

Russian Politics After Communism | POU44171

Year	Senior Sophister
ECTS Credits	5
Contact Hours	1.5 hours per week
Pre-requisite	Nil
Semester	1
Module Leader & Lecturer	Dr Noah Buckley
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Module Outline

Learning Outcomes:

This module will familiarize you with Russian domestic and international politics in a descriptive way by giving you the lay of the land in terms of important events, figures, institutions, and dynamics. The module will also situate Russian politics in relation to other academic research in political science--you will be able to use the knowledge you gain here to better understand corruption, growing authoritarianism, and other factors in the world at large. Research will be presented that puts Russian and other post-Soviet politics into a larger global perspective.

Module Learning Aims:

On successful completion of this module, students will:

- Have an understanding of how the Russian political system has developed since the fall of communism in 1991
- Be familiar with academic research on Russian politics and political economy, as well as related topics such as authoritarianism and natural resources in politics
- Be familiar with the connections between Russian domestic politics and Russia's geopolitical posture
- Have a better grasp on what elements within Russia's authoritarian politics over recent decades lead to its bloody invasion of Ukraine in 2022

Module Content:

After over 70 years of Soviet communist rule, by the 1990s the Russian Federation found itself struggling with political disintegration, chaotic and weak democracy, and caustic legacies of an economy not built for capitalist markets. This course explores the evolution of Russian politics from the dynamic times of Gorbachev to the “vertical of power” in Putin’s third term in office to the intrigues that are rocking Russian politics today. This module covers topics including the collapse of the Soviet political and economic systems,

Russian political institutions such as presidentialism and federalism, the never-ending scourge of corruption, “petropolitics,” Russia's political parties, the opposition and fight for democracy in Russia, and current social movements in the country. The module will also examine trends of increasing “neo-imperialism” as Russia has invaded and intervened in Ukraine in 2014 and 2022, Georgia in 2008, and elsewhere around the world in recent decades. What are Putin's motivations and how can we expect Russia to act on the global stage in the years to come? We will attempt to answer this and related questions in this module.

Assessment

Essay - weighted 40%

Exam - weighted 60%

Recommended Reading List

- Treisman, Daniel, ed. *The New Autocracy: Information, Politics, and Policy in Putin's Russia*. Brookings Institution Press, 2018.
- Frye, Timothy. *Weak Strongman: The Limits of Power in Putin's Russia*. Princeton University Press, 2021.
- Greene, Samuel A., and Graeme B. Robertson. *Putin v. the People: The Perilous Politics of a Divided Russia*. Yale University Press, 2019.