

GOV F336M (80695): Government and Politics of Russia, Summer 2023

Class Time/Place: Online, asynchronous

Instructor: Kevin Galambos

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Office Hours: Wed/Th 10-11:30am

Zoom: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/92585921082>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

With its invasion of Ukraine, Russia is back in the headlines in a familiar role as a primary security threat to the United States. For some observers, this was to be expected, given the legacy of the Cold War and the chaotic nature of Russia's post-communist transition. However, such a perspective misses the uncertainty surrounding the emergence of post-communist Russia after the Soviet collapse. In the early 1990s, commentators offered several different historical trajectories, ranging from successful democratization and integration with Western international institutions to devolution into civil war, and many options in between. This course attempts to trace the political development of Russia to understand its current condition as an aggressive authoritarian state that has invaded its neighbor, Ukraine, and challenged the existing international political order.

Given that Russia's war in Ukraine is on-going, the course will provide two concurrent narratives: 1) a political history of contemporary Russian politics from the Soviet period to the present and 2) a recent account and analysis of the major developments of Russia's war in Ukraine.

The first narrative – Russia's political development – will be divided into three parts. First, we provide a short overview of the Soviet period, which ended with the introduction of radical reforms under Mikhail Gorbachev and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union. Second, we examine the multiple challenges of state-building, democratization, and radical market reform that faced the new post-Soviet Russian state under the presidency of Boris Yeltsin. In the third section, we examine the ascendance of Vladimir Putin as president and the reemergence of authoritarianism, state control of the economy, and confrontation with the United States and the West.

The second narrative – Russia's war in Ukraine – will be covered through separate modules. In these modules we will examine developments in the war as well as long-standing issues such as Russian citizens' support for the war, Western public support for aid to Ukraine, the possible use of nuclear weapons, and the war's effects on global food and energy supplies.

Prerequisite: upper-division standing and six hours of lower-division coursework in Government.

ONLINE COURSE FORMAT

This is an asynchronous, online course. Lectures will be online rather than in-person. Students will “attend” class by logging into Canvas to watch pre-recorded lectures. There are no preset deadlines for students to view recorded lectures, so long as they take the associated quiz for every lecture by the assigned deadline: 11:59 pm CST.

Separate modules will discuss contemporary new stories related to Russia’s ongoing war in Ukraine. These are in addition to lecture modules, with quizzes also due at 11:59 PM. All lecture videos are available through the Modules tab on Canvas.

You are strongly encouraged to follow the schedule outline in the syllabus. Access to modules and quizzes will be provided gradually. Students may work ahead several days. Students will not have access to quizzes after their deadlines have passed. Any missed quiz will result in a zero for that quiz.

Students will take **three exams** during the summer session. The exams will be held in the evenings and proctored through an online service called Proctorio. Exam dates are:

*** **Wednesday, June 14; Monday, June 26; and Friday, July 7.** ***

Please mark your calendars.

TECHNICAL AND COMMUNICATION LOGISTICS

CLASS WEBSITE

Technical Requirements:

Students are required to have access to a laptop or desktop computer for exams. Tablets, smartphones, and Microsoft Surface devices are not supported. Your computer should meet the following requirements:

- MacOS or Windows operating system
- Browser: Chrome (required for exams), Safari or Firefox. If using Safari or Firefox, be prepared to download Chrome and use it.
- Internet connection speed: 5 Mbps download speed. Check your speed here.
- Functional webcam and microphone
- Zoom installed and configured

Confirm that your computer can stream video here

For the best experience:

- Close all unnecessary browser windows and tabs and programs
- Check your computer is free of viruses, malware, and spyware
- Clear the browser's cache before class (here's how.)

There are multiple computer labs (listed here) on campus if you do not have a personal computer or laptop.

Course Communication – Student communication will be conducted via the Announcements page on the course website, so please check the page daily. Students should use the instructor's email for communication.

Honor system for quizzes and assignments. By taking this class, you agree to abide by the University of Texas regulations concerning cheating. During the quizzes, you cannot receive help from others or discuss your assignments with other students. If you observe others cheating, you are honor bound to contact the instructor.

