

College of Arts and Sciences
Center for International Programs (CIP)
Oakland University

International Studies 2600

Perspectives on Russia and Eastern Europe

Fall 2018

Instructor: Janusz Wrobel, Ph.D. **E-mail:** wrobel@oakland.edu

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 am – 11:47 am

Class Place: 374 South Foundation Hall

Office Hours: By appointment only

Course Catalog Description: An interdisciplinary study of the peoples of Russia and East/Central Europe and their traditional and modern civilizations.

**This class satisfies the General Education requirements
in the Global Perspective area.**

Course prerequisites: None

Welcome to IS 2600 class!

Welcome to IS 2600. The purpose of this course is to acquaint students with Russian and Central/Eastern European civilizations and to present the history of communism, one of the deadliest totalitarian ideologies in the history of the world. The course will have an interdisciplinary character and will consider, among other disciplines, geography, history, culture and religion, social and political structures and finally, the elements of business protocol when dealing with the Russians and people from Central/Eastern Europe. Mr. Andrew Young, the former UN Ambassador, once stated: "We're running a \$170 billion trade deficit essentially because the captains of American industry don't know how to deal with people who are different."

Though not exclusively, the presentation and material will focus on the modern period. The reason for this approach lies in the extraordinary chance

which today's world offers to us -- we were witnesses to the fall of communism and its empire, the USSR, and to the rise of freedom, and now, fifteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, we are observing how new democracies are struggling to survive. They are facing social discontent with capitalist economic policies adopted by the post-communist governments, they must deal with communist legacy that is haunting social consciousness, and in some cases, they exercise only a limited freedom because it is either overshadowed by tribal nationalism or by the autocratic, non-democratic manners of their political leaders.

In 1849, just one year after the Spring of the Nations, Russian writer, Herzen, wrote:

The demise of present forms of social life should be a source of joy rather than an anxious contemplation. It is alarming, however, that the departing world leaves behind not only an heir but a pregnant widow. Between the death of one and the birth of the other, much water will pass under the bridge, a long night of chaos and emptiness.

To paraphrase G. Herling-Grudzinski, we can say that we know that just as well in the year of 2018 as A. Herzen did in 1849.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

1. Student will demonstrate knowledge of environments, political systems, economies, societies and religions of one of more regions outside the United States and awareness of the transnational flow of goods, peoples, ideas and values.
2. Student will demonstrate knowledge of the role that different cultural heritages, past and present, playing forming values in another part of the world, enabling the student to function within a more global context.

Cross-cutting Capacity: Social awareness, Critical thinking.

Course Objectives:

1. Students should gain an introductory familiarity with the civilization of Russia and East/Central Europe, via an overview of geography, history and traditional culture, including religion, arts and social institutions. They should become aware of Russian and East/Central European major contributions to world civilization.
2. Students should acquire a basic knowledge of political, economic and social problems the Russian and East/Central European people face as they encounter our contemporary world.

3. In conjunction with the first two objectives, students should develop an awareness of how Russian and East/Central European distinctive social and cultural traditions and particular historical experience have shaped the current patterns of thought and activity of the people of the region.
4. Students should indicate the sources of communist ideology, principals of Marxism, its initial appeal, circumstances of its implementation and its outcomes including the devastating influence that communism had on Europe in the 20th century. Recognize the factors that led to the demise of communism, and the ways it took place in particular European countries.
5. Students should analyze the gains and pains being experienced by the former communist states on their road to democracy and a free market economy

Required Texts:

