Political Projects of the Twentieth Century:  
The Soviet Union

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Course type: A compulsory core course taught in the 3rd year of the BA program, 2 ECTS, 76 academic hours.

Prerequisites: Students should posses a general knowledge of modern Russian/Soviet history.

Outline: After centuries of expansion, the tsarist empire collapsed in political crisis and military defeat. Within months the Bolsheviks had come to power in Russia and established what they claimed to be the first socialist government in history. This course will explore the fate of that government and the people it ruled, the seventy-four years of “socialist” experimentation, industrial transformation of a backward peasant economy, the establishment of a new type of party-state dictatorship, and the attempts after 1985 to transform the Soviet system that led to the collapse of the state.

Module: 1st (September 20 — October 21)

Language of instruction: English.

Objectives: Various critiques and explanations of Soviet society, ranging from Western sovietological to Marxist, will be introduced and examined through the course. The goal of the course is to establish the basis for a broader and deeper understanding of Soviet history and to provide material for analysis of the USSR, Russia, and the successor states from a variety of viewpoints.

Outcomes: Upon completion of the course students should know contemporary historiography of Soviet history, current methodology employed by the scholars working in the field, as well as the main events of the Soviet history. They also should be able to read, analyze and generalize special literature on Soviet history. Additionally they will possess research, analytic, synthetic skills together with an ability to present the results of one’s research on public.

Assessment:  
Seminar participation (40%);  
Seminar presentation (10%);  
Written assignment (book review) (10%);  
Written exam (40%).
Written assignment deadline: October 14.

Guidelines for grading: \( G_{\text{final}} = 0.6 \times G_{\text{cumulative module grade}} \) (seminar participation, seminar presentation, written assignment) + 0.4 \( G_{\text{written exam}} \).

Course content:

Tuesday, September 20
Lecture 1. Ronald Suny: Introduction. Russia, State and Society before 1900
Seminar 1. Assigned reading:

Friday, September 23
Lecture 2: Ronald Suny: The Russian Revolutions, 1905–1917
Seminar 2: Anton Kotenko
Assigned reading:

Tuesday, September 27
Lecture 3: Ronald Suny: Civil War and NEP (New Economic Policy), 1918–1928
Seminar 3: Anton Kotenko
Assigned reading:

Friday, September 30
Lecture 4: Anton Kotenko: Stalin and Stalinism, 1928–1953: Looking Through the Lens of Magnitogorsk
Seminar 4: Anton Kotenko
Assigned reading 4:
Suggested Additional Reading:

Friday, October 7
Lecture 5: Anton Kotenko: Soviet Power and the Nationality Question: Ukraine as a Case Study
Seminar 5: Anton Kotenko
Assigned readings:

Friday, October 14
Lecture 6: Ronald Suny: War and the Victory over Fascism, 1939–1945
Seminar 7: Anton Kotenko
Assigned readings:

Friday, October 21
Seminar 7: Ronald Suny
Assigned readings: