

Russia to Peter the Great

History 3604: Fall 2005

Professor Tom Ewing

Office hours: Monday 1-2 pm, Wednesday 11-12; by appointment

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This course examines the period from the formation of the Russian state in the ninth century through the establishment of the Imperial system by Peter the Great at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Tracing the historical development of Russian politics, society, and culture through the Kievan, Appanage, Mongol, and Muscovite periods, this course devotes particular attention to the process of nation-building in the Eurasian steppes, the relationship between Russia and its bordering states, the role of the Orthodox Church in shaping ideology and culture, the formation of distinct social classes, the role of prominent personalities, comparisons of women in elite, urban, and peasant communities, the establishment of serfdom, the emergence of an autocratic political system, the repeated threats of war and foreign occupation, and attempts to modernize Russia in response to the dominant powers of Europe. Assigned readings include selected primary documents and literary works as well as secondary studies that approach Russian history from a variety of perspectives.

This course is designed to encourage students to pursue three objectives:

- 1) To become familiar with the most important events, people, and processes of Russian history in its first millenium.
- 2) To understand how these historical events, people, and processes have shaped the evolution of Russia and the contemporary world.
- 3) To develop the analytical skills necessary to think and write effectively about processes of change in terms of both the experiences of individuals and the development of broader communities.

Assigned books:

Carolyn Pouncy, ed. *Domostroi* (Cornell University Press)

Gregory Freeze, ed., *Russia: A History* (Oxford University Press)

Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., *Medieval Russia. A Source Book, 850-1700* (Academic Intern'l Press)

Daniel Kaiser and Gary Marker, eds., *Reinterpreting Russian History* (Oxford University Press)

Requirements:	Date:	Percent of Grade	
		Option 1	Option 2
Exam	September 28	25%	20%
Exam	November 16	25%	20%
Research project	Final paper due December 7		30%
Writing assignments	Throughout semester	25%	20%
Final essay	Due November 30	25%	10%

This course is designed to encourage active learning, in which a student's engagement with the material, with the instructor, and with other students is essential to the process of learning. Most of the course will be taught in a lecture format, but with ample time for questions and occasional periods of discussion. In order to understand the lectures, ask questions, and participate in the discussions, students should do the reading ahead of time, following the assignment schedule. Attendance in all classes is very important. Excessive absences will result in missed assignments and incomplete understanding of materials. Any student with special needs or circumstances should contact the instructor. Students are encouraged to ask questions during class, either to clarify lectures and readings or to explore connections between class materials and contemporary events. Students are also welcome to ask questions and pursue further discussion with the instructor during office hours.

Students choosing to write the optional research paper will need to adhere to the following deadlines: topic statement due September 19, preliminary annotated bibliography due September 26, outline and thesis statement due October 12, rough draft due October 26, and final paper and five minute class presentation due December 7. Students choosing this option are required to consult with the instructor on choice of topic, selection of source materials, and schedule for completion of the project. Students must demonstrate adequate progress toward completion of the paper in order to retain the right to pursue this option. The research paper option is particularly recommended for Russian studies minors, for students with backgrounds in Russian history or European history in the Medieval/Renaissance eras, and for History majors pursuing the "Options" track.

Writing assignments may be announced ahead of time and due in a designated class session, or may be conducted during the class. Writing assignments will not be given an individual letter grade, but some take-home assignments may be graded on a point scale. Make up writing assignments must be turned in before the next class meeting. A cumulative grade for writing assignments will be used to calculate the final grade.

Questions on the exams will be taken from readings, lectures (including examples, illustrations, and topics not necessarily included in the assigned readings), discussions, and writing assignments. Exams will be conducted according to the Virginia Tech honor code. The question for the final essay will be distributed early in the semester, and will draw upon readings, lectures, and writing assignments. Students may consult outside sources, but no additional research is required or expected. Students are strongly encouraged to reflect on the final essay throughout the semester.

The History 3604 page on Blackboard will include the following materials: syllabus, writing assignments, lecture outlines, and supplemental texts. Materials will be made available on the website following each class. Whenever possible, changes in schedules and assignments will be made first in class, and then an announcement will be posted online. Graded work will be returned in class.

Students interested in completing a Russian studies thesis under the auspices of this course should consult with the instructor regarding topic, Russian language sources, and other requirements.

Week 1	Introduction: Time and Space in Russian History
August 22	Putin's Speech on Russia, April 2005 (handout)
August 24	<i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 1-12 <i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 3-8
Week 2	Origins of Russia
August 29	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 2-21
August 31	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp.14-20 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 22-25
Week 3	State and society in Kievan Rus'
September 5	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 26-30 <i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 21-44
September 7	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 49-59, 67-71, 109-122 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 30-64
Week 4	Appanage Era
September 12	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 71-87 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 65-105
September 14	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 105-142 "Alexander Nevsky" (film)
Week 5	Mongol Empire
September 19	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 99-101 <i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 13-17 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 146-152
September 21	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 153-174 "Storm from the East" (film)
Week 6	A Test of Faith
September 26	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 174-186 <i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 101-102, 104-107
September 28	EXAM
Week 7	Rise of Moscow
October 3	<i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 17-26
October 5	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 87-99, 103-104, 137-145 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 190-258

Week 8	Formation of Autocracy
October 10	No Class: Columbus Day
October 12	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 147-149 <i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 27-54 <i>Domostroi</i> pp. 1-87
Week 9	Ivan the Terrible
October 17	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 151-154 “Ivan the Terrible” (film)
October 19	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 154-163 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 259-308
Week 10	Family Politics
October 24	<i>Domostroi</i> pp. 87-121, 129-145, 176-190, 204-239
October 26	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 176-180, 183-222 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 309-341
Week 11	Muscovy in Crisis
October 31	<i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 55-63
November 2	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 342-355
Week 12	A Time of Troubles
November 7	<i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 180-183
November 9	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 355-398 <i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 63-78
Week 13	A Time of Transition
November 14	<i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 78-86 <i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 399-461
November 16	EXAM
Week 14	Peter the Great
November 28	<i>Medieval Russia</i> pp. 461-497 <i>Reinterpreting Russian History</i> pp. 228-229
November 30	FINAL ESSAYS DUE
Week 15	Imperial Russia: Past, Present, and Future
December 5	<i>Russia: A History</i> pp. 87-107
December 7	OPTIONAL RESEARCH PAPERS DUE, WITH CLASS PRESENTATIONS

