

History 447

Revolutionary Russia, 1905-1921

Dr. Paul Werth [2019]
MW, 8.30-9.45 AM | WRI C-307

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Course Goals

The Russian Revolution of 1917 represents one of the most significant events of modern history. The twentieth century is essentially inconceivable without it. This course explores the sources, nature, and consequences of the revolution by intensively analyzing politics, society, and culture in late imperial and early Soviet Russia from 1905 to 1921. The course proceeds from the proposition that the revolutionary process may not be reduced to the events of 1917, but should instead be understood in terms of larger changes in political practices extending from the late tsarist period until the end of the civil war—and indeed beyond into the realm of commemoration. Students who dutifully and earnestly discharge the requirements of this course will be able

- To identify the principal historical players and social groups central to the revolution's unfolding;
- To analyze the diverse circumstances, structures, and events that proved critical to the fall of the old regime, the Bolshevik seizure of power, and the early evolution of the new Soviet state;
- To identify core elements of the geography and administrative structures of the Russian Empire, the USSR, and the broader Eurasian space in which they were located;
- To describe how the revolution was understood by both Soviet and post-Soviet Russian regimes in the century since 1917;
- To develop the skill of historical empathy by adopting an identity of a person or group in the years 1905-1921;
- To engage successfully in independent research, through which each student will find materials relevant to his/her group;
- To speak in a public setting from the subjective viewpoint of that person or group, as if the student were experiencing the events of 1905-1921 him/herself;
- And to write effectively and fluently about the revolutionary process.

Attendance and Participation

This course makes the brash assumption that you want to learn and aspire to discuss the material we will be reading. I therefore put a premium on your attendance and *active* participation. Absences will be detrimental to your final grade. Nasty and oppressive mechanisms to ensure compliance with the reading assignments may be introduced at any time. Absences on conference days are positively unforgivable.

Written Assignments

There is a series of written assignments for this course that collectively constitute a coherent writing experience. For the course I ask that you adopt the identity of an individual or group that you will represent throughout the semester. You will see in the schedule below four “conferences,” at which time we will convene specially to discuss your findings. For each conference (in the final case a little bit after) you will compose a “position paper” in which you describe how the situation appears from the subjective standpoint of your group or individual. Each paper thus informs the next one, which will have the cumulative effect of producing an assessment of the experience of your group/individual over the entire revolutionary process (unless s/he perished, in which case we will discuss how you can deal with the problem). The first two papers (3-4 pp. each) are worth 5% each, the second (7-8 p.) worth 10%, and the final (10-12 pp.) worth 15% of your total grade. More information on this exercise is on the web site. Written work should be submitted to the instructor by email with a clear subject line and with your last name as the title of the file that you send. Work is considered on time if it is received by noon on the due date. Thereafter, submissions are downgraded 1 point for every 30 minutes that they are late. All written submissions should have a clear title and should be written in 12-point font with one-inch margins on all side. There is no need for a title page.

Quizzes and Exams

There will be two **geography quizzes**, designed to test your basic knowledge of the Eurasian landmass. The web site tells you what you need to know and provides resources for preparation. There will moreover be four **content quizzes**, all comparatively brief (15 minutes or so) and designed to test primarily factual knowledge. Of the results on these four quizzes, I will eliminate the lowest score, so that only three scores will inform your final grade. Geography quizzes can be taken at a time other than the scheduled one only if there is a very good reason for this and *if and only if* the student contacts me before the originally scheduled quiz. Content quizzes may not be made up; a missed quiz results in a zero. Although there is no mid-term exam, there is a **final exam** (about which more information will be provided later); there is no mid-term exam. All quizzes and exams are guaranteed to be fun (though the instructor’s conception of “fun” may differ substantially from that of students).

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Attendance + conference participation:	20%
Geography quizzes	10%
Content quizzes	15%
Papers	35%
Final exam	20%

Syllabus as Contract

This syllabus represents a contract between instructor and student, one equally binding on all parties. Students may not find refuge for neglecting the terms of the syllabus by claiming ignorance of its contents. On exceptionally rare occasions, the instructor may need to make changes to the syllabus unilaterally. In all other cases, changes to the syllabus shall be the function of deliberation and vote of the group as a whole, with the majority of votes carrying the day. The instructor alone may initiate such deliberation.

