Welcome to Russian Politics! PSCI 3022 is an upper division political science course. This course covers a brief review of Soviet history, the Yeltsin era (in the 1990s), the Putin era (in the 2000s), Russia’s foreign policy, and how Russia compares to other countries today. Students are required to take a geography quiz, 2 midterm exams, and a final exam. Students are also asked to regularly participate in class, comment on current affairs articles on the Canvas website for the course, and write a policy brief.
Requirements
Your course grade will be based on the criteria listed below. Exams and assignments are graded on a standard 100 percentage point scale. Please pay attention to the relative weight of different course requirements as listed below.

The two biggest components of your grade are:
- 2 Midterm Exams 40% (20% each)
- In-Class Participation 25%

I also require several other assignments/exams/quizzes to enhance your learning:
- Policy Brief (includes online discussion) 15%
- Final Exam 10%
- Geography Quiz 5%
- Current Events Discussion on Canvas 5%
- Extra Credit Reaction Papers See more information below

Grading
I will use the scale below in assessing grades.

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Course Website
Our course website can be found at https://canvas.colorado.edu. I will use this website to post readings and information about the course. You should check this website regularly. You will also be required to comment on current affairs articles on this website (more information on this below in the section on “current events”). On a few days of class, you will be asked to watch a video lecture and complete other activities on Canvas.

Midterm Exams (worth 40% total; worth 20% each)
The two midterm exams will consist of multiple choice, identification, and short answer questions. I will provide more information in class on what you should expect on the exams. The midterm exams are not cumulative. On the final exam, you will be asked to answer 1 long essay question. This question will focus on the big questions we have focused on from week 13 onwards, but will also ask you to draw on information from the first part of the course.

In-Class Participation (worth 25%)
Your participation grade will be based on reading quizzes and in-class assignments. There is no subjective component (based on something like how often you speak in class) to your participation grade. There are no make-ups for the reading quizzes and in-class assignment because these are specifically intended to evaluate your participation in class. There will, however, be many of these throughout the semester (usually at least 1 a week, or more) so that missing just a few will not have a large negative impact on your grade. If you miss many of these, then there will, of course, be a larger impact on your final grade.
Policy Brief (15%)  
You are required to write a policy brief in which you explain a current issue related to Russian politics, take a position on what the Russian government should do, or take a position on what another government should do in relation to Russia. Your policy brief should be 3-pages, double-spaced, 12 point font, Times New Roman, and with 1" margins on all sides. Do not include an excessively space-consuming header to help fill up the 3 pages. You should plan on citing sources in your policy report. More detailed information will be provided in class. Don’t be fooled by the short length of the paper. You need to write 3 succinct, well-researched, and well-articulated pages. The short length should give you plenty of opportunity to research and revise these 3 pages.

Reminder: Don’t plagiarize – the penalty for plagiarizing in this class is failing the class. You will also be reported to the honor council at the University of Colorado. See the section on the Honor Code below.

Final Exam (worth 10%)  
The final exam will consist of 1 long essay question. If you attend class regularly, you will likely have a good idea about what this question will be.

Geography Quiz (worth 5%)  
There will be a geography quiz at the end of week 2 which tests your knowledge of the post-Soviet countries (including Russia, of course), country capitals, and major geographic features.

Current Events Discussion on Canvas (worth 5%)  
Keeping up with current events is an important part of our class. I will post articles on Canvas with current relevant news. On the class schedule on the syllabus, I have marked the days of class for which you should read and comment on these articles. You will be required to: 1) make 1 relevant comment about the articles, and 2) respond to 1 comment from someone else. Your comments should be relevant and reflect that you have read the articles. Please be polite in your comments and responses to others. Suggestions for topics or articles in which you are especially interested are very welcome!

Resources for Current News about Russia  
Current affairs will be regularly incorporated into class. In addition to the articles you are required to read and comment on, below I have listed some news sources about Russia including several which will give you a non-American perspective. Many people are surprised to find out how much accurate news and polling data are available about Russia in English on the web. Check it out!

- **Johnson’s Russia List**: This is an excellent way to read articles (in English) about what is going on in Russia from a variety of Russian, international, and American news sources. You can sign up for free daily news from Russian and international news sources from “Johnson’s Russia List” at [russialist.org](http://www.russialist.org). You can also check this website instead of receiving the stories by e-mail. Johnson’s Russia List includes articles from major news sources around the world and Russian newspapers. Russian-language articles have been translated into English which is a great advantage of this free service.

