

IS 2600 PERSPECTIVES ON RUSSIA



“Three Bogatyrs” (1898) by Viktor Vaznetsov

"Scanning the horizon....."

Course Description:

"Russia is a great and rich country, yet serious material deficiencies exist." The paradox of this statement reflects the mystique, which this country embodies, and one with which it wrestles daily. Throughout its history Russia has remained a mystery to the world, viewed by many outsiders as backward and aloof. The attitudes, the mentality of people and, more specifically, the individual human being in mass society are not understood.

This course will examine the intellectual, ideological, cultural, social, and political changes that have evolved throughout the centuries. To comprehend Russia today, it is important to understand its history. Its future, however, depends on the ability of its people to overcome the deeply rooted political and economic obstacles of its heritage.

**IS 2600 satisfies the Global Perspective AND Writing Intensive categories
of the General Education requirements**

Course Objectives:

- *To provide an overview and understanding of the Russian culture;*
- *To trace the development of key characteristics of the Russian culture i.e., nation-building, leadership models, identity, efforts to reform;*
- *To underscore the cycles, paradoxes and repetitions in Russia's development and evolution;*
- *To examine specific events in history that had a significant impact on Russia.*

Course Outline:

This course has 13 units online. Individual units include course materials, assignments, PowerPoint Presentations, video, and/or audio excerpts. These units become available according to the schedule below. I realize that some of you may not have immediate access to the technology necessary to view or hear these materials. The *Downloads* page of the syllabus includes website addresses where this technology is available. These references may be downloaded **FREE!**

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Date Opens</u>	<u>Unit Title</u>
1	(09/04/2018)	Introduction to course; Landmass
2	(09/13/2018)	Mother Russia
3	(09/20/2018)	Who's in Control
4	(09/27/2018)	Ruler to Ruled
5	(10/04/2018)	Crisis in Identity
6	(10/11/2018)	Popular Persuasion
7	(10/18/2018)	National Composition
8	(10/25/2018)	Shifting Focus
9	(11/01/2018)	Change in Conscience
10	(11/08/2018)	Intellectual Movements
11	(11/15/2018)	In Search of a Market
12	(11/29/2018)	Confronting Communism
13	(12/06/2018)	Coping with Change

Methods of Evaluation

Quizzes (40%)

There are **four (4) internet quizzes**, which evaluate the student's understanding of course materials. Quizzes will reside in Moodle to which each student registered in the course will have access. Each quiz is timed (**30 minutes/quiz**) and students can log into the quiz *one time only*. Each quiz has a submission deadline. Quizzes represent 40% of a student's grade. Access to the results and feedback for each quiz occurs once the availability period for the quiz expires.

Unit Question Assignments (24%)

The purpose of the question assignments is to help students focus on the key topics and/or issues presented in respective course unit materials. There are **eight (8) question assignments**. Each assignment is worth 3%.

Assignments (21%)

There are a total of seven (7) internet assignments interspersed throughout the course. Each assignment has a specific focus and instructions. Students are to follow the instructions for each assignment. Each assignment is worth 3%.

Critical Reflection Paper (15%)

Students will write **one (1)** critical reflection paper. Paper expectations are 4 – 6 pages in length. The paper is divided into the following components, **each with its own specific deadline:** The instructor must approve all topics for the team project no later than **Sunday September 23, 2018!!**

- Paper topic selection (**Due by 11:50 PM Sunday September 23, 2018!**)
- Outline for paper (**Due by 11:50 PM Sunday October 14, 2018!**)
- Annotated bibliography of resource materials (**Due by 11:50 PM Sunday October 28, 2018!**)
- Paper for Peer Review deadline (**Due by 11:50 PM Sunday November 18, 2018!**)
- Peer review of paper (**Due by 11:50 PM Wednesday November 21, 2018!**)
- Final version of paper (**Due by 11:50 PM Sunday December 2, 2018!**)

Grading for the critical reflection paper is based on the following components:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| • peer review | 5% out of 15% |
| • final paper | <u>10% out of 15%</u> |
| TOTAL | 20% out of 20% |

[I will send out more explicit directions on the paper topic once topics are known. I will also assign you one (1) other person whose paper you will review.]