Materials for this course

The materials for this course take five basic forms. The **first** is reading that you may purchase or borrow in the form of books. There are three such required books for the course:

- S. A. Smith, *Russian in Revolution: An Empire in Crisis, 1890-1928* (Oxford, 2017)
- Mark Steinberg, ed., *Voices of Revolution, 1917* (Yale, 2001)
- Richard Pipes, *Three "Whys" of the Russian Revolution* (Vintage, 1995)

Second, a small number of readings take the form of PDF texts that have been posted on the course web site and are labeled as such in the schedule below. **Third**, on two occasions the entire group will access the same published article, which can be found on the site of Lied Library. **Fourth**, students will engage in dependent research on the groups or individuals that they have selected for the conferences. This will involve deploying a combination of library materials, a matter to which we devote a special session at Lied Library. **Fifth**, and finally, there is a fine two-part film on the revolution that can be streamed from the web site of Lied Library.

Schedule of Readings & Assignments

I. INTRODUCTIONS & THE TWILIGHT OF IMPERIAL RUSSIA

JANUARY 23. Introduction: The Course & the Cast

Q: What are the requirements for this course and why is it structured as it is?

JANUARY 28. Definitions and the Nature of Tsarism

Q: What are the principal characteristics of a revolution?

Q: What were some of the principal attributes of Russia's old regime?

Reading: S. A. Smith, *Russia in Revolution* (Oxford, 2017), pp. 1-24

JANUARY 30. Library Session—**Meet at Pioche classroom, Lied Library, 1st floor**

Q: In what ways may students locate sources for their identities?

Other: Provisionally identify a social, ethnic, political, religious, or other group or individual (see web site for details)

FEBRUARY 4. Methodological Diversion: Using Sources

Q: How can we use sources—both primary & secondary—to make points about the past?

Reading: Mark D. Steinberg, *Voices of Revolution* (New Haven, 2001), pp. 1-35

Other: GEOGRAPHY QUIZ #1

FEBRUARY 6. Stasis & Change in Late Imperial Russia

Q: How was tsarist Russia changing in its last decades, and how was it not?

Reading: Smith, *Russia in Revolution*, pp. 24-47

FEBRUARY 11. Marxism in Russia

Q: What are the central tenets of Marxism and what did Russian Marxists add?

Reading: Two texts on Marxism [web site]

Other: You must have committed to an identity by now and informed me of your choice.

FEBRUARY 13. The “Revolution” of 1905

Q: In what ways did 1905-07 constitute a “revolution” (and in what ways not)?

Reading: Smith, *Russia in Revolution*, pp. 47-76

Three documents on 1905 [web site]

Other: CONTENT QUIZ #1

NO CLASS FEBRUARY 18 – Presidents’ Day

FEBRUARY 20. Storm Approaching

Q: What were the prospects for imperial Russia in its last decade?

Reading: Smith, 76-80; Steinberg, 37-49

Other: CONFERENCE #1: FIRST PAPER DUE

FEBRUARY 25. The Crucible of War

Q: What were the principal challenges and experience of Russia in WWI?

Reading: Smith, 80-100

Memorandum of interior minister Peter Durnovo to the Tsar [web site]

II. FROM FEBRUARY TO OCTOBER

FEBRUARY 27. The Autocracy's Collapse

Q: What were the autocracy's decisive weaknesses, and was collapse inevitable?

Reading: Richard Pipes, *Three "Whys" of the Russian Revolution* (NY, 1994), pp. 1-30

Other: Watch *Russian Revolution in Color, Part I: Freedom and Hope* (library web site)

MARCH 4. Experiencing 1917: An Overview

Reading: Steinberg, 49-79, 149-82

MARCH 6. Workers

Reading: Steinberg, 79-106, 182-99

MARCH 11. Soldiers

Reading: Steinberg, 106-28, 199-234

MARCH 13. Peasants

Reading: Steinberg, 128-47, 234-50

Other: CONTENT QUIZ #2

NO CLASS MARCH 18 and 20 – The Revolution takes a holiday

MARCH 25. Reviewing 1917 (after the revolutionary spring break)

Q: What were the principal events, processes, and institutions that defined 1917?

