

## **Russian History- 3 credits**

Fall semester 2010 – St Petersburg Christian University

Instructor: Janyne Johnston

### **1. Course Description**

This course presents an introduction to the history of Russia, from 800 A.D. to the present, with some stress on cultural concepts. An effort will be made to incorporate exposure to actual places of historical interest. A train trip to Moscow will be required, along with a trip to Novgorod. The student is expected to become familiar with the recognizable phases of Russian history and to develop a broad understanding of some of the major facets of the rich heritage impacting the people and events of today. 3 hours. Prerequisites: World History. The History of Christianity would also be helpful.

### **2. Course Objectives**

This course is intended to help students to:

A. Become familiar with recognizable phases of Russian history through classroom lectures, assigned readings and weekly quizzes;

B. Become aware of the richness of the historical past through visits to museums, memorials and churches from the 11<sup>th</sup> century on;

C. Increase their appreciation for Russian culture and history through personal visits to places of major importance in the capital city, the cultural capital, and one of the most ancient towns (Moscow, St Petersburg, and Novgorod);

D. Begin to integrate historical details and express personal insights through the writing of various papers;

E. Become aware of the important influence of the Russian Orthodox faith in the history of this country through classroom lectures, assigned readings and a visit to at least one Orthodox service.

F. Begin to appreciate some of the perspectives of Russian Orthodox theology through reading and discussion of assigned texts.

G. Become aware of the sense of danger experienced by this nation over the centuries by constructing a list of surrounding territories and noting the number and types of wars fought.

H. Begin to experience and appreciate some of the Russian attitudes toward major historical heroes by reading excerpts from the book, A Russian History in Folk Tales.

I. Deepen their awareness of the suffering endured by this people through a visit to the Blockade Museum and assigned readings, including selections from the underground publication, "Prisoner Bulletin," written during the Communist years.

J. Become more aware of the extent, limits and contributions of Communist control and perspectives

through the reading of assigned texts and classroom lectures.

K. Better understand the present experience of the Russian people, of current events and situations through classroom lectures, assigned readings and the experience of living within the culture.

This, in turn, is expected to promote friendship, deepen understanding, decrease political tensions, and facilitate the ability to show love in an acceptable format to people of diverse historical and cultural backgrounds.

### 3. Course Outline

See attached Reading Sheet.

### 4. Bibliography

The texts required for this course are:

- (1) **A History of Russia, volume I**. Moss, Walter G. Anthem Press, Wimbledon Publishing Company, London, 2002.
- (2) **A History of Russia, volume II**. Moss, Walter G. Anthem Press, Wimbledon Publishing Company, London, 2005.

The instructor will also utilize and/or make reading assignments from the following:

- (3) Aron, Leon. Boris Yeltsin, A Revolutionary Life. HarperCollins, London, 2001.
- (4) Alexeyev, S(ergei). Russian History in Tales, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1985.
- (5) de Haas, Marcel. Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Putin, Medvedev and Beyond. Routledge, New York, 2010.
- (6) Dmytryshyn, Basil. USSR, A Concise History, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1971.
- (7) Gevorkyan, Timakova, and Kolesnikov. First Person. Hutchinson, United Kingdom, 2000.
- (8) Goldman, Marshall I. Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia. Oxford University Press, Inc., New York, 2008, 2010.
- (9) LeVine, Steve. Putin's Labyrinth: Spies, Murder, and the Dark Heart of the New Russia. Random House, Inc., New York, 2008, 2009.
- (10) Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000, Microsoft Corporation, 1993-1999.
- (11) Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2004, Microsoft Corporation, 1993-2003.
- (12) Neville, Peter. Russia, The USSR, the CIS, and the Independent States, The Windrush Press, Gloucestershire, 2000.
- (13) Oxley, Peter. Russia: 1855-1991, From Czars to Commissars, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001.
- (14) Politkovskaya, Anna. Putin's Russia. The Harville Press, London, 2004.
- (15) Sproule, Anna. Mikhail Gorbachev. Exley Publications Ltd, Watford, 1990.
- (16) Stuermer, Michael. Putin and the Rise of Russia. Pegasus Books LLC, New York, 2009.
- (17) The World Book Multimedia Encyclopedia, World Book, Inc., Chicago, 1998.
- (18) Ware, Timothy. The Orthodox Church, Penguin Books, New York, 1993.
- (19) Werth, Alexander. Russia at War, 1941-1945. Avon Books, New York, 1964.
- (20) Yeltsin, Boris. Midnight Diaries. The Orion Publishing House, London, 2000.
- (21) See also 5 H below for a list of video's.

