HIS 3040: RUSSIAN HISTORY TO 1900
SYLLABUS--FALL 2026

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Hours: whenever

Course Description

This is part one of a two semester survey of Russian history from the ninth century to the present. In this semester we will emphasize the early history of Russia and the process by which it became a great state, with an eye to understanding the interaction of different nationalities and cultures in the formation of the Russian empire. While this course attempts to deal with most of the "big" events in Russian history down to 1900, it makes no claims to being comprehensive. Instead, I plan to emphasize the different aspects of Russian history that interest me: the role of religion, imperial expansion, political and social reforms, terrorism, vodka, and (thanks to Putin) Ukraine.

Course Outcomes

Russia is huge, and so is its history. Therefore, as noted, we cannot hope to adequately cover every possible subject during one semester. My goal is to introduce you to some of the persistent big questions/issues in Russian history (most of which I cannot answer). I hope that by exploring these problems you will continue to develop your own analytical skills as they relate to historical issues. You will also gain experience reading carefully and reflecting on the various types of primary source materials used by historians to reconstruct the past. Finally, you should gain a better understanding of some of the current problems that Russia now faces (for example, the persistent economic, ethnic, and leadership difficulties) by looking at the origins of some of these issues.

Texts

The following required text will be used this semester:

Moss, Walter G. *A History of Russia. Volume I: To 1917*. Second Edition. London: Anthem Press, 2002.

In addition, we will be reading some classic Russian literature. Here are recommended editions but any translation will suffice. All are readily available, very cheap or even free.

Pushkin, Alexander. *The Queen of Spades and Other Stories*. Translated by Alan Myers. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. [only "The Captain's Daughter" and "Peter the Great's Blackamoor"]

Tolstoy, Leo. *Hadji Murad*. Translated by Aylmer Maude. New York: Modern Library, 2003.

Turgenev, Ivan. *Fathers and Sons*. New York: Signet Classics, 2005.

Assignments and Expectations

1. Regular class attendance and active participation in discussions is essential for your success in this course. You should complete the reading assignments as indicated on the course calendar before coming to class and be prepared to discuss them. Failure to do so will adversely affect your grade.
2. Numerous (at least once a week) quizzes and/or one-page exploratory "thinking pieces" will be given. Quizzes will be in class covering basic names, dates, events, geography, etc. "Thinking pieces" will be informal, one-page (max), typed (sometimes), single-space exploratory responses to a prompt I provide based on assigned reading or other sources. Due at the beginning of class.
3. A mid-term and a final examination will be given. Both of these will consist of a mix of objective and essay questions.
4. Each student will complete a research project, based on a primary source (historical memoir, travel account, etc.) chosen individually (see separate handout).
5. Your grade will be calculated approximately as follows:

Attendance, participation --10%

Quizzes & "thinking pieces" --10%

Mid-term --25%

Final Exam --30%

Research Project --25%

Course Calendar
(Note: This is subject to change-- You are responsible for any and all changes announced in class.)

Day	Date	Topic	Readings
M	AUG 31	Course Introduction	
W	SEPT 2	Land and People	Moss 1
F	SEPT 4	Kievan Rus	Moss 2
M	SEPT 7	**Labor Day—No Class**	
W	SEPT 9	Eastern Orthodoxy	Moss 3
F	SEPT 11	Shifting Power Centers	Moss 4
M	SEPT 14	The Mongol Yoke	Moss 5
W	SEPT 16	Rise of Muscovy	Moss 6
F	SEPT 18	(cont. +Ukraine area)	
M	SEPT 21	The Unification of Great Russia	Moss 7
W	SEPT 23	Ivan the Terrible	Moss 8

F	SEPT 25	Time of Troubles	Moss 9
M	SEPT 28	The Early Romanovs	Moss 10
W	SEPT 30	Rise of Serfdom	Moss 11
F	OCT 2	The Great Schism	Moss 12
M	OCT 5	Peter the Great: Politics	Moss 13
W	OCT 7	Peter the Great: Society	(Pushkin)
F	OCT 9	Peter's Revolution	
M	OCT 12	The Era of Palace Revolutions	Moss 14
W	OCT 14	Catherine II (the 'Great')	Moss 15
F	OCT 16	18th Century Economic & Social Life	Moss 16; Pushkin
M	OCT 19	18th Century Religion & Culture	Moss 17
W	OCT 21	**Mid-Term Examination**	
F	OCT 23	**Fall Break—No Class**	
M	OCT 26	Alexander I	Moss 18
W	OCT 28	(cont.)	
F	OCT 30	Nicholas I (the "Iron Tsar")	Moss 19
M	NOV 2	(cont.)	
W	NOV 4	Caucasus & Crimean War	Tolstoy
F	NOV 6	Early 19th Century Economy & Society	Moss 20
M	NOV 9	Slavophiles vs. Westernizers	Moss 21
W	NOV 11	(cont.)	
F	NOV 13	Alexander II and the Great Reforms	Moss 22
M	NOV 16	(cont.)	
W	NOV 18	"To the people…"	Turgenev
F	NOV 20	Reaction and Counter-Reform	Moss 23
M	NOV 23	(cont.)	
W	NOV 25	**Thanksgiving Recess—No Class**	
F	NOV 27	**Thanksgiving Recess—No Class**	
M	NOV 30	Opposition to Tsarism	
W	DEC 2	(cont.)	
F	DEC 4	Empire Building	Moss 24
M	DEC 7	Late 19th Century Economy & Society	Moss 26
W	DEC 9	Late 19th Century Religion & Culture	Moss 27
F	DEC 11	[Catch-up/Review]	

Final Examination: Wednesday, December 16, 7:30-10:00 am.

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To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

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PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY⊛

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an "F" grade.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY⊛

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

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Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Final Examination Policy⊛

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination

schedule is posted on the Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.