Introduction

Despite the dismemberment of the Soviet Union, the ending of the Cold War, and the near total collapse of the Russian economy, it is arguable that no country will be more important for the international economy and global security in the twenty-first century than Russia. Understanding Russia—its history, culture, and politics—is therefore fundamentally important to finding ways to cooperate and coexist with this vast and powerful country. The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to the cultural, social, economic and political structures of Russian history from earliest times down to the end of the seventeenth century, when Russia was poised under Peter the Great to undergo dramatic cultural and social change and become a leading player in the European world. We are all products of our past, and this is especially true of the Russians. In examining a range of topics—from serfdom to autocracy—and personalities—from Ivan the Terrible to St. Sergei of Radonezh—we can begin to grasp not only how the modern Russian state came into being, but acquire some sense of the character of the Russians themselves. This course will plunge students into the primary sources of Russian history: ancient chronicles, works of “high-” and “low-brow” literature, and religious art and architecture. The main purpose of the course (beyond, of course, mastery of lots of names and dates) is for students to obtain a sense of the structure of Russian history and a general appreciation of the formative power of historical events on culture.

Studying Russia is, however, a challenge. There is a strange (to some) combination of the exotic and the familiar about the Russians. They are (mostly) Christians, but Eastern Orthodox (not the kind of Christianity most in the US are familiar with). They had a monarchy, but it was an
autocracy (an unlimited monarchy) with rulers with odd-sounding titles (like tsar’ and autocrat). They are European in culture, language, and religion, but are a society on the periphery of Europe (its eastern edge, with all the mutations and influences that often affect societies that interact with both European and Eurasian cultures). It is often hard to wrap your brain around this history, especially if you have no background in the subject coming into the class. Do not fret about this. Embrace the apparent oddities about Russian history and society. Wade into the history like an explorer discovering a new land. Release yourself from all your preconceptions about how religion works, how government develops, how subjects and rulers interact. I often like to use the (now rather dated) metaphor of Mac versus IBM computers to help explain how you might feel for a time in this class. Mac and IBM computers do the same things—both have word processors, spreadsheet programs, math co-processors, and so on—but anyone who has moved between an iMac and, say, a Dell knows the temporary discomfort and disorientation one feels when going from one environment to the other. In taking this class, you’re going from a Mac (user-friendly, intuitive, unconfounding) to an IBM (strange, complex, and sometimes vexing). This course is an adventure into a past time and foreign culture. Let go and enjoy the adventure. And expect to learn a lot about your own culture and time along the way. After all, as a mentor of mine likes to say, all knowledge is, in the end, self-knowledge.

Goals and Objectives

On the most basic, stratospheric level, the goals of this course are:

1. To describe the interconnectedness and relevance of all knowledge;
2. To identify the nature and limits of historical claims;
3. To describe how historians make claims about the past;
4. To define what a primary source is for a historian;
5. To describe how historical knowledge evolves, changes, and is revised;
6. To demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills and to support these skills through the appropriate use of technology tools.
7. To demonstrate problem solving, critical thinking, and cooperative-learning skills.

and, on an affective level,

8. To instill a love of learning and respect for past and unfamiliar cultures.

These important and lofty goals will be achieved through reading historical texts, reading the works of historians who have worked with these texts, discussing with your peers and with the instructor the meaning and significance of these readings, and by writing about what you have discovered in this course.

The more specific objectives of this reading, discussing, and writing are to:

1. Describe the evolution of several themes over the centuries covered in this course, including: power and authority, religious culture, the multinational features of this geographical space, and art and architecture;
2. *Demonstrate* mastery of a core list of facts, including the names of important historical figures, key historical texts, and, yes, the dates and chronology of events that helped to shape the Russia as a distinct cultural world;

3. *Demonstrate* writing and reasoning skills by engaging the readings and discussions;

    and, on an affective level,

4. *Enrich your lives forever!*

**Texts**


   This book serves as the basic textbook for the course. Its purpose is to provide additional details on topics presented in lecture and discussions, as well as presenting an overview of the structure of Russian History in the period covered in this course. This book has been chosen over other titles because of its brevity, it emphasis on themes important in this course, and its suitability for students new to Russian history. No amount of time spent reading it will be wasted.

