

History 242: The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Union
Spring 2016: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:00-9:50

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Office hours: MWF 10-11;
Tues./Thurs. 3-4

Course Overview

The history of the Soviet Union is a story of great contrasts. In October 1917, when the tsarist

- explain the ways in which the country's political leaders both modified and preserved the legacy of the October Revolution in each of the main periods of Soviet history;
- explain the ways in which the Soviet state made use of terror and ideology to achieve its goals (and the extent to which it was a dictatorship during each period of its history);
- explain how the Soviet Union was shaped by its Russian historical and geographical context, and the ways in which it was a modern

Assignments and Grading

Your grade in this class will be based on the following requirements. Note that you must hand in every assignment listed below in order to pass the class, and that if your grades improve steadily

need more time. Keep in mind, however, that once you've received an extension on an assignment, I will not give you an extension on another except in the case of a documented emergency. (Note, too, that you cannot break up your one 48-hour extension into two 24-hour extensions or a 2-hour extension and a 46-hour extension.) In the absence of an extension, late assignments will be penalized one third of a letter grade per day.

The first two written assignments of the semester—the document analyses due on January 31 and February 16—are due by email the night before class. Since we will be discussing these documents in class the next day, it is not possible to get an extension on them (since this would give you an advantage on the paper relative to your classmates.) If you cannot complete one of your short document analyses by the deadline, I will give you the chance to do an analysis of a document from later in the semester instead; however, if you choose to exercise this option, you will not have the chance to get an extension on a later paper except in the case of an emergency.

PaperRevisionPolicy

This class is a writing-intensive course that is designed not only to teach students about history, but to help them develop their writing skills. Over the course of the semester, then, you will have two opportunities to revise a paper that you've already handed in and to resubmit it for re-grading. Every student in the class will be required to hand in a second version of the first writing assignment of the semester (the document analysis due on January 31); after spring break, any student who wants to will be able to hand in a revised version of their 5-page paper or their 6-to-8-page paper. (Keep in mind that you will only have a few days to revise the latter paper, since it's due late in the semester and it will take me roughly a week to grade it and get it back to you.) If you choose to exercise this option, your final grade for the

AcademicAccommodations

Grinnell College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you have any special needs, please provide documentation of those needs to the Coordinator for Disability Resources, Autumn Wilke. Students should then bring me paperwork from her office within the first few days of class.

SCHEDULE

Friday, February 19: An Overview of Stalinism

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, ch. 6-

Monday, February 22: Collectivization and De-Kulakization

Reading: Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels under Stalin*, excerpts [Pioneerweb]
Stalin, "Dizzy with Success" [Suny]
Lev Kopelev, "The Last Grain Collections" [Suny]

Wednesday, February 24: The Stalin Dictatorship

Reading: Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Stalin: In the Court of the Red Tsar*, pp. 1-57,
93-101 [Pioneerweb]
Oleg Khlevniuk, "Stalin as Dictator: The Personalisation of Power" [Pioneerweb]

Optional Event: "Russia and the West: Conflict, Diplomacy, and the Future" (roundtable
featuring former Ambassador John Beyrle and Eric Green '85,
from the State Department's Russia Desk) (Faulconer Gallery,
4:00 PM) (optional event)

Friday, February 26: Stalin's Personality Cult

Reading: Jan Plamper, *The Stalin Cult*, excerpts [Pioneerweb]
Sarah Davies, "Stalin and the Making of the Leader Cult" [Pioneerweb]
Sarah Davies, "The Leader Cult in Official Discourse" [Pioneerweb]

Sunday, February 28: email me your 5-page paper by 5:00 PM

Monday, February 29: Everyday Life and the Communist Party

Reading: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 1-66

Wednesday, March 2: A New Society?

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 67-114

Thursday, March 3: booktalk by Anyavon Bremzen, author of *Mastering the Art of Soviet
Cooking: A Memoir of Food and Longing* (JRC 101, 4:00 PM)
(optional event)

Friday, March 4: Ostracized Citizens and Broken Families

Reading: Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, pp. 115-189, 218-228

Monday,

