



HIST 14000 4, REES 26012 4, SOSC 24100 4 - Introduction to Russian Civilization II - Instructor(s): William Nickell

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Winter 2024**

Number Enrolled: **20**

Number of Responses: **8**

Report Comments

Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Thursday, March 28, 2024**

What are the most important things that you learned in this course? Please reflect on the knowledge and skills you gained.

Comments
I think it was the wide array of primary sources which were meant to represent a brief overview of the USSR.
I learned about Stalin's Russia, Gorbachev, Yeltsin, and Putin
The history of the Soviet Union as well as post-Soviet Russia. There was a lot of emphasis on how the history of the Soviet Union directly affects the way Russia is currently behaving.
We learned about the Soviet Union and its impact on modern day Russia. We looked through a lot of primary sources, media, and artwork that helped describe the situation of the USSR and Russia's current political/economic situation.
I learned about more modern Russian history
This course covered Russian history from the end of the Romanov dynasty up to the present-day (with our last few classes being on Ukraine and Putin). I better learned how to approach primary source material, considering that we read very few secondary/contextual sources and instead filled in the gaps during class time.
How to analyze primary sources and understand the development of Russia

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

Comments
In this the readings and lectures were the most helpful, that said I kind of wish that the course was less discussion based. It would have been nice to have more connective lecturing that gave a more overall picture of the Soviet Union. Instead I felt that I was shown many brief snapshots it almost felt disjointed or stilted.
Readings were most helpful. Prof. Nickell is quite nice, but I found it hard to engage with the material.
There were just lectures/discussions which was the main way we got information. We would do readings which is where the bulk of the info came from, then our professor would supplement them with more info and we would discuss the things we found interesting.
The lectures helped with interpreting the readings and understanding the media from the Soviet era. The movie screenings helped with understanding Russian/Soviet culture. The essays were a great opportunity to do independent research on topics related to the USSR.
Lectures and discussions were super useful
Time in class doubled as being lectures and discussions, both of which were helpful to my understanding of the material. Lectures in particular provided useful context for some of the readings. Additionally, papers for the course built up progressively in length so I felt my abilities to write about Russian history strengthen overtime.
The discussions were interesting

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	3.71	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%	0.00%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	4.33	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.29	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	42.86%	42.86%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	4.00	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	14.29%	42.86%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	4.43	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	28.57%	57.14%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.57	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	57.14%
I felt respected in this class.	4.57	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	42.86%	57.14%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	4.29	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	14.29%	42.86%	42.86%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
I know that the structure and specific content used for this course was new, and I think that it did show a little. I really think that more secondary literature would really improve the course— for example at the start there was one reading that was from a sort of textbook and that was probably the most helpful of the readings that I did.
Our prof is super nice and genuinely wants you to engage.

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	14.29%	85.71%
Anyone interested in the topic	14.29%	85.71%

Thinking about your time in the class, what aspect of the instructor's teaching contributed most to your learning?

Comments
I thought there were some really nice anecdotes used and some cool aspects shown in the power points.
In-class discussions were most helpful for my learning
The lectures were very helpful in getting more information on the connections between the readings. I'm not the biggest fan of discussions so they weren't particularly helpful to me.
Professor Nickell's in class examples of media, artwork, and poetry as well as his lectures were very informative. I felt like he struck the perfect balance between lecture style and discussion style. Additionally his office hours helped with understanding the purpose of the essays and what was expected for them.
His slides and discussions were very helpful
Professor Nickell is extremely knowledgeable about Soviet and Russian history. He makes lectures engaging by mixing in personal anecdotes from his time spent in Russia and always encouraged us to grapple with the readings independently. For instance, he was always very conscious about how much time he spent talking to us and would try to limit the amount of time he was lecturing for so as to promote in-class discussion instead.
His notes on our essays and how he guides the class