2. Ostrowski and Poe, *Portraits of Old Russia*.

   This is a new and innovative collection of short biographies of real and fictional figures in Russia history from a wide range of social backgrounds. The book provides penetrating accounts of the lives of Russians living in the period we treat in this class. This should be a fun read.

3. Kaiser and Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History*

   A valuable collection of primary sources and secondary readings. This will be the main source book for the course. The extensive primary-source readings will be divvied up among the students, but all are encouraged to read everything.


   The best (and shortest) biography of the Terrible Tsar available in English.

In addition, there will be numerous smaller readings week-by-week. These will be on reserve in McGill, available on D2L, or distributed as handouts. See the preliminary course schedule for details.

**Assignments and Policies**

1. *Examinations*. There will be two examinations: a midterm and (non-comprehensive) final. They are both essay format. Part I is a longer essay, chosen from three essay questions. Essay questions are given in advance. Part II is short answer essays on terms. The terms are
at the bottom of the daily lecture handouts. Both components of both exams, therefore, are distributed in advance of the exam. Make-up exams are given only when the student had requested one in advance, for a college-recognized reason or other approved schedule conflict.

2. **Paper.** Students will write a short (3000-word) paper on a treated in this course. The professor will distribute a list of suitable topics, but students are also encouraged to propose one that has captured their interest. Students will present their papers in short oral presentations to be scheduled during presentation sessions (which will be counted as part of your participation grade).

3. **Quizzes.** Bi-weekly 10-, 15-, or 20-point quizzes will be given in class, usually on Fridays, during discussion sections. Make-ups will normally not be administered. The dates for the quizzes are in the course schedule below. If you are going to be absent on the day of a quiz, you must inform the professor in advance, and supply a valid reason for your absence in order to obtain a waiver. Waived quizzes will not count toward the quiz component of your final grade (making those that you do take all the more significant statistically for your grade). There are no pop quizzes in this course.

4. **Participation.** Students will be expected to attend class and to have prepared for lectures and for discussion sessions by having read and thought about the assigned readings. Be forewarned: unexcused or excessive absences will work against you in the final calculation of your grade. Almost every Friday will be a discussion section, during which we will focus on one of our topics or readings. Attendance at, and advanced preparation for, these discussion sessions is essential.

**Grading Rubrics**

The **writing assignments** themselves will be graded according to the following rubric:

1. **Argumentation** (80%). How lucidly do you make your arguments? How relevant or substantial is your thesis? How well do you draw on sources? How convincing are your arguments?
2. **Mechanics** (10%). How grammatical is your prose? How correct is your spelling and punctuation, generally but especially of terms introduced in this course? Has your paper been submitted on time and both in paper and electronic versions?
3. **Format** (10%). How well does your citation of sources conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition? Does your paper conform to the course’s own format requirements (enumerated below)?

*For the paper, please follow assiduously the format requirements enumerated below:*