- **BBC**: The “Europe” web page of the BBC for news on Russia which can be found at: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/europe/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/europe/). Scan the BBC headlines for news on Russia and read any relevant articles. You can also search “Russia” from the BBC web page to find the most relevant news.
• RT: Formerly called Russia Today, RT is available at www.rt.com (click on the Russian Politics section). This is a Russian state-owned news source which provides news in English. In particular, you should note how the perspective is the same or different for reporting on the same events when reading the BBC versus Russia Today. It is also interesting to take a look at US news reported in Russia Today at www.rt.com/usa.

• PONARS Eurasia: At www.ponarseurasia.org, you can find regularly find news commentary from academic experts—based in the US, Europe, and Russia—about current events in Russia and other post-communist countries.

• Public Opinion Polls: Check out Putin’s approval ratings, and other important results of national polls (including attitudes towards the US) at Levada (a private polling company) (http://www.levada.ru/en/) and at the Russian Public Opinion Research center (a state-owned polling organization) (https://www.wciom.com/). Both have English versions of their websites.

Extra Credit
There is one opportunity for extra credit in this course. On the course schedule below, you will notice that there are sometimes optional readings for extra credit. These are interesting additional sources which are available if you are interested and may be helpful for your policy brief. If you are especially interested in a topic on the syllabus for which there are not recommended readings, please let me know and I may be able to recommend readings for extra credit. Some optional extra credit readings will be available on Canvas.

You should complete a recommended reading and write a two-page summary which: 1) briefly summarizes the content of the reading, and 2) gives your reaction & thoughts about the reading. Your response paper should relate to what we are covering in the course. You may complete 2 recommended readings for extra credit. Each recommended reading response you complete is worth 2 points on your final grade. You may only receive 1 extra credit point if the response paper does not summarize the reading correctly or does not give your reaction to the reading. To receive extra credit, you must submit an extra credit response paper on Canvas before the final day of class. Please do not submit paper copies of your extra credit. Instead, upload your extra credit in the appropriate folder on Canvas.

Required Books
Much of the required reading will be available on the Canvas website for our course.

Required:

Recommended (but not required):

Note about cost & buying books
New paperback copies of the Frye book should be about $30 and used copies should be a bit cheaper. There appear to be rental options for the Frye book with online vendors. You may wish to check out online vendors like Amazon and Chegg in addition the University bookstore. You will not need the Frye book until week 13 of the semester so you should have plenty of time to order it online.
Contacting Professor Sokhey
For the purposes of this class, I prefer to go by “Professor Sokhey” or “Dr. Sokhey”. I am available during my regular office hours (which are indicated at the top of the syllabus). I am also happy to make arrangements to meet with you at a time that is more convenient for your schedule. You are welcome to stop by at other times as I am typically in my office during the week from roughly 9am-5pm.

E-mail is the quickest and easiest way to contact me outside of class and I always make an effort to respond promptly. Please be polite and professional in your emails. Some questions are best answered in class (because many students will have the same question) or in person during office hours (because they require some explanation). In these cases, I may wait to address your question in class or indicate that we should arrange a time to talk.

Accommodations for Disabilities
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions under the Students tab on the Disability Services website.

Religious Holidays
Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, please make an effort to let me know as soon as possible before you need an accommodation and, preferably, at least a week before you need to arrange an accommodation. See the campus policy regarding religious observances for full details.

Classroom Behavior
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct.

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering a positive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, exploitation, harassment, dating or domestic violence, and stalking), discrimination, and harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, anonymous reporting, and the campus resources can be found on the OIEC website. Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.
**Honor Code**

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy (http://www.colorado.edu/policies/academic-integrity-policy) of the institution. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible of violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at http://honorcode.colorado.edu.

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own and should not be work you have submitted in any other course. No cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. **If I find that you have plagiarized, you will fail the course.** Plagiarism does not only include lifting text verbatim from another source and using it as your own, but includes paraphrasing a work and not properly citing it in your paper (i.e., using an idea or argument without proper attribution).

When considering whether or not to plagiarize, consider whether you are willing to fail the course and possibly face other university sanctions for doing so. If you are having difficulty completing course assignments, consider alternatives to cheating including contacting me (or your other instructors) for help. The consequences of turning in a poorly done assignment, or not turning in an assignment at all, are much less severe than plagiarizing.

