The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union

HIST 3352-001

MW 2:30-3:45

Instructor: Dr. Randi Cox
Office: Liberal Arts North, room 356
Hours: MW 4:00-5:00, TR 3:00-4:30, and by appointment
Phone: Call or text to 936-645-6727 (Texting is the fastest way to reach me.)
Email: rcox@sfasu.edu (Slower response time than texting)

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION
A general overview of the political, economic and social trends in Russia and the Soviet Union from the reign of Nicholas II to the fall of communism.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO DO AND LEARN IN THIS CLASS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES)
• You will analyze key developments in the political history of the USSR, including the Revolution of 1917 and the establishment of the Soviet system, the rise of Stalinism, the USSR’s status as a postwar superpower, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and crises of the 1990s and the rise of Putin.
• You will analyze key economic institutions of the USSR, such as NEP, the command economy, the collective farm, and the reforms of Khrushchev and Gorbachev.
• You will analyze key social and cultural developments in the Soviet Union, in order to explore the impact of communism on social mobility, gender roles, ethnic relations, the arts, etc.
• You will analyze scholarly literature and primary sources, and you will practice the historical reasoning skills outlined in the History Department’s Program Learning Objectives.

COURSE TEXTS
• Jonathan Daly & Leonid Trofimov, Seven Myths of the Russian Revolution
• Lydia Chukovskaya, Sofia Petrovna
• Donald Raleigh, Russia’s Sputnik Generation
• Norman Lowe, Mastering Twentieth Century Russian History (optional)
ASSIGMENTS, GRADES, AND DUE DATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight (%)</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map quiz</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Monday, September 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven Myths presentation</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Wednesday, September 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven Myths essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Friday, September 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Wednesday, October 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chukovskaya essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Friday, November 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raleigh essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Friday, December 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Monday, December 11 at 4:00</td>
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**Map Quiz** You will identify 30 items on a blank map of the USSR. Because an understanding of Soviet geography is essential to mastering the course material, you must correctly identify at least 26 items to receive credit for the quiz. Any score less than that will be recorded as zero. You may retake the quiz as many times as necessary until September 22.

**Seven Myths Project** Our first reading is a secondary source, *Seven Myths of the Russian Revolution*, in which Jonathan Daly and Leonid Trofimov unpack common misconceptions, distortions, and conspiracy theories about the Revolution. You will complete two separate assignments on this book: a group presentation focusing on one myth and an individual essay that considers three of the myths. The goal of this assignment is to consider the standards that historians use to evaluate evidence, as well as the difficulties that historians face when they attempt to counter widespread misinformation and popular conspiracy theories. Full instructions will be posted on D2L.

**Book Essays** You will write short essays (about 1500 words each) on the books by Chukovskaya and Raleigh, both of which are primary sources. These will not be formal book reviews. Instead I will give you specific questions or ask you grapple with the issues raised by each book. The goal of this assignment is to practice the methods that historians use to extract evidence from primary sources, put that evidence into historical context, and interpret this new information in order to create a historical argument. Full instructions will be posted on D2L.

**Exams** The midterm and final exams will feature a mix of short and medium identifications, as well as a longer essay. The final will be partially cumulative. The essay options will ask you to grapple with the idea of change and continuity in Soviet society over the long run. While the book assignments focus on snapshots of particular moments in Soviet history, your goal of the exams is to demonstrate an understanding of change over time, a key element of historical analysis.

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**A note on attendance.** Although attendance is not formally required in this class, poor attendance will make it difficult to perform well on assignments. I understand that students get sick, have family emergencies, and run into other obstacles that can cause them to miss an occasional class. That's just life. However, you should know that the more you come to class, the better you will do on assignments. You do not need to contact me if you have to miss a normal class day, but please contact me as soon as possible if you have a problem on an exam or presentation day. Requests for make-ups will be considered on a case by case basis and are more likely to be granted to students who contact me in a timely fashion and provide documentation.
**Tentative Schedule**