## 5. Course Requirements

A. Reading assignments are given in the attached Reading Sheet. There will be approximately 25-30 pages per class. It is imperative to have all readings done on time! **(Worth 20 points)**

B. Weekly quizzes will be given to enhance retention of information. **(Worth 20 points)**

C. A final exam will be given to enable further processing of the material covered, to consolidate information and to demonstrate a basic understanding of the history of Russia. **(Worth 20 points)**

D. A 5-10 page typewritten report will be required on the trip to Moscow. It should include a description of the area visited, a discussion of historical information connected with this city, and personal reflections or perspectives. **(Worth 5 points)**

E. To awaken and enhance an interest in the history unfolding in our days, students are encouraged to read current newspaper reports on Russian economy, corruption/law, foreign affairs, domestic policies, or religious concerns. The St Petersburg Times, which is issued on Tuesdays and Fridays, can be read on-line (<http://www.sptimes.ru>); other on-line sources can also be used. *Choose 1 or 2 spheres of interest and concentrate on reading in that area.* One article or editorial with your evaluation will be required **each week, for the first 12 weeks** of class. A copy of each article should be attached to your paper. Use a colored pencil to underline 3 sentences which stand out for you. If the article and your response is submitted by email, use bold print to highlight the 3 sentences to which you want to respond. Write a 3-5 sentence comment. See the prepared sample. **(Worth 12 points)**

F. A 5-10 page paper will be required on 1 of the people listed below. **(Worth 10 points for 200 level course, 4 points for 300 level course):**

1. Peter the Great
2. Catherine the Great
3. Nicholas and Alexandra
4. Stalin
5. Yeltsin
6. Putin

Papers should include information on that person's family background, personality, policies favored, events dealt with, contributions or accomplishments, and influence on future generations. Attention should also be given to grammar and spelling.

For the 300 level course, an additional project will be required, **worth 6 points**. Students will need to read one of the books listed below, provide an outline of 2 chapters in detail along with an overall report on the book and the author (including mention of any biases noted and the intended audience), and present a 20-minute session to the class on what was learned. Information obtained from point E, above, should be incorporated.

1. Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by Marcel de Haas, 2010

2. Putin's Labyrinth by Steve LeVine, 2009
3. Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia by Marshall I. Goldman, 2008, 2010
4. Putin and the Rise of Russia by Michael Stuermer, 2009

G. Visit a Russian Orthodox church service and submit a 1-2 page paper describing the setting, the activity, and personal insights or responses (**Worth 3 points**).

H. Video's can make a huge impact in helping to absorb information and understand circumstances. For this reason, several video's will be made available for this class. It is highly recommended that you make every effort to watch all of them! Question sheets have been prepared for several of these to help increase comprehension. These may include:

- Alexander Nevsky, approximately 2 hours, 15 minutes
- Peter the Great, 6 hours (It's long but worth the effort!)
- The Hermitage, vol one, on Catherine the Great, 55 minutes
- Nicholas and Alexandra, 3 hours
- Stalin, 3 hours
- Red Star, vol 11: The World at War, approximately 1 hour

6. **Extra credit** may be obtained to help offset poor quiz scores by completing a set of 5 papers, 1-2 pages each, on places of historical interest in the St. Petersburg area. This should include the name and location of the site visited, a description, some historical information, and a personal response.

7. **Extra credit** may also be obtained by research papers. Obtain prior permission from the instructor.

8. **Expectations:** Students are expected to attend all lectures and to be in class, ready for work, on time. Absences will require extra work.

9. **Course Grades** will be computed as follows:

- Number 5A above will count 30% of the grade. (Assigned readings)
- Number 5B above will count 20% of the grade. (Quizzes)
- Number 5C above will count 20% of the grade. (Final exam)
- Number 5D above will count 5% of the grade. (Moscow report)
- Number 5E above will count 12% of the grade. (Newspaper articles with short evaluation)
- Number 5F above will count 10% of the grade. (Paper on named historical figures for 200 level,  
Paper plus project for 300 level course)
- Number 5G above will count 3% of the grade. (Visit to ROC service and short paper)

**To obtain a C**, the student must have an average of 75% for the total, 5A-G.

**To obtain a B**, the student must have an average of 85% for the total of 5A-G.

**To obtain an A**, the student must have an average of 95% for the total of 5A-G.