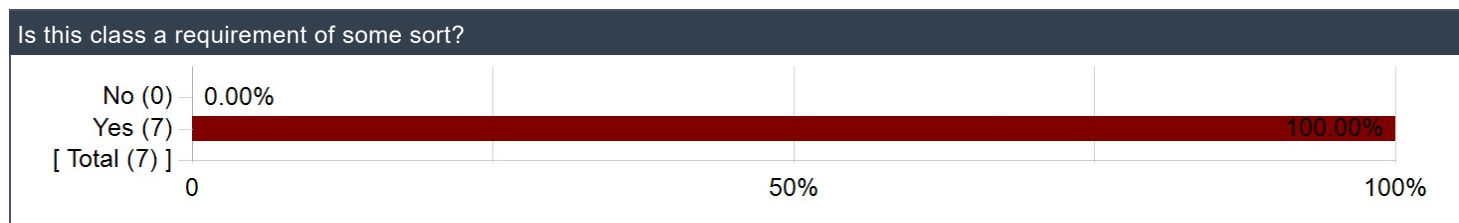
What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
I think (not to beat a dead horse) but in instruction there could be more overarching lecture. I also felt that there were a lot of readings that were kind of redundant. For example we would get multiple legalistic document readings of decent length and they all covered similar concepts and I would get the feeling that if there was only one, then I would have more been able to actually pour over and dissect that single document (as this is a core intro class) and then in discussion maybe we could make those connections to other similar documents. This is how other similar courses I have taken have functioned and I felt like they really benefited from the tightened reading list.
Allow for more in-class discussion and less lecturing
Sometimes discussions were stale and stagnant. This tended to occur when the readings were on topics that didn't really lend themselves to discussions. In cases like that, I would think it would have been better to focus more on supplemental lectures rather than forcing discussion.
Nothing, we were provided with a lot of great resources.
I wish some more readings revolved around context, rather than so many primary sources. Sometimes I felt like I went into the readings and understood nothing because there was no context around it, and it was hard to keep up with the readings.
I cannot think of any improvements I could suggest for the course. I could have maybe benefited from a little bit more historical context at times, but considering amount of time available in a quarter, the class was executed quite well.
I think our class needed a little push sometimes

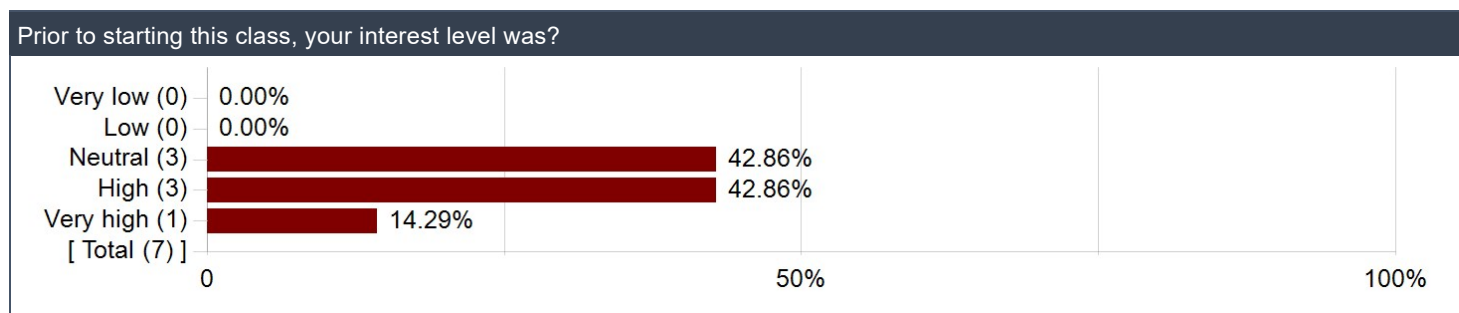
The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	4.63	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%	62.50%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	4.25	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	37.50%	0.00%	62.50%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	4.38	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	62.50%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	4.38	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	12.50%	62.50%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.50	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	0.00%

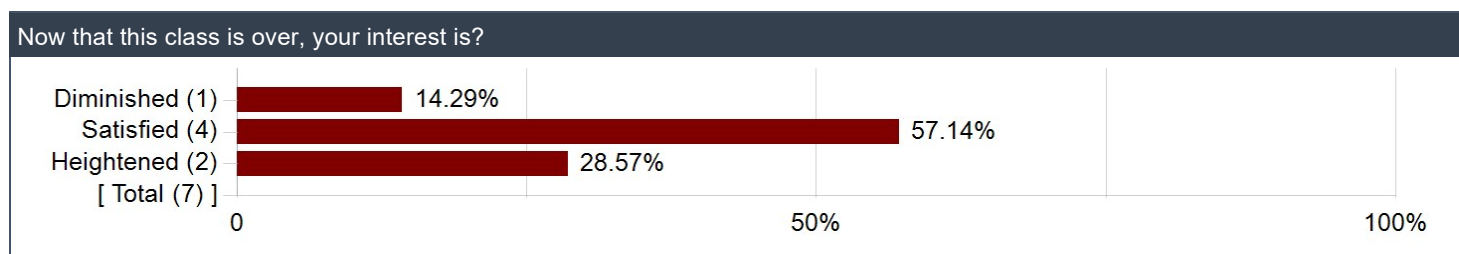
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



