderstood hero?**

**Open web:**

**CLIO:**


**Open web:**

**Friday. Mar. 15: Research proposal due on Courseworks.**

**Mar. 18-20: Spring Break, no class meetings.**

**Mar. 25. The Cold War and the correlation of forces.**

**CLIO:**
Vladimir O. Pechatnov. “Soviet-American Relations Through the Cold War.” in *The
Mar. 27. The peculiar Soviet economy and why it endured (and then failed to reform).

**CLIO:**
Janos Kornai, Eric Maskin, and Gerard Roland, “Understanding the Soft Budget Constraint,” *Journal of Economic Literature* 61 (Dec. 2003): 1095-1136. [Note: please do not worry about the mathematical equations that are in this article. The text provides an excellent, easy-to-read explanation of the major source of inefficiency in the Soviet economy.]


**CLIO:**


Apr. 3. The end of the Cold War.

**CLIO:**


Sunday Apr. 7: Midterm 2 due on Courseworks.

Section IV. Russia and the West Today (topics and readings subject to change based on current events)

Apr. 8. The new Russia and the old Soviet empire.

**Courseworks Files:**


Serhii Plokhy, “Epilogue,” in *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union* (New York: Basic Books, 2014), pp. 388-408. Note: concentrate on his argument that the end of the Cold War was not causally related to the breakup of the USSR.

Apr. 10. The failure to reform the KGB—and its criminal aftermath.

**Open web:**
Apr. 15. International sanctions and Russian politics.

**CLIO:**

**Open web:**


**CLIO:**


Apr. 17. Oil, natural gas, and Russia-West relations.

**Open web:**


Apr. 22. The collapse of nuclear arms control.

**Open web:**

Apr. 24. “Information war” and cyber conflict: Russia’s neighbors.

Open web:

Apr. 29. Russian Interference in U.S. and Other Western Elections

Open web:

Courseworks:

Open web:


May 1. Is a post-Western world order emerging?

Open web:
CLIO:

Open web:


CLIO:


May 6. There is nothing so difficult to predict as the future…

There are no readings assigned for today, so students can concentrate on their research papers. But our class will prepare students well for the final exam, through a discussion of how we can apply the theories we have used throughout the semester to try to understand what comes next.