

POLS/RUSS/HIST 4362: RUSSIA TODAY

An Introduction to Russian and Eurasian Studies

Spring 2017, 25 University Hall

Добро пожаловать! Ласкаво просимо! Laipni lūdzam! ჰელო იყოს თქვენ იმობრძანება!
and Xush kelibsiz!

All of that is “welcome” to UTA's core course in Russian and Eurasian studies program. You are now in one of the most unique and truly multi-disciplinary courses offered at this University. In here we will introduce you to Russia in the contexts of history, language, politics, culture, film, and virtually everything you can think about that pertains to the world's largest country and one of its most important cultures. This is a survey class designed to stimulate your inner-Russian (or Kazakh, Cossack, Chechen, Korean, or Tatar) sensibilities. We don't have all the answers to what makes Russia so very interesting, but we promise you that this will not be boring.

This is also about what many term a "critical" area of study. Russia is a country, language, and culture of global importance and understanding. It requires specialized, multi-disciplined instruction and toward that end you get a unique situation: a core group of three regular instructors, as well as numerous guest lecturers who will provide you their expertise regarding the meaning of modern-day Russia. Our "learning objectives" include a broad understanding of the primary means to analyze a part of the world whose significance extends from world politics and trade, to literature, philosophical interpretation, and scientific endeavor. You will be introduced to tsars, commissars, composers, every-day people, climates, economics, and a host of subjects that you would normally need three semesters or more to cover. In this class you will learn of scientific endeavors, analytical techniques, and how opinion about the world's largest country fits into the mosaic of **global studies**. Russia is here revealed for all its contradictions, predispositions, and curiosities which make for one of the most interesting area studies to be found in the college experience.

Russia and Eurasia are just too big effectively handled by any one professor. So we have combined the expertise of three UTA instructors: Dr. Mark Cichock (Political Science); Dr. Lonny Harrison (Modern Languages); and Dr. Pete Smith (Russian/Distance Education). As your teachers we will guide you along paths unexpected, unexplored, or maybe already familiar to some of you. In addition, we will introduce you to professionals from the field of Russian studies by means of in-class video conferences with U.S. government agencies, business sector specialists, and commentators from within Russia itself. We expect that your reward for participation will be an experience that you will remember long after graduating from UTA.

Readings: There is one required text for the course: Michael L. Bressler, ed., *Understanding Contemporary Russia* (Lynne Rienner, 2008).

The class also relies very heavily on the use of blogs including one that we provide for the class (<http://blog.uta.edu/russiatoday/>). We regularly post articles, course materials, and notices to **Blackboard** (elearn.uta.edu) so students are encouraged to pay attention to these announcements. All exams will include current events items and analytical themes found in these sources, as well as materials posted to Blackboard.

All students are required to read the following blogs on a daily basis:

http://www.rferl.org/archive/The_Power_Vertical/latest/
<http://www.robertamsterdam.com>

Maps: Students are directed to the Maps Collection website of the University of Texas at Austin. The site is <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/index.html>.

Testing/Evaluation: There are three exams for this course, or what we refer to as Opportunities to Excel (OTE's); this includes the final exam. OTEs combine short answer essays, identifications, fill in the blanks, and multiple-choice questions. In addition, all students will do a research or translation assignment (see below). Each counts as 25% of your total grade and ***all must be taken/completed to receive a passing grade for the course***. Students are responsible for being on time for exams and in handing in their assignments on time. Make-up exams are only possible with the consent of the individual instructor and must conform to university policy for testing. POLS research projects are due on April 25, and RUSS papers on April 28.

Students are responsible for contacting their respective professor for the details of their assignments. Russian language students will do a research paper using Russian sources assigned by Dr. Harrison; while POLS students will also do research papers. Subjects for papers are decided individually with Drs. Cichock and Harrison. Each professor determines his own standards for quantity, quality, and grading of assignments, and all three instructors contribute to the writing of the exams.

Office Hours/Access to Instructors:

Dr. Cichock: Office, 221 Hammond Hall; Office hours: MWF 10am-12:00pm, and by appointment. Phone: 817-272-2388. E-mail: cichock@uta.edu.

Dr. Harrison: Office, 221 Hammond Hall; Office hours: MWF 11am-12:00pm, and by appointment; Phone: 817-272-9506. E-mail: lonnyharrison@uta.edu.