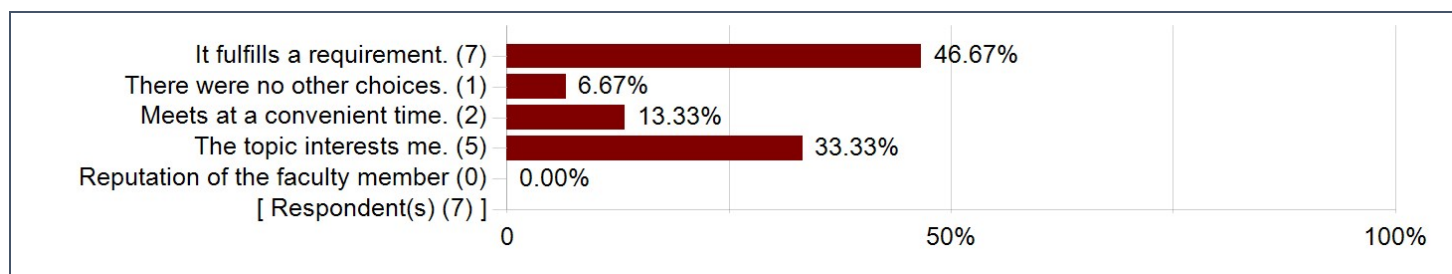
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



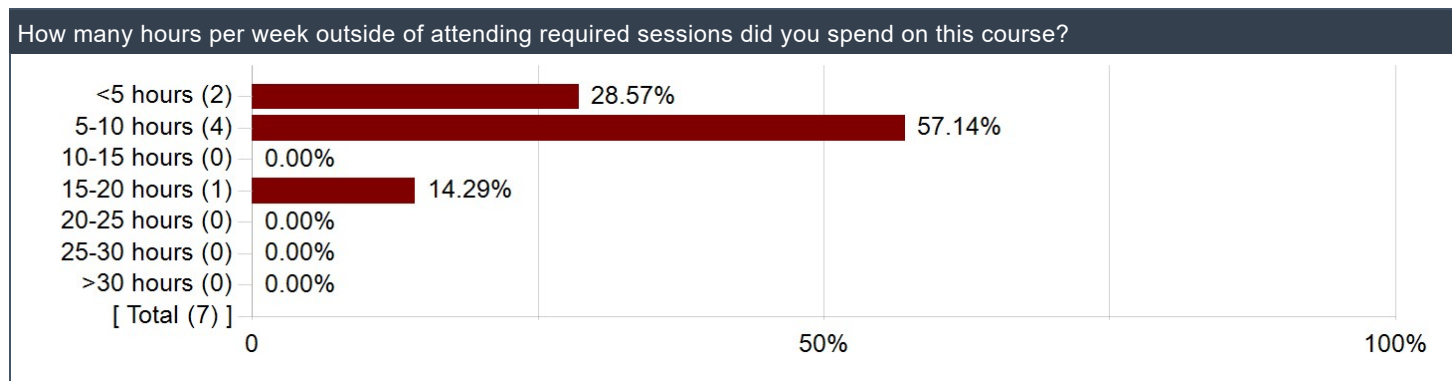
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



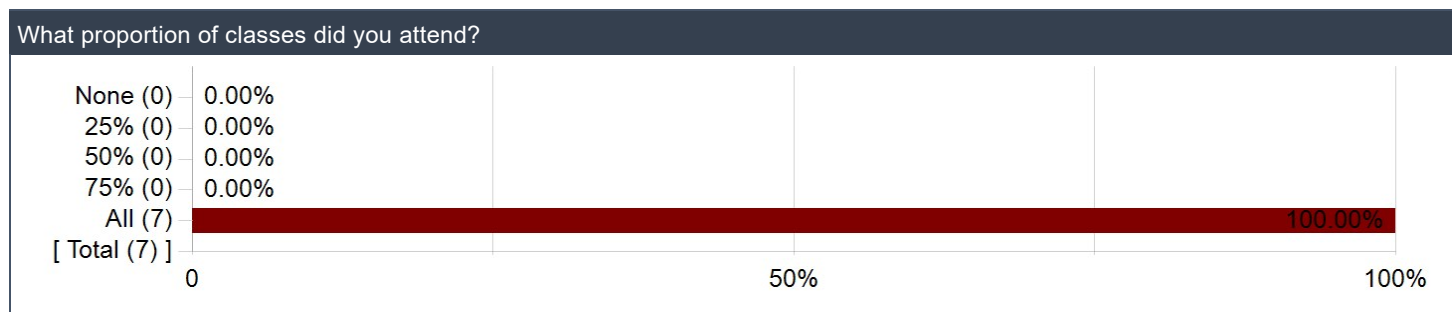
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?



Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
I had probably above average background knowledge and that certainly helped but I don't think it is necessary for the course it definitely is an intro.
This class is not hard
I took the first quarter, but other than that I did not know much about Soviet Russia. I think the class was good but it's hard for me to judge it as it just isn't the type of class I like.
No background in this topic needed. I personally have family who immigrated from the USSR, which was helpful in understanding what was taught in the course. But even without prior knowledge in this topic you can succeed in this course.
No background is needed
Having taken the previous course in the sequence, the formatting and expectations of this course were quite similar. The coverage of historical material transitioned seamlessly between the two as well.
It is not difficult

