

Catalog course description

This course uses the experience of the Soviet Union and Russia to understand change in political and economic systems,

Communication

The easiest way to communicate with me is by e-mail. I will usually respond within 24 hours, a bit longer on weekends. Don't hesitate to resend your message if you think I am taking too long. I will be communicating with you as individuals and with the whole class through e-mail on a regular basis, so be sure that you also check e-mail regularly.

I will be holding Zoom office hours every week Monday and Wednesday 3:45-4:30 pm Central US time. During those times, you can just drop in if you want to talk about anything. The standing office hour meeting link is <https://slu.zoom.us/j/96903001331?pwd=bjkveWRrUkJoYjI2d1I4dmdXRWpFdz09>.

I'm also happy to arrange a separate meeting with you, if you would rather meet privately. For this semester, those meetings mostly will be on Zoom or on the phone. Just e-mail me if you want to set up a meeting outside office hours. When you e-mail, let me know some times that will work for you. For those of you taking the class in person, I'll be available after class to talk in a socially distanced way.

Throughout the semester, we will be communicating with each other through a number of online tools, including Blackboard. Here are a few "netiquette" – or internet etiquette – rules.

Be respectful: Respect the opinions and privacy of your classmates. We can certainly disagree – and we may learn more when we do – but please disagree tactfully and explain the reasons for your disagreement. Do not share personal information about your classmates with others.

Be scholarly: Use correct language, grammar, and spelling. Write in full sentences. Credit the ideas of others. Be clear when you are stating an opinion, and provide sources to back up your facts. Where appropriate, engage the class readings directly or refer to ideas and concepts that

This class is divided into 5 modules. Each module will include a few low-stakes assessments. These will include discussion boards, blogs, short reflections, quizzes and some group projects. More information on these low-stakes assessments is provided for each module on Blackboard. Students taking the class online will complete all this work on Blackboard. Students who are present in the classroom will be able to complete some of it in class. In either case, you will receive feedback on these exercises, usually within 5 days, in the Blackboard grade center.

Included in the low-stakes assessment is evaluation of your participation in class. Whether you are taking the class in person or on line, you should come to class prepared to engage the material during every class meeting. This daily participation will help you apply the concepts you are learning and expose where you still have questions. To participate effectively, you will need to keep up to date with the assigned reading and continually think about how ideas from one set of readings relate to the others. You should be prepared to

Tips for success

Do all the reading and think about it. It is very difficult to fully engage with the topics we will be examining without doing the reading. I provide a reading question for each day to help you focus your reading on aspects we are likely to talk about in class.

W.E.B. DuBois, "Marxism and the Negro Problem," from *W.E.B. DuBois: A Reader*, edited by David Levering Lewis (New York: Henry Holt, 1995), pp. 538-544 (on e-reserve).

Does it make sense to think – as Marx does – that revolution will arise organically from the situation of the proletariat under capitalism? What does Lenin think? What does Olson think?

February 10

Colton, pp. 13-42.

March 10 ESSAY ONE DUE

March 15 Colton, pp. 54-68.
David Painter, *The Cold War: An International History* (London: Routledge, 1999),
pp. 112-118 (e-reserve).
Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010),
pp. 153-157 (e-reserve).
Seweryn Bialer, "Soviet Stability and its Sources," In Ostrow, pp. 44-64.

Was the Soviet Union still "totalitarian" after Stalin?
Why did observers think the Soviet system was more stable than it really was?
What did they miss? Why did they miss it?

March 17 Colton, pp. 68-84.
Igor Kliamkin and Andranik Migranian, "The Iron Hand! Do We Need It?"
Literaturnaya Gazeta (International), February 1990 (on e-reserve).

Why might it be hard to reform a totalitarian system?