Dr. Smith: Office, 300 Nedderman Hall; Office hours: MWF, 11am-12:00pm and by appointment. Phone: 817-272-5727. E-mail: pete.smith@g.uta.edu.

Dr. Scott Palmer: Office, 202A University Hall: Office hours: by appointment.

REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Attendance: At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. Each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance.

However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients "begin attendance in a course." UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

As the instructor of this section, I expect regular classroom attendance of all students. Coursework, assignments, and evaluative measures are based upon that assumption. You are responsible for acquiring class notes if you have to miss. Inform me of any extenuating circumstances before a class is missed. In the case of illness, please provide a doctor's note. -LH

This course relies on many guest speakers both in person and by video who voluntarily give their time for your learning. We feel this necessitates class attendance and do require it both out of courtesy and practical learning. Students are expected to show up on time so that speakers may get on with their material/discussions and not be interrupted by late arrivals. Attendance is taken into consideration in terms of borderline grades.

Grading: See the distribution of grades above. Progress report schedules can be found here: <http://www.uta.edu/records/calendars/progress-reports.php> Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels; see "Student Support Services," below.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study: Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 9 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

Grade Grievances: Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current University Catalog. For undergraduate courses, see <http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/grades/#undergraduatetext>; For student complaints, see <http://www.uta.edu/deanofstudents/student-complaints/index.php>.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially

withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

Disability Accommodations: UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a **letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability.

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

Non-Discrimination Policy: *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos.*

Title IX Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.*

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code

into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Campus Carry: Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located at the door on the far right end of the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities. You are encouraged to subscribe to the MavAlert system that will send information in case of an emergency to your cell phone or email account. Anyone can subscribe at <https://mavalert.uta.edu/> or <https://mavalert.uta.edu/register.php>

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and

information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#), [major-based learning centers](#), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](#), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>



Calendar

(please note that scheduling may change due to the availability of speakers)

Unit One: Defining Russia and Eurasia

Jan. 18 : Introduction Reading: Bressler, Introduction	Cichock, Harrison, and Smith
Jan. 20: Language and Diversity	Harrison
Jan. 23 & 25: Geography (physical, pol., and eco.)	Smith, & Dr. Andrew Milson (HIST/GEOG) Pre-course survey, including map quiz (posted on Blackboard); Reading: Bressler, chaps. 2 & 8
Jan. 27 & 30: Demographic Issues Readings: Bressler, chap. 8	Smith
Feb. 1, 3, 6, & 8: History Reading: Bressler, chap. 3	Dr. Palmer (UTA History Dept.);
Feb. 15 & 17: Ideology (Marxism, capitalism, authoritarianism)	Cichock; Reading: Bressler chap.5
Feb. 20: Russian Philosophy	Dr. Kenneth Williford (UTA Philosophy Dept.)

Feb. 22: OTE #1

Unit Two: The Contexts of Culture, Politics, and Change

Feb. 24 & 27 Russian and Soviet literature Reading: Bressler, chap. 12	Harrison
March 1 & 3: "Raspad," or The Breakup of the USSR Reading: Bressler, chap. 10	Smith
March 6, 8, & 10: Politics in Russia Reading: Bressler, chap. 4	Cichock;

(March 13-18 is Spring Break!!)

March 20 & 22: The Media	Smith
March 24: Religion in Russia and Eurasia Reading: Bressler, chap. 11	Cichock
March 27, 29 & 31: Russian Film	Harrison

(March 31 is the last day to drop!!)

April 3: OTE #2

Unit Three: Russia Seen Through Other Eyes

April 5, 7, and 10: Modern Ukraine Reading: Bressler, chap. 7; Ukrainian Crisis Chronology	Cichock
April 12, 14, & 17: The Baltics Film: "The Singing Revolution"	Cichock
April 19 & 21: Russia seen through film	Harrison; Film, "Revolution"
April 24: The Caucasus Reading: Bressler, chap. 6	Cichock
April 26: Chernobyl and Environmental Problems Reading: Bressler, chap. 9	Smith
April 28 & May 1: Central Asia	Cichock & Smith
May 3: Teleconference with RFE/RL (room TBA)	
May 5: Russia seen through the eyes of youth	Smith, other TBA
May 8: Summarizing Russia (course review) Reading: Bressler, chap. 13	Cichock, Harrison, and Smith;
May 10: Final OTE, 8-9:15am.	