1. Type your papers.
2. Double space your main text.
3. Single space footnotes, but double space between them; and if you prefer to use endnotes, double-space them throughout.
4. Do not put extra spaces between paragraphs or subheadings.
5. Use reasonable margins and headers/footers: 1.25” all around.
6. Do not use a separate title page, but always have a title.
7. Begin page 1 at the top of the first page (not mid page). Place your title at the very top of page 1, with the main body of the text beginning 3 lines below it.
8. After your title, your first paragraph should NOT be indented. All others, of course, should be.
9. Use only black ink for all your text, including hyperlinks that might appear in your main text, foot- or endnotes, or bibliographies (hyperlinks often print out in blue ink; it is advisable to deactivate all hyperlinks in your papers as a matter of course).
10. Pay scrupulous attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation, which do “count.”
11. Use footnotes or endnotes (footnotes are friendlier to the reader), following strictly the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS, 17th edition) rules.
12. Include a separate bibliography page listing not only all sources cited but all sources consulted.
13. The bibliography page should follow CMS style; the heading “Bibliography” (no quotation marks) should appear at the top of a new page, centered.
14. Label your submissions as following: name, date, course and number, description of the assignment (in our case: “Exam 2”).
15. Type or neatly and legibly write this information on the top left corner of the back of your last page of the paper, approximately 3 inches from the top of the page. DO NOT PUT THIS INFORMATION ON P. 1. I want to read and grade your papers anonymously.
16. Always staple your pages together.
17. Always be mindful of the appearance of your submitted work. A bad printer or low ink cartridge (and therefore poor-quality print) is not acceptable.
18. All written assignments must be submitted in hardcopy by the announced due date and simultaneously submitted to the D2L drop box for the course, or by email attachment: whichever the professor indicates.
19. When doing so, please name your document with your last name followed by the number of the assignment (without a space), e.g.: Martin1, Martin2, etc. (If there are two students with the same last name, add initials of first and middle names, again without spaces: REMartin1, REMartin2, etc.)
20. Be advised that late papers are penalized in ruthless Soviet fashion: a one-third reduction in the grade of the paper for each day late (including weekends), beginning at the conclusion of the class during which the assignment was due. An “A” paper turned in one day late will receive an “A-,” two days late, a “B+,” three, a “B,” and so on.

The quizzes will be graded according to the raw number of answers correct on an objective quiz (usually 10 or 20 points).

 Participation will be assessed according to the following rubric:
1. Information (70%). How accurate and complete is the information in your presentation or other oral work?
2. Presentation (30%). How lucidly presented and organized is the presentation or oral report? Is your presentation “professional,” conveying a seriousness of purpose?
**Grading**

1. The final grade will be determined according to the following breakdown:

   - Midterm: 25%
   - Final: 25%
   - Paper: 30%
   - Quizzes: 10%
   - Participation: 10%

2. Grades will be assigned according to the following numerical equivalencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Field Trips and Films**

Believe it or not, Westminster College is located in an area of the country rich in Russian and Russian Orthodox culture. Depending upon the schedules of students, we will plan to visit one nearby Russian Orthodox Church so as to observe the services and religious art and architecture. The trip is optional, but very enriching. All are strongly encouraged to participate.

In addition to snippets of films shown in class, we will be screening a number of classic films about Russian history in our period out of class, including Eisenstein’s *Ivan the Terrible* (part 1 only). Like the field trips, these are also optional but very useful and entertaining.

**Course Resources**

Daily lecture outlines will be made available to all students electronically on D2L. These will not be distributed in class (to save paper). The outlines will include, naturally enough, an outline of that day’s lecture, but also a list of terms that will serve as the pool from which “identifications” on the examinations will be exclusively drawn.

**Academic Honesty**

The 2018–2019 *Undergraduate Catalog* (pp. 60–64; quote at p. 60) provides the following definition for “academic integrity”:

Central to the purpose and pursuit of any academic community is academic integrity. All members of the Westminster community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity, in
keeping with the philosophy and mission of the College. The College’s expectation for strong integrity applies to all academic work, including work on campus, online, and at other locations where Westminster courses are offered. Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of this code of behavior.

For a course like this one, the major concern about “academic dishonesty” is plagiarism, partly because it remains, alas, fairly commonplace on college campuses, partly because what constitutes plagiarism is often unclear in the minds of students. Plagiarism is described in some detail in the Undergraduate Catalog on pp. 61–62. For the sake of clarity, plagiarism can be defined as generally leading your reader (or in the case of oral presentations, listeners) to believe that what you have written or said is your own work when, in fact, it is not. Plagiarism runs from the rather mild to the totally flagrant. It can be the word-for-word reproduction of another person's text without quotation marks and appropriate citation. It can be a paraphrase that is far too close to the source text to constitute “being in your own words.” And it can be even the unattributed borrowing of apt phrases or terminology. All of these degrees of plagiarism are equally unethical and may be penalized with failure for the assignment, or, in extreme cases, failure for the course.