**Extensions & Make-ups**

As a general rule, I will not grant any extensions or make-ups. All deadlines have been clearly marked on the course schedule and you should make note of them. In case of extreme emergency (such as serious illness), extensions and make-ups must be discussed with the instructor individually and will be arranged on a case-by-case basis contingent on proper documentation of any incident preventing the student from meeting the deadline.
Course Schedule

Most of the readings will be made available on the Canvas website for our course at https://canvas.colorado.edu. Please let me know prior to class if you have difficulty accessing any of the readings. Please see above for more information about the “optional reading for extra credit”.

The course is organized around 4 topics:

- Topic 1: Introduction & Background (Weeks 1 and 2)
- Topic 2: The Yeltsin Era (1990s) (Weeks 3-5)
- Topic 3: The Putin Era (2000s) (Weeks 6-10)
- Topic 4: Russia in Comparative Perspective (Weeks 12-16)

| Topic 1: Introduction & Background |

Week 1: Why study Russian politics? What’s going on in Russia today?

Monday, Jan. 14 - Welcome to Russian politics!

Wednesday, Jan. 16

Required reading

1) Thomas Remington, “State and Regime in Russia,” in Politics in Russia, 7th edition (chapter posted on Canvas)

Optional reading for extra credit


Friday, Jan. 18 – Current Events & Post-Communist Geography

Required reading

1) Read & comment on current events article (or articles) on Canvas before class time. Note that suggestions are always welcome for current news articles related to Russia that you would like to read about and discuss in class. Many of these articles will be from a variety of Russian-language news sources (but will, of course, be posted in English).

Week 2: A Quick Look at the Soviet System

Monday, Jan. 21 – No Class, Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Wednesday, Jan. 23 – GEOGRAPHY QUIZ IN CLASS

Required Reading

Friday, Jan. 25
Required Reading
2) Read & Comment on current events on Canvas before class

Optional reading for extra credit about the Communist era
- Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, 1963
- Janos Kornai, *Economics of Shortage*, see a short biography of Kornai at: https://economics.harvard.edu/people/janos-kornai and his website here: http://www.kornai-janos.hu/KornaiJ-home-English.html
- Maria Krenz, *Made in Hungary: A Life Forged by History*, Donner Publishing, 2009. Ms. Krenz is a CU alum and was born and lived in Hungary during the Holocaust and under Communism until she left in 1957. This book gives an excellent personal account of life under Communism. See her discuss the book here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YOOr8HLoXVw
- Neil MacFarquhar, “Rapper is Jailed for 12 Days in Russia as a Culture War Spreads,” *New York Times*, Nov. 23, 2018

**Topic 2: The Yeltsin Era (1990s)**

**Week 3: The End the Soviet Union & the Emergence of Yeltsin**

Monday, Jan. 28 – The End of the Soviet Economic System
Required reading:

Wednesday, Jan. 30 – The End of the Soviet Political System
Required reading:
1) Mary McAuley, Chapter 7: *Perestroika* and the End of Party Rule, Chapter 8: Dispersal of Power, & Conclusion

Friday, Feb. 1 – The Beginning of the Russian Federation
**No in-class session on this day**

Required reading
1) Read & comment on current events articles on Canvas before class time.

Required for this day of class
1) Video lecture & online quiz to be completed before the end of class time (at 1:50pm). This video lecture will cover the timeline of 1991-1993 which are a very eventful 2 years in Russian politics.
2) CNN documentary “The Cold War” from 1996. This is a 24-part series that includes episodes with interviews of many leaders, political activists, and citizens in Russia and other post-communist countries from the late 1980s and early 1990s. This is an excellent insight into Russia’s early transition.
Optional reading for extra credit

**Week 4: The 1990s – Why It Was So Bad**

**Monday, Feb. 4 – Economic Reform**
**Required reading:**

**Wednesday, Feb. 6 – The Oligarchs**
**Required reading**

Optional reading for extra credit

**Friday, Feb. 8 – 2 Coup Attempts in 2 Year: Russian Politics, 1991-1993**
**Required reading**
1) Boris Yeltsin’s memoires, Chapter 7, “A Rough Patch”
4) Read & comment on current affairs articles on Canvas before class time

**Week 5: Chechnya & Islam in Russia**

**Monday, Feb. 11 – Chechnya & Islam in Russia**
**Required reading**

Optional reading for extra credit
1) Debra Javeline and Vanessa Baird, “Who Sues the Government? Evidence from the Moscow Theater Hostage Crisis,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 20:10, 2007, pp. 1-28; This articles presents an original survey of the victims of the Nord-Ost hostage crisis and was written by one of CU’s own political science professors.