1. ***Russia. A Short History***, Abraham Ascher. Oxford: Oneworld, 2009, ISBN: 978-1-85168-613-1,
2. ***Culture Smart! Russia***, Anna King, London: Kuperard, 2008, ISBN: 978-1-85733-352-7,
3. ***Revolution 1989. The Fall of the Soviet Empire***, Victor Sebestyen. New York: Pantheon Books, 2009, ISBN: 978-0-375-42532-5,
4. ***The Rebirth of East Europe. Fourth Edition***, Michael G. Roskin. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002, ISBN: 0-13-034120-7.
5. ***A Guided Tour Through the Museum of Communism***, Slavenka Drakulic. London: Penguin Books, 2011, ISBN: 978-0-14-311863-3,
6. ***Class Packet***. Available from <http://www.dollarbillcopying.com/>.
7. ***Weekly reading*** of a newspaper or Internet for news about the Russian Commonwealth and Central/Eastern Europe. Any additional newspapers, magazines, CNN and C-SPAN programs, and the Web Sites on the Internet devoted to the region, are welcome as a source of knowledge. Articles should be discussed on Moodle Forum then brought to the class, and after discussion submitted to the instructor.

To buy your textbooks visit:

[Oakland University Bookstore](#) - lower level of the [Oakland Center](#), Tel. (248) 370-2404

You can order your textbooks on-line as well. The following is the website for the OU bookstore:

<http://oakland.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/BNCBHomePage?storeId=13551&catalogId=10001>

You can find the text information on this website for all your courses at OU. Books are processed by the OU bookstore in 48 hours and then there is a choice of shipping types which could take up to another 8 days.

[OU Student Congress Book Swap](#) Room 62 [Oakland Center](#) Tel. (248) 370-4294

To buy your Class Packet visit:



<http://www.dollarbillcopying.com/>

Tel.: (734) 665-9200 or Toll-free: (877) 738-9200

You can order it on-line or by phone. The coursepack will be shipped by UPS, directly to your address.

I. Course General Requirements:

Student will be responsible for the following:

1. Required readings.
2. The material presented in class.
3. Participation in class discussions when attend the class (newspaper articles should be submitted to the instructor every session except for days when quizzes and tests are due).

4. **Two map quizzes.** They are due on **Monday, October 16** and on **Monday, November 20**. Students are responsible for an 882 E Scantron sheet that is available in the OU Bookstore.
5. **Two tests.** The tests are due on **Monday, October 23** and on **Friday, December 1**. Students are responsible for an 882 E Scantron sheet.

Attendance Policy: Class attendance is strongly encouraged.

Important: **Cellular phones and other beepers must be turned off in class. No open laptops are allowed in class.**

II. Moodle Online homework:

Ten essays at least 600 word long each, divided into paragraphs, discussing the ten topics included in the syllabus, posted to Moodle Forums. Important: copy your essay and paste posting directly to the forum - do not post as attachment! For their due dates (**Important: All postings must be submitted no later than on Monday, before 11:55 PM!**) see *Class Schedule, Topical Outline and Reading Assignments*.

Ten, double, news articles synopses at least 200 word long each, posted to Moodle Forums. Important: copy your essay and paste posting directly to the forum - do not post as attachment! For their due dates (**Important: All postings must be submitted no later than on Monday, before 11:55 PM!**) see *Class Schedule, Topical Outline and Reading Assignments*.

Moodle address: <https://moodle.oakland.edu/moodle/login/index.php>

If you are having what you perceive to be a **technical problem** with your computer hardware or software, or the WebCT system, you should contact the Online Learning support team:

Moodle Support - Request Help - Moodle Support Request Form

If you are a student having a problem with Moodle, you can request support here:

<http://www2.oakland.edu/elis/help.cfm?LMS=2>

Simply fill out the form and click on submit. Fields in **red** are required. When you submit, the request will be stamped into our tracking database and e-mailed to the support staff.

Note: To get immediate help, call (248) 805-1625 weekdays 8 am to 8 pm and 8 am to 1 pm on Saturdays.

Make sure you provide as much detail as possible when contacting the support team; they won't be able to help you unless you give them a clear idea of what the problem is. Questions regarding course content or policy should be directed to the instructor.

Grade Determination

The following grading scale will be the basis to convert final averages (%) to OU's 4.0 grade system (100%--4.0, 90%--3.5, 80%--3.0, 70%--2.0, 60%--1.0, under 60%, 0.0.)