Potential Paper Topics

- *How open or restricted is the media in Russia today?*
- *To what extent does Russia use propaganda today?*
- *How has the standard of living changed in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991?*
- *To what extent has the political system in Russia evolved? Is the political system more democratic? Less democratic? Does it truly represent its people?*

- How does Russia's contemporary defense structure compare with that of the Soviet era (pre-1991)
- Has Russia's identity (how Russians view their country) changed since the 1990s?
- Has the West's perception of Russia changed since the 1990s?
- What is the impact of corruption in Russia today?

The above list of paper topics is NOT all-inclusive. The instructor entertains and encourages suggestions for other topics. Please submit any additional topics you wish to explore to me **no later than Sunday September 23, 2018!**

Course Unit Question – 8 @ 3%	24%
Internet Assignments – 7 @ 3%	21%
Critical Reflection Paper – 1 @ 15%	15%
Individual Unit Quizzes – 10 @ % 5%	<u>40%</u>
TOTAL	100%

All assignments, quizzes and the critical reflection paper have deadline dates. Late work will NOT be accepted, so please do not wait until the last minute!

Technology, as we all know, occasionally experiences "hiccups". It would be unfortunate for you if the system went down and did not allow you to respond "by the deadline." I strongly encourage you to have a "back-up" plan in the event of a disruption in internet service or computer malfunction.

Grading Scale

I will use the following grading scale when assigning your final grade. In the interim you are to check your grades regularly. **You have one (1) week from the time I post your grade to question the grade assigned to you.** Once that week has past, I will make **NO** changes and the grade posted will stand.

	Grade	Honor Points
96 – 100	A	4.0
90 – 95	A-	3.7
87 – 89	B+	3.3
84 – 86	B	3.0
80 – 83	B-	2.7
77 – 79	C+	2.3
74 - 76	C	2.0
70 – 73	C-	1.7
67 – 69	D+	1.3
60 – 66	D	1.0
	F	0.0

Plagiarism

The policy at Oakland University about plagiarism is clear and published in the online version of the *Undergraduate Catalog, 2017-2018*, as quoted below:

"Plagiarizing from work of others. Plagiarism is using someone else's work or ideas without giving the other person credit; by doing this, a student is, in effect, claiming credit for someone else's thinking. Whether the student has read or heard the information he uses, the student must document the source of information. When dealing with written sources, a clear distinction would be made between quotations (which reproduce information from the source word-for-word within quotation marks) and paraphrases (which digest the source information and produce it in the student's own words). Both direct quotations and paraphrases must be documented. Just because 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. Naturally, buying a paper and handing it in as one's own work is plagiarism."

<https://oakland.edu/pace/policies-procedures>

Suggested references:

- [Kresge Library Course and Subject Guide to "IS2600: Perspectives on Russia"](#)
- Aron, Leon. **Roads to the Temple: Truth, Memory, Ideas and Ideals in the Making of the Russian Revolution, 1987 – 1991**. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2012.
- Aslund, Anders. **Russia's Capitalist Revolution: Why Market Reform Succeeded and Democracy Failed**. Washington, D. C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics. 2007.
- Baker, Peter and Susan Glasser. **Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution**. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 2005.
- Billington, James H. **The Face of Russia**. New York: TV Books. 1998.
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- English, Robert D. **Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals & The End of the Cold War**. New York: Columbia University Press. 200.
- Figes, Orlando. **Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia**. New York: Picador. 2002.
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- Gaidar, Yegor. **Collapse of an Empire: Lessons for Modern Russia.** Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution. 2007.
- Herspring, Dale R., ed. **Putin's Russia: Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain, 3rd ed.** New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007
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- Ledeneva, Alena V. **Can Russia Modernise? Sistema, power Networks and Informal Governance.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2013
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- Remick, David. **Resurrection: A Struggle for New Russia.** New York: Vintage Books. 1998.
- _____. **Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire.** New York: Random House. 1993.
- Satter, David. **It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened: Russia and the Communist Past.** New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2012.
- Shevtsova, Lilia. **Russia Lost in Transition: The Yelstsin and Putin Legacies.** Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007.
- _____. **Lonely Power: Why Russia Has Failed To Become the West, and the West....** Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010.
- _____ and Andrew Wood. **Change or Decay: Russia's Dilemma and the West's Response.** Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. 2011.