*If you are ever in doubt as to whether your written work is plagiaristic in form, do not hesitate to consult with the professor.*

And please be informed that the take-home exam in this course may be submitted to turnitin.com, a licensed service to which the College has a subscription to help faculty identify papers that contain plagiaristic material.


**Statement on the Use of Communications Technology in the Classroom**

The use of all cell phones, smart phones, pagers, iPods, iPads, or any other internet-accessible technology is *expressly prohibited* during class unless part of an in-class assignment or activity. All students are required to turn off or silence their phones and to stow them out of reach and out of sight for the duration of the class and during in-class examinations. Violation of this policy may be considered a breach of the academic integrity policy of the College.

Moreover, the use of laptops is permitted only for the purpose of taking notes. Surfing the internet or other non-class-related activities can be disruptive to those sitting beside or behind you. Ideally, leave your laptop in your dorm room, but if you bring it, use it only for class purposes. Violation of this request for courtesy will result in your being prohibited from using a laptop in class.

Students may use a laptop if a learning disability requires it (a disability that has been documented with Student Affairs). All policies and restrictions on their use nonetheless applies in this case.
**On Notifications**

If you are going to miss a scheduled exam or quiz, please notify the professor in advance to obtain permission to reschedule (in the case of exams) or to be excused (in the case of quizzes). Failure to do so will mean that the exam may not be rescheduled and that the grade for the missed quiz or exam will be a zero. Permissions are not automatically granted, even when advanced notice is given. All absences at times of exams and quizzes must be documented with a legal excuse and for reasons permitted by College policy (as stated in the *Undergraduate Catalog*).

**On Citation Styles**

Most students at Westminster College have been taught MLA citation conventions. These are good to know generally, but are not always appropriate for use in history courses. It is the usual (though not universal) custom in the historical profession to use the *Chicago Manual of Style* (or CMS, currently in its 17th edition). This is the method that makes use of footnotes or endnotes (which you use is entirely up to you), in preference to in-text or parenthetical references. Students will be required to master CMS sufficiently well enough to write their second (take-home) midterms. While more complex than MLA, it is not difficult to learn or use. McGill also has a copy of the CMS (14th through 17th editions—for our purposes, it doesn’t matter which you consult). Students are encouraged, of course, to seek out the professor’s advice in any especially problematic cases.

**Copyright of Lectures and Course Materials**

All federal and state copyrights to my lectures and course materials of my own generation are reserved by the professor.

You are authorized to take notes in class for your own personal use and for no other purpose. You are not authorized to make any recording of my lectures without the professor’s written permission. You are not authorized to make any commercial use of the professor’s course materials or to provide them to anyone else other than students currently enrolled in this course without the professor’s written permission.

**Accessibility Statement**

Westminster College actively strives for the full inclusion of all our students. Students with disabilities who require access solutions for environmental or curricular barriers should contact Faith Craig, Director of Disability Resources, at 414 Thompson-Clark Hall; 724-946-7192; craigfa@westminster.edu. See the 2018–2019 Undergraduate Catalog, pp. 38–39 for details. See also here: https://my.westminster.edu/ics/Campus_Life/Campus_Groups/Disability_Resources/.
I am very eager to meet the instructional needs of any and all of my students. Please see me privately if you have any special needs, concerns, or questions that pertain to your performance in this class.