Information and data security. All exercises, quizzes, assignments, and online interactions over the TOWER system will be saved and stored. Information is kept for educational and general academic research. Any research or data sharing with other researchers will involve de-identifying the data, including the removal of names, EIDs, email addresses, or other information.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The assessments for the course will consist of module quizzes and midterm exams. There will be no final exam. Make-up exams will be granted only for medical emergencies with a doctor's note. Those unable to meet the requirements of the class on the dates set should not take the course. Grades will be assigned as follows:

First Exam	25%
Second Exam	25%
Third Exam	25%
Quizzes	25%

Exams

Exams will be administered through Canvas using *Proctorio*. Exam format will be multiple choice and true/false questions. Students will have 75 minutes to complete each exam.

Please be sure that you have access to a high-speed internet connection and a secure, distraction-free setting to take the exams. The exams will be timed and closed book.

The three exams are NOT cumulative. The first will cover the readings and lecture material for course modules 0 through 8; and the War in Ukraine modules 1 and 2. The second exam will cover material from course modules 9 through 14; and the War in Ukraine module 3. The third exam will cover material from course modules 15 through 21; and War in Ukraine modules 4 and 5. Please note the dates and times of these exams and make sure that you are able to attend all exams.

Exam conflicts: Students that have a legitimate conflict with the scheduled testing *day or time* can request an alternative time slot. All requests for alternative exam periods must be approved

in advance. Please provide documentation of the conflict (e.g. a screenshot of your schedule on the registrar's page, an email from a supervisor) along with your request for an alternative testing period. Legitimate conflicts include religious holidays; childcare responsibilities; work; and a conflicting class, exam, or lab. The format of the makeup exam may differ significantly, including some identification terms and short essay questions.

Exam proctoring: Proctorio, an online proctoring tool, will be used for the three exams. Students are required to have a webcam (USB or internal) with a microphone and a stable internet connection. Students must use the Google Chrome browser with Proctorio. During exams, Proctorio will record the testing environment, therefore students should select private spaces for the exam session where disruptions are unlikely and where recording devices can be enabled. To insure exam integrity, during the exam period Proctorio will lock down a number of your computer's capabilities, including locking down your browser and disabling new internet tabs, disabling printing, disabling the clipboard, disabling the right click feature on the mouse (to prevent copying and pasting activities), forcing full screen in the browser window to prevent the exam participant from accessing outside programs, and clearing the memory cache of temporary internet files to prevent retention and redistribution of exam materials.

Please note that Proctorio has been vetted by UT's Information Security Office (ISO) and is FERPA compliant (meaning your recording is secure and private). If you wish to uninstall it after each quiz/exam, simply right-click the Proctorio shield, select Manage Extensions, and then click Remove Extension.

Additionally, Proctorio also complies with the “right to be forgotten” laws. This means students can send an email to Proctorio and have any and all data associated with them deleted after the semester ends. You can learn more about Proctorio's privacy policies and how to contact them here.

Instructions for Proctorio use will be provided. You will also complete a non-graded practice quiz as part of your pre-class activities modules to ensure you have correctly enabled Proctorio and can use it successfully.

Quizzes

Quizzes will be administered after every lecture module and after every War in Ukraine module. **Quizzes are due by 11:59 PM CST on the day listed in the syllabus.** After 11:59 PM, quizzes will close. Because material is available in advance of due dates and students are free to complete these activities on their own timeline, students will **NOT** be able to make up any points because of a missed deadline.

Quizzes will be multiple-choice and true/false format and administered through Canvas. Students are expected to complete the quizzes on your own. We will monitor this via cheating detection software. Quizzes are designed to reinforce the material you have just learned and help your grade so long as you keep up with the material throughout the semester. Students are allowed to access lecture material, lecture slides, and readings during quizzes.

Students' **four** lowest quiz grades will be dropped, no questions asked. This policy is designed to accommodate any potential conflicts that arise for you. There are no makeups for missed quizzes.

REQUIRED READING/OTHER MATERIALS:

Required readings and other materials (videos and podcasts) will be available on Canvas.

There are no required textbooks.

GRADING POLICY:

Letter grades for the course will be based on the following scale. Please note that we already take into consideration rounding by setting the bottom threshold at .5 lower than normal (e.g. 92.5 rather than 93 for an A). Grades will NOT be bumped.