**Wednesday, Feb. 13**
**Required reading:** Steven Levine, *Putin’s Russia*, Nord-Ost chapter.

**Friday, Feb. 15 – Midterm Exam #1 (Bring a blue exam book)**
Week 6 – Putin’s Rise to Power

Monday, Feb. 18
Required reading

Wednesday, Feb. 20
Required reading

Friday, Feb. 22
Required Reading
   1) Read & comment on current affairs articles on Canvas before class.
   3) Samnuel Greene and Graeme Robertson, “Vladimir Putin’s approval ratings are dropping. This is why,” Washington Post, July 19, 2018.

Week 7 – The Media & Elections

Monday, Feb. 25
Required reading
   1) Scott Gehlbach, “Reflections on Putin & the Media,” Post-Soviet Affairs, 26:1, 2010, pp. 77-87 (D2L)
   2) Steven Levine, Putin’s Labyrinth, Chapter 8: Murder on an Elevator, 2008.

Wednesday, Feb. 27
Required reading

Friday, March 1
Required reading
   1) Read & comment on current affairs articles on Canvas before class.
   2) Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way. 2010. Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War, Cambridge University Press. Read the Russia section from Chapter 5 (pages 186-201)

Week 8 – Protests & Opposition

Monday, March 4
Required reading:
Wednesday, March 6 – Protests in 2011 & 2012
Required reading
1) Paul Chaisty and Stephen Whitefield, “Forward to democracy or back to authoritarianism? The attitudinal bases of mass support for the Russian election protests of 2011-2012,” Post-Soviet Affairs, 29:5, 2012, pp. 387-403. (D2L)

Friday, March 8 – Protests in 2017 & 2018
Required
1) Read and comment on current affairs articles on Canvas
3) BBC, “Protests over retirement age hikes,” July 1, 2018.

Optional reading for extra credit
2) OSCE Preliminary Findings on Russian parliamentary elections in December 2011
3) OSCE Preliminary Findings on Russian presidential elections in March 2012

Week 9 – 2018 in Russian Politics

Monday, March 11 – Presidential & Regional Elections in 2018
Required reading
2) Maria Lipman with Natalia Zubaravich, Alexey Titkov, and Denis Volkov, “The Moscow Mayoral Election: Just as Non-Intriguing as All Other Regional Races Held in Russia on September 9,” Point & Counterpoint, September 8, 2018.

Optional reading for extra credit
Note: Danilo Gjukovikj is a current CU undergraduate student who has been published twice in The Washington Post. You should keep in mind articles like these when working on your policy brief due at the end of next week.

1) Danilo Gjukovikj and Sarah Wilson Sokhey, “This is why the West should pay attention to the drama in Macedonia,” Washington Post, May 29, 2017.
2) Danilo Gjukovikj, “After 27 years, Greece and Macedonia have resolved their contentious ‘naming dispute’ Here’s how.” Washington Post, August 2, 2018.
Wednesday, March 13
**No in-class session on this day**


**Required reading**
1) Michael McFaul, “Why Vladimir Putin is a terrible strategist,” *Washington Post*, December 17, 2018

**Required for this day of class**
1) Watch video lecture before the end of class time at 1:50pm.
2) Comment & Discuss online: You are required to: 1) write 2 questions or comments about the video lecture and 2) respond to (at least) 2 comments or questions. This counts as an in-class assignment. This should be completed before the end of class time at 1:50pm.

Friday, March 15 (POLICY BRIEF DUE by 5pm)
**No in-class session on this day**

**Required**
1) Watch video lecture on Canvas before class time ends at 1:50pm.
2) Turn in policy brief on Canvas (due by 5pm on Friday, March 15).

Week 10 – Midterm Exam #2

Monday, March 18 – Current Events

**Required**
1) Read & comment on current affairs articles on Canvas before class time.

Wednesday, March 20 - Review

Friday, March 22 – Midterm Exam #2 (Bring a blue exam book)

Week 11: Spring Break (March 25-29)

**Topic 4: Russia in Comparative Perspective**

Week 12 – Post-Communist Transitions

Monday, April 1

**Required reading**

**Optional reading for extra credit**
Wednesday, April 3

Required reading

Required before class
- Post an abstract (a paragraph) summarizing your policy report. Upload your policy brief as an attachment to your post. Your abstract and report will be publicly available to the class.