**Statement on a Safe Learning Environment**

Westminster College operates under a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment and assault. If you or someone you know has experienced discrimination, harassment, or sexual assault, including domestic or dating violence or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. Feel free always to report the incident to me, though know that I am obligated to report all incidences to the College. The College’s EEO and Title IX coordinator is Kimberlee Christofferson, who can be reached at 724-946-7247 or at christkk@westminster.edu. *I am determined to make sure that this class and this classroom setting are safe learning spaces for you.* See also the *Handbook for Students, 2018–2019,* pp. 34–37, here: http://www.westminster.edu.academics/pdf/undergraduate-catalog/2018_2019.pdf.
Preliminary Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to modification, as the needs of the students or professor require.

Week I.
August 27: Introduction: The Structure of Russian History
August 29: A Balloon Ride over Eurasia: The Human and Natural Landscapes
August 31: The Origins of Rus’
   Readings: Moss, chapter 1;
             Kaiser, 1–37;
             Ostrowski, xviii–xxvii.

Week II.
September 3: The Nature of the Kievan Political System
September 5: Culture, Economy, and Society in Kievan Rus’
   September 7: Discussion QUIZ
   Readings: Moss, chapter 2;
             Kaiser, 38–82;

Week III.
September 10: Byzantium and the Rus’
September 12: Orthodoxy in the East Slavic Space
September 14: Discussion
   Readings: Moss, chapter 3;
             Kaiser, 83–145.

Prof. Martin is in Moscow at a conference on September 12 and 14. An announcement will be made about classes on these two days, but keep up with the reading in any case.

Week IV.
September 17: Kiev’s Fall and New Centers of Power
September 19: The Mongols
   September 21: Discussion QUIZ
   Readings: Moss, chapters 4 and 5;
             Ostrowski, TBD.

Week V.
September 24: The Mongols (con’t.)
September 26: Emergence of Moscow
   September 28: Discussion QUIZ
   Readings: Moss, chapter 6;
             Kaiser, 147–192.

Week VI.
October 1: The Muscovite Civil War
October 3: The Muscovite Church
October 5: **Discussion**

*Readings:* Moss, chapter 7; 
Ostrowski, TBD; 
Keenan, “Muscovite Political Folkways (D2L).”

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**Week VII.**

October 8: Novgorod the Great
October 10: Ivan III the Great
October 12: **Discussion: Women and Seclusion QUIZ**

*Readings:* Kollmann, “Elite Women’s Seclusion” (D2L); 
Ostrowski, on the seclusion of elite women (D2L); 
Begin Perrie and Pavlov.

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**Week VIII.**

October 15: Ivan the Terrible I
October 17: Ivan the Terrible II
**October 19: Mid Term Examination**

*Readings:* Moss, chapter 8; 
Finish Perrie and Pavlov.

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**Week IX.**

October 22: Town and Countryside
October 24: Life of the Mind and Spirit
October 26: **Discussion**

*Readings:* Ostrowski, TBD; 
Martin, *A Bride for the Tsar*, chapters 2–4; 
Kaiser, 193v222.

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**Week X.**

October 29: **Fall Break**
October 31: Time of Troubles
November 2: **Discussion QUIZ**

*Readings:* Moss, chapter 9;

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**Week XI.**

November 5: Time of Troubles (con’t)
November 7: Excursus: Muscovite Weddings
November 9: Discussion

*Readings:* Martin, *The Tsar’s Happy Occasion* (snippets)

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**Week XII.**

November 12: Film (*The Island*)
November 14: Film (*The Island*)
November 16: **Discussion QUIZ**

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**Week XIII.**
November 19: The Rise of the Romanovs
November 21: The Schism
November 23: Discussion
   Readings: Moss, chapter 10; Ostrowski, TBD.

Week XIV.
   November 26: Peter the Great
   November 28: Peter the Great
   November 30: Discussion QUIZ
   Readings: Moss, chapters 11 and 12
   Zenkovsky, “The Russian Church Schism” (D2L); Kaiser, 223–41.

Week XV.
   December 3: Peter the Great
   December 5: TBA
   December 7: TBA
   Readings: Moss, chapter 13.

Examination Period: Final Examination