**Part 1: The Revolutions, 1894-1940**

**Topics and themes**
- Late Imperial Russia: Nicholas II and the growth of revolutionary movements
- The February and October Revolutions
- The Civil War, 1918-1920
- The New Economic Policy and revolutionary experiments in the 1920s
- The rise of Stalin and the First Five Year Plan
- The Stalinist command economy
- Stalinism as a civilization: society, culture, and the Great Terror

**Readings**
- Lowe, *Mastering*, chapters 1-6 (as needed)
- Daly & Trofimov, *Seven Myths* (Intro, chapter 7, conclusion, plus your two additional chapters)
- Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna* (begin)

**Assignment Schedule**
- Map Quiz: Monday, September 11
- Seven Myths Presentations: Wednesday, September 27
- Seven Myths Essay: Friday, September 29
- Midterm Exam: Wednesday, October 18

**Part 2: Recovering from Stalinism and War, 1941-2010**

**Topics and themes**
- The Soviet Union in World War II and the origins of the Cold War
- Khrushchev’s reforms and Destalinization
- Optimism in the 1950s-60s: the Soviet space program and other achievements
- Stagnation under Brezhnev (or not?); Dissidents, apathy and other forms of resistance
- Gorbachev’s reforms and the fall of the USSR
- The crises of the 1990s and the rise of Putin

**Readings**
- Lowe, *Mastering*, chapters 7-11 (as needed)
- Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna* (finish)
- Raleigh, *Russia’s Sputnik Generation* (all)

**Assignment Schedule**
- Chukovskaya paper: Friday, November 3
- Raleigh paper: Friday, December 1
- Final: Monday, December 11 at 4:00
OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Academic Integrity (SFA Policy 10.4)

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty in this class

We will practice avoiding accidental plagiarism in class, and I will help you learn to write about sources in your own words. I understand that it is difficult to do sometimes. Be aware that I am very patient with students learning a new skill, but I have no tolerance for deliberate plagiarism. I make every effort to distinguish between intentional cheating and unintentional errors made by students as they learn how to cite their work. Minor errors that are clearly the result of a misunderstanding of the rules will result in a small penalty ranging from a point deduction to resubmission of the work. I am more interested in helping you understand professional standards than punishing you.

However, deliberate plagiarism is a violation of our community trust and insults the hard work of other students. Therefore, significant plagiarism—including the use of ChatGPT and other AI programs—may result in a zero for the assignment or failure of the entire course. SFA policy also requires that I report academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students.
History Department Program Learning Outcomes

With a BA, the SFA history major can:

1. Interpret the past in context
2. Understand the complex nature of the historical record
3. Engage in historical inquiry, research, and analysis
4. Craft historical narrative and argument
5. Practice historical thinking as central to engaged citizenship

This course will offer practice in all five areas.

Explanation of credit hours awarded for course

This is an upper-level history course. Upper-level lecture courses in history meet for 2,250 minutes (37.5 hours), including examination times, during the course of a semester. Students typically have weekly reading assignments from a combination of textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, primary document collections, and supplemental materials (biographies, historical novels, memoirs, etc.). The level of reading is more advanced than that required in lower-level surveys, and the number of pages students are required to read is generally higher. Typical upper-level courses require students to take 2-3 essay exams per semester, in addition to the final exam, which is also generally a written exam. In addition, out-of-class writing assignments (book reviews, biographical sketches, research papers, etc.) are typically required in upper-level courses. Course instructors are required to hold regular scheduled office hours to make themselves available to consult with students as needed. Combined, studying for exams, doing the required reading, completing writing assignments, and consulting with course instructors average two hours of work outside the classroom for every hour spent in the classroom.

Disability Statement (SFA Policy 6.1)

I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I am always happy to consider creative solutions as long as they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

You are also encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services to begin this conversation or to establish accommodations for this or other courses. I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. The Office of Disability Services works with students to identify accommodations that remove barriers to learning. The ODS is located in the Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD). For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices

Withheld Grades (SFA Policy 5.5)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.
**SFA Mental Health Statement**

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

**The Dean of Students Office**
[https://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents](https://www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents)
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-7249
dos@sfasu.edu

**SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic**
[www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp)
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

**The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”**
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

[www.sfasu.edu/thehub](http://www.sfasu.edu/thehub)
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

**Crisis Resources:**

- Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
- Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741