

Department of Geography
Western University

Geography 2045A
Russia and The Former Soviet Union: The Legacy
Section 001
2013/14

Course Day, Hours and Location: Wednesday, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. in SSC 3026

Instructor:

Dr. S. Greaves

TA: TBA

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Office hours: Mon. 11:30-1:00, Wed. 10:30-11:30

1. Introduction

I do not assume that you have a background in geography. I do, however, assume that you have reasonable general knowledge of the world around you and its history. The course is intended to broaden your knowledge and understanding of the former Soviet Union, Russia and its neighbours. There will be an emphasis on issues and problems relating to the environment and to resource utilization.

Calendar Description:

"An introduction to the geography of Russia and its neighbours with an emphasis on the Soviet legacy. Topics covered will include resource and environmental issues, culture and nationalism, the economy and demographics." (UWO Academic Calendar)

There are no prerequisites or antirequisites for Geography 2045A at this time other than second year standing or above.

2. Learning Objectives

The geographical objectives of this course include (1) an increased awareness of geographical diversity through knowledge of different places and an understanding of the factors that have shaped them and (2) exposure to and practice in thinking spatially.

At the end of this course, you will have an:

1. expanded knowledge of the geography of Russia and the former Soviet Union (e.g. physical, cultural, economic, environmental)
2. increased familiarity with the map of Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe

3. increased understanding of the regions of today's Russia and its neighbours in light of the Soviet legacy

3. Course Content

The course will consist of an overview of a variety of topics including industry, agriculture, the environment, culture and nationalism, and demographics. Since we will be considering "legacy", the historical geography of the former Soviet Union with respect to these topics will figure prominently in the course.

4. Course Texts

Required:

Blinnikov, Mikhail, A Geography of Russia and Its Neighbors Guilford Press, 2010

You are also asked to purchase or have access to a good quality atlas. A wide variety of atlases are available in the Western Library system for your use. Online atlases and other online resources may not be sufficient by themselves.

Reference:

Bradshaw, M. and Stenning, A. East Central Europe and the Former Soviet Union Pearson Education Limited, 2004

5. Course Requirements and Grading

Grading in the course will be based on the following:

| | Marks |
|-------------------|-------|
| Quizzes (3) | 30 |
| Mid Term Test | 25 |
| Final Examination | 45 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 100 |

Exam format (this does not include quizzes) will be mixed (i.e. objective, short answer and essay). Quizzes will be map based. Quizzes may also include objective questions (multiple choice, true/false, etc.). No electronic devices will be allowed during tests and examinations. No aids of any kind will be permitted without the express prior permission of the instructor.

6. Policy on Writing Skills

Writing skills, including grammar and spelling, will be taken into consideration in the grading of all work.

7. Plagiarism:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

8. E-Mail Policy

My general policy regarding the use of e-mail with respect to courses is as follows:

- (a) Please identify yourself and the course you are writing about in all emails.
- (b) I will answer all questions as I am able. Please anticipate a minimum of 24 hours turnaround time.
- (c) I do not normally check email on weekends.
- (d) I do not guarantee timely responses to emails sent 24 hours (or less) prior to a test, exam or quiz.

9. Website:

We will be using Owl (Sakai) to deliver most "handouts" and lecture outlines, and to post grades. It is your responsibility to obtain the necessary information and material, particularly for quizzes, from Owl (Sakai). We will also be using the announcement function as necessary. Please check it regularly.

10. Please note:

Tests and quizzes, etc. returned during the course should be retained until the final grade in the course has been issued. In the case of a disagreement regarding the recorded marks, it will be necessary to produce the graded item in order for a change to be made. Please check your grades on Owl (Sakai).

There will be no extra assignments, etc. to make up marks. Grades are awarded on the basis of merit, not need.

Requests for accommodation regarding missed tests and exams should be directed to your Academic Counselling Office. Accommodation will be arranged at the request of Academic Counselling. If you miss a quiz, you will be expected to provide the reason for missing the quiz to the instructor. You will then be given the opportunity to write the quiz during office hours in the one week following the originally scheduled date. This opportunity ends when the marked quizzes are returned to the class.

For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf
Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca>
under the Medical Documentation heading.

Your attendance at each and every class is expected as is your attention during those classes. I commit to starting each class at the appointed time and in turn expect punctuality from you. I commit to conducting class in a manner that maintains an academic atmosphere, that is conducive to learning, and that fosters respect. I expect behaviour from you that contributes to the same goals.

11. Please note:

Mental Health Website

If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for more information on these resources and on mental health.

Western's commitment to accessibility

Western University is committed to achieving barrier free accessibility for persons studying, visiting and working at Western.

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Support Services

Registrarial Services: <http://www3.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>
Student Development Services: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

12. Topic Schedule and Readings:

N.B. - Time allotments are approximations only.

Week 1 & 2 – Introduction:

Blinnikov – Chapters 1,6,7,8, and 9
Bradshaw and Stenning – Chapter 1, Sections 2 and 3

Week 3 – Physical Environment:

Blinnikov – Chapters 2,3, and 4

Week 4 – Agriculture:

Blinnikov – Chapter 20
Bradshaw and Stenning – Chapter 5 – Sections 1, 3, 4, and 5

Week 5 – Industry:

Blinnikov – Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Week 6 & 7 – Demographics and Nationalism:

Blinnikov – Chapters 10, and 13
Bradshaw and Stenning – Chapter 8, Sections 1, 2, and 5.1

Week 8 – The Environment:

Blinnikov – Chapter 5
Bradshaw and Stenning – Chapter 6, Sections 2, 3, 7, and 8

Week 9 – Social Issues:

Blinnikov – Chapters 12, 14, and 15
Bradshaw and Stenning – Chapter 9, Sections 3, and 4;
Chapter 7, Sections 1, 3.1, 4, and 4.1

Week 10 – Urban Russia:

Blinnikov – Chapter 11
Bradshaw and Stenning – Chapter 4, Sections 3.2, and 4.1

Week 11 & 12 – Regions of the FSU:

Blinnikov – Chapters 22 to 31 inclusive

Week 13 - Conclusion

13. Evaluation Schedule:

Quiz 1 - Wednesday, September 25, 2013

Quiz 2 - Wednesday, October 9, 2013

Midterm – Wednesday, October 23, 2013

Quiz 3 - Wednesday, November 13, 2013

Final Exam: December Exam Period, date and time TBA