The determination of grades results from the course instructor's evaluation of the student's progress and accomplishments according to all criteria listed below:

40% or 160 points - two tests (up to 80 points each) *
30% or 120 points - ten essays posted to Moodle (up to 12 points each) *
20% or 80 points - two map quizzes (up to 40 points each) *
10% or 40 points - twenty news articles synopses posted to Moodle (up to 2 points each) *
Total: **100%** or 400 points.

***The cut score on quizzes and tests is 60%, it means that anything above that is a passing grade and anything below that is a failing grade.**

There are NO (0) points granted for failed quizzes and tests.

Grading criteria:

To receive full credit for your essay, it must meet the following criteria:

1. is an original work of the author;
2. is relevant and addresses the topic;
3. adequately states and defends its author's argument;
4. uses correct grammar and spelling;
5. is divided into paragraphs;
6. is submitted before the deadline;
7. consists of at least 600 words.

If an essay fulfills the first 6 criteria, it will be graded in the following way:

Amount of words	Grade
100	2
200	4
300	6
400	8
500	10
600 or more	12

Two article synopses will be graded in the following way:

Amount of words	Grade
100	2
200 or more	4

By the eighth week of class students whose academic progress is unsatisfactory will be provided with mid-term evaluations. Only those students who are making unsatisfactory progress will be notified. In other words, students who will **not** receive a “U” notice are making satisfactory progress in this course but must continue to perform at or above their current level to maintain that status.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will be penalized in accordance the school policies: **Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to an environment of academic integrity and respect for the educational process and the safety and well being of all members of the community. Adherence to the Student Code of Conduct will be expected; violations of this code will be reported to the Dean of Students. The Code of Academic and Student Conduct can be found at**

<http://www2.oakland.edu/deanofstudents/handbook/conduct.cfm>.

Below are examples of academic dishonesty in our class. Students, faculty or staff who know of possible academic violations are expected to report the alleged violation to the Dean of Students Office. The report will include a brief written statement and relevant evidence (original material when available). A copy of this report with supporting evidence is given to the accused student as the statement of the charge. When appropriate, the faculty member will issue a grade of Incomplete until the academic conduct matter has been resolved.

1. Cheating on assignments and examinations. This includes, but is not limited to, the following when not authorized by the instructor: the use of any assistance or materials such as books and/or notes, acquiring exams or any other academic materials, the use of any other sources in writing drafts, papers, preparing reports, solving problems, works completed for a past or concurrent course, completing homework or carrying out other assignments. No student shall copy from someone else's work or help someone else copy work or substitute another's work as one's own. No student shall engage in any behavior specifically prohibited by an instructor in the course syllabus or class discussion.
2. Plagiarizing the work of others. Plagiarism is using someone else's work or ideas without giving that person credit. By doing this, a student is, in effect, claiming credit for someone else's thinking. This can occur in drafts, papers and oral presentations. Whether the student has read or heard the information used, the student must document the source of information. When dealing with written sources, a clear distinction should be made between quotations, which reproduce information from the source word-for-word within quotation marks, and paraphrases, which digest the source of information and produce it in the student's own words. Both direct quotations and paraphrases must be documented. Even if a student rephrases, condenses or selects from another person's work, the ideas are still the other person's and failure to give credit constitutes misrepresentation of the student's actual work and plagiarism of another's ideas. Buying a paper or using information from the Internet without attribution and handing it in as one's own work is plagiarism.
3. Unauthorized collaboration on assignments. This is unauthorized interaction with anyone in the fulfillment of academic requirements and applies to in-class or take-home coursework. Individual (unaided) work on exams, homework, computer assignments and documentation of sources is expected unless the instructor specifically states in the syllabus or verbally that it is not necessary. Collaboration can also include calculating homework problems with another person, having another help to rewrite a paper, sharing information/sources with others and checking coursework with others.
4. Completion of original work. When an instructor assigns coursework, the instructor intends that work to be completed for his/her course only. Work students may have completed for a course taken in the past, or may be completing for a concurrent course, must not be submitted in both courses unless they receive permission to do so from both faculty members.