Optional reading for extra credit (which includes other social topics)
1) Sex trafficking: Documentary on trafficking of women in the post-communist era: Mimi Chakarova, “The Price of Sex” (available at: [www.priceofsex.org](http://www.priceofsex.org))
6) Children: Documentary: *Children Underground* (Edet Belzberg, 2001); about orphan’s living in the subway in Bucharest, Romania

Friday, April 5: Discussing Policy Briefs Online
**No in-class session on this day**

Required comments on policy brief on Canvas (due before class time ends at 1:50pm)
- Read the policy brief by another student that you were assigned to read.
- Post 3 questions (on Canvas) regarding the policy report you were assigned to read.
- Respond to the 3 questions asked about your policy report.
- OPTIONAL for extra credit: Comment on an additional policy report and post an additional question or questions. If you received extra questions, you can respond to these for extra credit. For two additional comments or responses (beyond those required), you will get a “100” as an in-class assignment. You may get up to 2 additional in-class assignments this way (and no more than 2 additional in-class assignments for this extra credit opportunity).

Week 13 – Democracy & the Market In-Class Simulation, Part 1

Monday, April 8 – The Theory & Reality of Economic Reform

Required reading
1) Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*, Chapter 4: The political dynamics of economic reform, pp. 136-139 (just read the introduction section to the chapter) and Conclusion, pp. 188-191

Optional reading for extra credit

Wednesday, April 10

Required reading
1) Timothy Frye, *Building States and Markets after Communism*, 2010, Intro and Conclusion, pp. 1-20, 244-253. The Frye book gives you an excellent example of current political science research on post-communist political economy. We will read 6 chapters of this book as we complete a simulation in
class in which you will form parties and participate in elections. Your participation in the simulation in Weeks 13 and 14 counts towards your participation grade in the class.

Optional reading for extra credit
1) Read Timothy Frye, “My Perestroika and Russian Politics”

Friday, April 12
**No in-class session on this day**

Required for this day of class:
1) Comment & discuss current affairs articles before class time.
2) Online discussion & strategizing with your group for the simulation (due before class time ends at 1:50pm). You are required to make comments and respond to others on this day as part of your class participation for this day of class. A prompt will be provided in a discussion group online.

Week 14 – Democracy & the Market In-Class Simulation, Part 2

Monday, April 15
Required reading
1) **Russia & Bulgaria cases**: Timothy Frye, *Building States and Markets after Communism*, 2010, Russia and Bulgaria Chapters, pp. 168-212.

Wednesday, April 17
Required reading
1) **Poland & Uzbekistan cases**: Timothy Frye, *Building States and Markets after Communism*, 2010, Poland and Uzbekistan chapters, 213-243

Optional reading for extra credit
1) European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Report, 1999 (D2L); This report provides a good review of the arguments made by Przeworski and Hellman and an excellent overview of the trends across countries in the late 1990s.

Friday, April 19
Required reading
1) Comment & discuss current affairs articles on Canvas before class time.

Week 15 – Conflict Ukraine, 2013-present

Monday, April 22 – The Beginnings of the Recent Conflict
Required reading
1) **Ukrainian perspective**: Andrey Kurkov, *Ukraine Diaries: Dispatches from Kiev*, Random House, 2014, pages 1-26 and pages 136-163 (posted in 2 separate PDFs on Canvas)
Wednesday, April 24 – Where are We Now?
Required reading

Friday, April 26
Required reading
1) Read & comment on current affairs articles on Canvas before class time.

Optional reading for extra credit
1) Andrey Kurkov’s novels, Death and the Penguin (originally published in Russian in 1996, English translation in 2001), and Penguin Lost (originally published in Russian in 2005, English translation in 2010). I cannot recommend these novels highly enough!
3) Hiski Haukkala, “From Cooperative to Contested Europe? The Conflict in Ukraine as a Culmination of a Long-Term Crisis in EU-Russia Relations,” Journal of Contemporary European Studies, 23:1, 2015; focus on pages 30-37 about the recent era

Week 16 – Russia Around the World

Monday, April 29
Required reading:

Wednesday, May 1 – Last Day of Class & last day to submit extra credit reaction papers
Required reading
1) Read & comment on current affairs articles on Canvas.

Friday, May 3 – Official University Reading Day (No Class)

FINAL EXAM – Monday, May 6, 1:30-4pm
In our regular classroom
Bring a blue exam book