

HIS 3042: 20th Century Russia/Soviet Union Spring 2025

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Office Hours: Generally, between 1:30 and 5:00, M-F.

Course Description

This is part two of a two semester survey of Russian history from the ninth century to the present. (Note that the first semester, while useful, is not a prerequisite for this course). In this semester we will examine the history of Russia and the Soviet Union from 1900 to the present. Topics covered include the demise of the Romanov dynasty, the October Revolution and the rise of Communism, the reign of terror under Stalin, the Cold War, the long decline and eventual collapse of the Soviet system, and the post-Soviet world of Russia and other successor states. We will be reminded throughout this course that the area we commonly call Russia is made up of many non-Russian peoples, for whom the last few decades represent a period of increased nationalist sentiment. [Given current events, this year I may modify things a bit to further explore current Ukrainian-Russian relations.]

Course Outcomes

Successful completion of this course should give you a basic background knowledge of the issues and events which shaped the course of Russian and Soviet history in the 20th century. Since the USSR was such a major player on the world scene in this century, you should also gain a deeper understanding of global history during this same time period. In addition, you will be introduced to some of the key areas where scholars have yet to reach consensus in their interpretations of historical events and given some (limited) ability to evaluate these controversial subjects for yourself. Also, by means of book review project, you will gain better understanding of how historical argumentation is formulated, and at the same time sharpen your own analytical skills.

Required Texts

*Smith, S.A. *Russia in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890-1928*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Alexievich, Svetlana. *The Unwomanly Face of War: An Oral History of Women in World War II*. Translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. New York: Random House, 2018.

*Applebaum, Anne, ed. *Gulag Voices: An Anthology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.
Petronne, Karen, and Kenneth Slepyan, eds. *The Soviet Union and Russia, 1939-2015: A History in Documents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

*Available through Ryan Library as eBooks.

Assignments and Expectations

1. Regular class attendance and active participation in discussions is essential for your success in this course. Poor attendance or obvious lack of preparation will adversely affect your grade. Note that you should complete the reading assignments as indicated on the course calendar before coming to class, and be prepared to discuss them.
2. Numerous quizzes and reflections will be given to assist you in your textbook reading, as well as to cover basic names, dates, events, terms, maps, etc. In addition, you will complete short (4 page) reflection papers on the *Gulag Voices* and *Unwomanly Faces* books.
3. A mid-term and a final examination will be given. Both of these will consist of a mix of essay questions, short answers, etc.
4. You will complete a 6-8 page book review/historiographical research paper on a topic we mutually agree upon. More information on this project, which will involve several steps, will be found on a separate handout.
5. Your grade will be calculated approximately as follows:

Attendance, participation	--10%
Quizzes/Reflections/Short Papers	--20%
Mid-term	--25%
Final Exam	--25%
Book Review Project	--20%

Course Calendar

(Note: This is a best guess only. You will be held responsible for any changes made and announced in class, including handouts and additional readings).

Day	Date	Topic	Readings
M	JAN 13	Course Introduction	None Assigned
W	JAN 15	Russia in Revolution	Smith, 1-8; 374-393
F	JAN 17	Roots of Revolution	Smith, 9-34
M	JAN 20	NO CLASS	
W	JAN 22	Prelude to Revolution	Smith, 34-47
F	JAN 24	1905 Revolution	Smith, 47-59
M	JAN 27	The Stolypin Era	Smith, 60-80
W	JAN 29	World War I	Smith, 80-100
F	JAN 31	February Revolution	Smith, 101-124
M	FEB 3	The October Revolution	Smith, 124-151
W	FEB 5	Civil War & Bolshevik Power	Smith, 152-183
F	FEB 7	<i>cont.</i>	Smith, 183-216
M	FEB 10	War Communism	Smith, 217-242
W	FEB 12	<i>cont.</i>	Smith, 242-262
F	FEB 14	N.E.P: Politics & Economy	Smith, 263-291

M	FEB 17	<i>cont.</i>	Smith, 291-312
W	FEB 19	N.E.P.: Society & Culture	Smith, 313-345
F	FEB 21	<i>cont.</i>	Smith, 345-373
M	FEB 24	Stalin's Russia: Intro	TBD
W	FEB 26	Industrialization	TBD
F	FEB 28	Collectivization	TBD
M	MAR 3	Purges and Politics	TBD
W	MAR 5	Catch-up & Review	
F	MAR 7	Mid-Term Exam	
		SPRING BREAK = READ Alexievich!!	
M	MAR 17	World War II/Great Patriotic War	Documents 1
W	MAR 19	<i>cont.</i>	Alexievich
F	MAR 21	<i>cont.</i>	
M	MAR 24	Stalin's Final Years and legacy	Documents 2
W	MAR 26	The Gulag Experience	Applebaum <i>Voices</i>
F	MAR 28	<i>cont.</i>	
M	MAR 31	Khrushchev & De-Stalinization	Documents 3
W	APR 2	Beginning of Cold War	
F	APR 4	Brezhnev and Stabilization	Documents 4
M	APR 7	Stagnation & Gerontocracy	
W	APR 9		
F	APR 11	NO CLASS	
M	APR 14	NO CLASS	
W	APR 16	Gorbachev Era & Reform	Documents 5
F	APR 18	<i>cont.</i>	
M	APR 21	Collapse of the USSR	Documents 7
W	APR 23	Yeltsin and "Russian Devolution"	
F	APR 25	<i>cont.</i>	
M	APR 28	Putin and Russia?	Documents 8
W	APR 30	<i>cont.</i>	
F	MAY 2	Conclusions/Review/Catch-up	

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 7, 10:30-1:00

PLNU Mission
To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Department of History and Political Science Mission

As followers of Christ, the Department of History and Political Science promotes wisdom and scholarship about historical contexts and political systems, so that graduates can become local and global leaders in the service of Christ and humanity.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. 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 issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

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 and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

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.

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 drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

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PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

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. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.