Reading: Smith, 101-151

MARCH 27. **CONFERENCE #2: SECOND PAPER DUE**

APRIL 1. Explaining the Bolshevik victory

How and why were the Bolsheviks able to seize power?

Reading: Pipes, Three Whys, pp. 31-62

III. CIVIL WAR BOLSHEVIK DICTATORSHIP

APRIL 3. Civil War & the Making of Bolshevik Dictatorship

Reading: Smith, pp. 152-216

Other: Watch *Russian Revolution in Color, Part II: Fear and Paranoia* (library web site)

APRIL 8. The World of War Communism

Reading: Smith, pp. 217-62

Other: CONTENT QUIZ #3

APRIL 10. Asserting the Bolshevik Dictatorship

Reading: Steinberg, 251-308

APRIL 15. **CONFERENCE #3: THIRD PAPER DUE**

IV. ENDINGS AND AFTERMATHS

APRIL 17. New Economic Policy I

Reading: Smith, 263-312

APRIL 22. New Economic Policy II

Reading: Smith, 313-73

Other: GEOGRAPHY QUIZ #2

APRIL 24. Revolutionary Endings?

Q: Was Stalin the continuation of the revolution or a departure?

Reading: Smith, 374-93

Pipes, Three Whys, pp. 63-84

APRIL 29. FINAL CONFERENCE (no paper due at this time)

MAY 1. The Meanings of 1917 for the USSR

Q: How did the USSR interpret, commemorate, and celebrate 1917?

Reading: Igor Torbakov, "Celebrating Red October: A Story of Ten Anniversaries of the Russian Revolution, 1927-2017," *Scando-Slavica*, 64.1 (2018): 7-30.

Other: CONTENT QUIZ #4

MAY 6. The Russian Revolution at 100

Q: What did the Russian Revolution mean for post-Soviet Russia in 2017?

Reading: James Ryan, "The Politics of National History: Russia's Ruling Elite and the Centenary of 1917," *Revolutionary Russia*, 31.1 (2018): 24-45.

MAY 8. Review Session. FINAL PAPER (#4) DUE

MAY 15: FINAL EXAMINATION, 8.00-10.00 AM

Stunning University Policies to Excite You Further:

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

Classroom Conduct—Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities, are permitted only with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative drop.

Classroom Surveillance—Nevada Revised Statutes (State Law) 396.970 Surreptitious electronic surveillance on campus; exceptions. [Effective January 1, 2017.]

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, it is unlawful for a person to engage in any kind of surreptitious electronic surveillance on a campus of the System without the knowledge of the person being observed.
 2. Subsection 1 does not apply to any electronic surveillance:
 - (a) Authorized by a court order issued to a public officer, based upon a showing of probable cause to believe that criminal activity is occurring on the property under surveillance;
 - (b) By a law enforcement agency pursuant to a criminal investigation;
 - (c) By a peace officer pursuant to NRS 289.830;
 - (d) By a uniformed peace officer of the Nevada Highway Patrol Division of the Department of Public Safety pursuant to NRS 480.365;
 - (e) Which is necessary as part of a system of security used to protect and ensure the safety of persons on the campus; or
 - (f) Of a class or laboratory when authorized by the teacher of the class or laboratory.
- (Added to NRS by 1993, 2138; A 2015, 575, 3668, effective January 1, 2017)

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves **with** and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor **within** the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or **within** the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit:

<http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching—The University encourages students to use a transparency template to discuss with their instructors how assignments and course activities benefit student success: https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/TILT-Framework-Students.pdf

Incomplete Grades—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Library Resources

Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the subject librarian is https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject. UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students’ access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.

Tutoring and Coaching—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call [702-895-3177](tel:702-895-3177). The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

UNLV Writing Center—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

Rebelmail—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Final Examinations—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