A	92.5-100%
A-	89.5-92.49%
B+	86.5-89.49%
B	82.5-86.49%
B-	79.5-82.49%
C+	76.5-79.49%
C	72.5-76.49%
C-	69.5-72.49%
D	59.5-69.49%
F	Below 59.49%

ACCOMODATIONS:

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at (512) 471-6259, (512) 410-6644 (video phone). If you have approved accommodations for exams, please contact the instructor directly.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

By taking this class you agree to uphold the University's Honor Code:

"As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity."

Each student is expected to maintain absolute integrity and a high standard of individual honor in scholastic work undertaken at the University, including:

- acknowledge the contributions of other sources to your scholastic efforts;
- complete your assignments independently unless expressly authorized to seek or obtain assistance in preparing them;
- follow instructions for assignments and exams, and observe the standards of your academic discipline; and
- avoid engaging in any form of academic dishonesty on behalf of yourself or another student.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. A violation of the course policy may include (but is not limited to):

- Providing your UT EID to any other person
- Collaborating or sharing information with another person on any quiz, assessment, or assignment
- Using unauthorized materials or sources of information on an assessment
- Recording or capturing any quiz, assessment, or assignment material in any format
- The public (such that it can be viewed by more than one person) posting of any form of a test bank or group of questions from any assignment
- Distributing any course material without explicit permission from the instructor
- Failing to properly cite language, ideas, data, or arguments that are not originally yours

For more information, please visit the [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website](#).

The online course format allows for multiple methods of identity verification, collusion, collaboration and plagiarism monitoring and detection. If you observe cheating in any manner, you are honor bound to contact the instructor. Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and / or dismissal from the University.

Students often join social media platforms where work product is shared. While we do not prohibit you from joining such groups, we will hold **ALL** members of a social media group responsible for any form of academic dishonesty. Be very careful about joining such groups.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:

A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

TITLE IX REPORTING:

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Faculty and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that we **must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with us, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit titleix.utexas.edu or contact the Title IX Office.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

(note that all quizzes are due by 11:59 CST on the day they are assigned)

I. The Soviet Union and Its Collapse

Thursday, June 1

Course Module 0: Course Introduction

F. Fukuyama, “Why Ukraine Will Win,” *Journal of Democracy*, September 2022.

Quiz - Course Module 0

Friday, June 2

Course Module 1: The 1917 Bolshevik Revolution

R. Suny, *The Soviet Experiment*, Ch. 2 (The Double Revolution)

Quiz - Course Module 1

Monday, June 5

Course Module 2: Leninism

S. Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Ch. 2 (The Lenin Years and the Succession Struggle)

Quiz - Course Module 2

War in Ukraine Module #1

Quiz - War in Ukraine Module #1

Tuesday, June 6

Module 3: Stalinism I

S. Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Ch. 3 (Stalinism)

Vox video, “How Stalin Starved Ukraine.” [Link here](#)

Quiz - Course Module 3

Wednesday, June 7

Course Module 4: Stalinism II

R. Suny, *The Soviet Experiment*, Ch. 11 (Building Stalinism)

Quiz - Course Module 4

Thursday, June 8

Course Module 5: Post-Stalinism: Khrushchev

S. Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Ch. 4 (War and its Aftermath) and Ch. 5 (From Collective Leadership to Khrushchev).

Quiz - Course Module 5

Friday June 9

Course Module 6: Brezhnev and the Rise of Gorbachev

R. Suny, *The Soviet Experiment*, Ch. 19 (The Paradoxes of Brezhnev's Long Reign).

Quiz - Course Module 6

Monday, June 12

Course Module 7: Gorbachev and Soviet Reforms

S. Fitzpatrick, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union*, Ch. 3 (The Fall)

Quiz - Course Module 7

War in Ukraine Module #2

Quiz - War in Ukraine Module #2

Tuesday, June 13

Course Module 8: Explaining the Soviet Collapse

M. Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy*, Ch. 13.