Extra Credit

A student can also obtain **twelve** additional extra points for becoming/bringing a guest speaker to the class.

Policy on Late Assignments and Make-up Tests

Tests: No make-ups. **If you miss both tests you receive 0.0 for the course.**

Quizzes: No make-ups.

Essays: Done on day assigned.

Exceptions will be made only in extenuating circumstances and prior approval from the instructor will be necessary.

Class Schedule, Topical Outline and Reading Assignments:

Week	Tuesdays	Thursdays	Mondays, 11:55 PM
Week 1		Sept. 6	Sept. 10
Week 2	Sept. 11	Sept. 13	Sept. 17
Week 3	Sept. 18	Sept. 20	Sept. 24 Essay I and Articles' Synopsis 1 & 2 due
Week 4	Sept. 25	Sept. 27	Oct. 1 Essay II and Articles' Synopsis 3 & 4 due
Week 5	Oct. 2	Oct. 4	Oct. 8 Essay III and Articles' Synopsis 5 & 6 due
Week 6	Oct. 9	Oct. 11 Map Quiz on Russia Due	Oct. 15 Essay IV and Articles' Synopsis 7 & 8 due
Week 7	Oct. 16	Oct. 18 Test #1 Due	Oct. 22

Week 8	Oct. 23	Oct. 25	Oct. 29 Essay V and Articles' Synopsis 9 & 10 due
Week 9	Oct. 30	Nov. 1	Nov. 5 Essay VI and Articles' Synopsis 11 & 12 due
Week 10	Nov. 6	Nov. 8	Nov. 12 Essay VII and Articles' Synopsis 13 & 14 due
Week 11	Nov. 13	Nov. 15	Nov. 19
Week 12	Nov. 20	Nov. 22 No class - Thanksgiving	Nov. 26 Essay VIII and Articles' Synopsis 15 & 16 due
Week 13	Nov. 27 Map Quiz on Central/Eastern Europe Due	Nov. 29 Test #2 Due	Dec. 3 Essay IX and Articles' Synopsis 17 & 18
Week 14	Dec. 4	Dec. 6	Dec. 10 Essay X and Articles' Synopsis 19 & 20 due

Part I: FROM RUSSIA TO RUSSIA

- Week 1** **A. Introduction to Russia and Cultural I.Q. Test**
B. Geography of the Russian Commonwealth
Reading: **Ascher, Chapter 1-2, King, Chapter 1.**
- Week 2** **From Riurik to Nicholas II**
Reading: **Ascher, Chapter 3-4, King, Chapter 2-3, and Class Packet, pp. 3-11.**

- Week 3** **A. The Principals of Marxism**
 B. Marxism in Practice (1953 - 1985)
Reading: *Ascher, Chapter 5-6, King, Chapter 4-5, Sebestyen, 1, 6, 8, 9, and Class Packet, p. 12.*
Topic I: Discuss the principles of Marxism.
- Week 4** **Reforms Attempted and Aborted:**
 from Imperial to Revolutionary Russia
Reading: *Ascher, Chapter 7, King, Chapter 6.*
Topic II: Discuss the reasons for the downfall of the Russian empire in the year of 1917.
- Week 5** **A. "We Are All up to Our Elbows in Blood":**
 Stalinism (1927 - 1953)
Reading: *Ascher, Chapter 8, King, Chapter 7.*
Topic III: Life under Stalinist terror.
- Week 6** **A. The Last Man Who Believed that Communism Was**
 Reformable: Gorbachev Era (1985 - 1991)
 B. Russian Contribution to World Civilization in Arts and
 Sciences
 C. Map Quiz on Russia
Reading: *Ascher, Chapter 9, King, Chapter 8, Sebestyen, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 43, 45 and Class Packet, p. 13-15.*
Topic IV: Russian Contribution to World Civilization in Arts and Sciences
- Week 7** **A. History of the Present: Contemporary Social, Political**
 and Economic Issues in the Post-Soviet Russia
 B. Cultural Values in Russia
 C. Test #1
Reading: *King, Chapter 9, Class Packet, p. 32-40, Drakulic, Part III & V, and Online course material.*