A. Dallin, "Causes of the Collapse of the USSR," *Post-Soviet Affairs* (1992), pp. 279-302.

J. Hough, *Democratization and Revolution in the USSR*, Ch. 15.

Quiz - Course Module 8

Wednesday, June 14

EXAM #1, 7:00 – 8:15 PM

Exam covers Introduction, Course Modules 0-8, War in Ukraine Modules #1 and #2

II. Russia's Post-Communist Experience Under Yeltsin

Thursday, June 15

Course Module 9: Yeltsin Era I – The First Russian Republic

M. McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, Ch. 5 (The Failure of the First Russian Republic)

Quiz - Course Module 9

Friday, June 16

Course Module 10: Yeltsin Era II – The Second Russian Republic

M. McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, Ch. 6 (Designing the Institutions of the Second Russian Republic)

Quiz - Course Module 10

Monday, June 19

Juneteenth Holiday -- No assignments

Tuesday, June 20

Course Module 11: Elections Under Yeltsin

M. McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, Ch. 8 (Transitional Electoralism)

Quiz - Course Module 11

War in Ukraine Module #3

Quiz - War in Ukraine Module #3

Wednesday, June 21

Course Module 12: Economic Reform Under Yeltsin

D. Treisman, *The Return*, Ch. 6 (The Transformation)

Quiz - Course Module 12

Thursday, June 22

Course Module 13: The Debate over NATO Expansion (and its impact on the war in Ukraine)

Readings: J. Mearsheimer, “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin,” *Foreign Affairs* (2014): 77–89.

M. McFaul and S. Sestanovich, (2014). “Faulty Powers: Who Started the Ukraine Crisis,” *Foreign Affairs* (2014), 167-178.

Quiz - Course Module 13

Friday, June 23

Module 14: The End of the Yeltsin Era and the Emergence of Vladimir Putin

M. Gessen, *The Man Without a Face: The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin*, Ch. 1 (The Accidental President) and Ch. 2 (The Election War).

Quiz - Course Module 14

Monday, June 26

EXAM #2, 7:00 – 8:15 PM

Exam covers Modules 9 through 14, War in Ukraine Module #3

Tuesday, June 27

Module 15: Putin and Putinism

M.S. Fish, “What is Putinism?” *Journal of Democracy* (2017): 61-75.

G. Robertson and S. Greene. “The Kremlin Emboldened: How Putin Wins Support,” *Journal of Democracy* (2017): 86–100.

Quiz - Course Module 15

War in Ukraine Module #4

Quiz - War in Ukraine Module #4

Wednesday, June 28

Course Module 16: Authoritarian Elections Under Putin

M. S. Fish, *Democracy Derailed in Russia*, Ch. 3 (Symptoms of the Failure of Democracy)

Quiz - Course Module 16

Thursday, June 29

Course Module 17: Russian Public Opinion and Putinism

R. Rose and N. Munro, and W. Mishler, "Resigned Acceptance of an Incomplete Democracy: Russia's Political Equilibrium," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 20 (2004): 195-218.

H. Hale, "The Myth of Mass Russian Support for Autocracy," *Europe-Asia Studies* 63 (2011): 1357-1375.

Quiz - Course Module 17

Friday, June 30

Course Module 18: Russia as a Petrostate (and how it affects the war in Ukraine)

"How Germany's Approach to Russia Backfired," *NY Times The Daily*, April 8, 2022.
[Link here](#)

Quiz - Course Module 18

Monday, July 3

Module 19: Russian Foreign Policy Under Putin

D. Trenin, "20 Years of Vladimir Putin: How Russian Foreign Policy Has Changed," *Moscow Times*, August 28, 2019.

M. Menkiszak, "The Putin Doctrine: The Formation of a Conceptual Framework for Russian Dominance in the Post-Soviet Area," *OSW Commentary*, Centre for Eastern Studies (2014).

Quiz - Course Module 21

War in Ukraine Module #5

Quiz - War in Ukraine Module #5

Tuesday, July 4

Independence Day Holiday -- No assignments

Wednesday, July 5

Course Module 20: US-Russian Relations Under Putin

Documentary: *PBS Frontline: Putin and the Presidents* [Link here](#)

Quiz - Course Module 20

Thursday, June 6

Course Module 21: US Foreign Policy, Russia, and the Ukraine War

A. Rasmussen and others, “Revisiting U.S. Grand Strategy After Ukraine,” *Foreign Policy*, Sept. 2, 2022

Quiz - Course Module 21

Friday, July 7

EXAM #3, 7:00 – 8:15 PM

Exam covers Modules 15 through 21, War in Ukraine Modules #4 and #5