Part II: EAST/CENTRAL EUROPE

„War is peace, freedom is slavery, ignorance is strength.” /Orwell/

- Week 8** **A. Introduction to East/Central Europe**
 B. The Polish Struggles with Communism

Reading: Sebestyen, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 23, 28, 33, 37, 39, 41, Roskin, Introduction, 1, 3, 4, 5, Drakulic, Part IV, and Class Packet, pp. 16-17 and 25.

Topic V: The Polish contribution to the collapse of communism in Europe.

**Week 9 Why Did the Central/Eastern Europeans Hate Socialism?
- The Hungarian Case-Study**

Reading: Sebestyen, 14, 26, 38, 40, Roskin, 6, Drakulic, Part VI, and Class Packet, pp. 28-31.

Topic VI: How Was Communism Buried in Hungary?

Week 10 Two Czechoslovakian Revolutions

Reading: Sebestyen, 7, 22, 27, 47, Finale, Roskin, 7, Drakulic, Part I.

Topic VII: From 1968 to 1989: The Czechoslovakian Road to Freedom.

**Week 11 A: The Phenomenon of Communostalgia or Why Do the
Central/Eastern Europeans Want Socialism Back?
B. Map Quiz on Central/Eastern Europe**

Reading: Class Packet, pp. 16-17 and 25.

**Week 12 Agonizing Yugoslavia: A Nightmare of Deadly
Freedom**

Reading: Roskin, 9, Drakulic, Part II & VIII, and Class Packet, p. 18 and 18a.

Topic VIII: Discuss the background of the Civil War in Yugoslavia.

**Week 13 A: Revolution, Blood and Tears - The Romanian Case
B: Test #2**

Reading: Sebestyen, Prologue, 16, 34, 48, Roskin, 8, Drakulic, Part VII.

Topic IX: Why Was the Romanian Revolution Bloody and Not as Successful as in Other Central/Eastern European Countries?

**Week 14 Paradoxes of Freedom: Gains and Pains of
Transformation**

Reading: Sebestyen, Introduction, 1, 18, 36, 46, Roskin, 10, and Class Packet, pp. 26-27.

Topic X: Write your own review of the book "A Guided Tour Through the Museum of Communism" by S. Drakulic

CULTURAL IQ TEST

Americans are (check one)	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disagree</u>
1. Outgoing, friendly	_____	_____	_____
2. Informal	_____	_____	_____
3. Loud, rude, boastful, immature	_____	_____	_____
4. Hard-working	_____	_____	_____
5. Extravagant, wasteful	_____	_____	_____
6. Confident they have all answers	_____	_____	_____
7. Disrespectful of authority	_____	_____	_____
8. Racially prejudiced	_____	_____	_____
9. Ignorant of other countries	_____	_____	_____
10. Wealthy	_____	_____	_____
11. Generous	_____	_____	_____
12. Always in hurry	_____	_____	_____

Circle True of False:

1. The fact that America was able to place a man on the moon proves America's technological superiority. **True False**
2. Foreigners going to live in a new country should give up their foreign ways and adapt to the new country as quickly as possible. **True False**
3. Asians do many things backwards. **True False**
4. Much of the world's population does not take enough initiative to develop themselves; therefore, they remain "underdeveloped." **True False**
5. English should be accepted as the universal language of the world. **True False**
6. Americans have been very generous in teaching other people how to do things the right way. **True False**
7. People living in undeveloped countries have not yet reached the higher stages of civilization. **True False**
8. Minority members of any population should be expected to conform to the costumes and values of majority. **True False**
9. The sooner the whole world learns to do things the way we do, the sooner all the people of the world will be able to understand each other better. **True False**