

## GOVERNMENT 334: RUSSIAN & POST-SOVIET POLITICS

Spring 2022, (Tu/Th: 9:30-10:50)

Instructor: Paula M. Pickering, [pmpick@wm.edu](mailto:pmpick@wm.edu); 221-3038

Office Hours: Chancellors 343, Tu: 11-12; Wed: 9:30-11:30, & by appointment

This course introduces students to the unprecedented and fascinating political transformation upon which Russia and post-Soviet states have embarked since the collapse of the USSR. How do ordinary people experience and influence political and economic transition? What kind of political system do ordinary Russians want? What forces affect how Russian politics works? How do we make sense of Russia's foreign policy? After more than 70 years under the Soviet system, why have post-Soviet states varied in their approaches to and experiences with reform?

The study of political transformation in Russia and the post-Soviet region is a complex undertaking because political change is inextricably linked with economic, social, and cultural changes. We will emphasize comparative *approaches* and *concepts* that help students analyze political developments. To guide our investigation, we will pay particular attention to how history, institutions, and political culture in Russia and the region shape the choices that elites and ordinary people make about politics. Because the states of the former Soviet Union did not launch their processes of political development with a blank slate, this course begins with a brief discussion of the politics and society of the Soviet state. We then analyze competing explanations for the collapse of the USSR. For the bulk of the class, we will examine the processes of political change and governance in post-communist Russia, factors that influence these processes, and how citizens react to and influence them. We will also study Russian foreign policy, particularly toward its neighbors. We will examine several other post-Soviet states to understand how their political systems function, how differently they function compared to Russia, and why. By the end of the course, students should be able to use their understanding of factors that influence political dynamics in post-Soviet countries and their comparative analytical skills to interpret political developments in this important region.

### Required text:

- Sakwa, Richard, Henry E. Hale, and Stephen White. *Developments in Russian Politics 9*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2019. ISBN 9781478004806. **(be sure to get 9th edition)**

Readings not from the required book or not accessible via the web (indicated by \*) are posted on blackboard.

### Requirements:

A student's course grade will be calculated as follows:

- |                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| • Attendance & Informed Participation | 10% |
| • Midterm                             | 28% |
| • Analytical paper                    | 34% |
| • Final                               | 28% |

**Informed Participation.** Health conditions permitting, students are required to attend class and to participate regularly in discussions by providing informed comments and/or questions either orally or in writing that incorporate readings and/or discussion. Students should come to class having completed, and having thought critically about, the assigned readings. The syllabus contains discussion questions to help focus reading for class and study for exams. Students should bring readings to class and be ready to engage them more deeply. Participation options include posting a substantive comment or question about an aspect of readings or classes to Blackboard's discussion board. I also welcome informed comments and questions on readings, lectures, or discussions during office hours or in emails. Students' informed participation will be evaluated on the level of critical thought of assigned reading and our dialogue in class, rather than on the mere frequency of their comments. **Please see additional information about evaluation of informed participation on p. 8.**

- **Attendance at least one talk in the Tepper Speaker Series is required.** Extra credit will be provided for attending a second talk (need to post a comment on our discussion board).
- **Tepper Speaker Series:** "Centenary of the USSR: the Unknown Chapters," Thursdays at 5 p.m.
  - **March 3:** Dr. Francine Hirsch, University of Wisconsin: the Soviet Role in the International Trial in Nuremberg (by zoom)
  - **March 24:** Ms. Valerie Hopkins, Moscow Correspondent for the *New York Times* and W&M alum: TBA. (in person, room TBA, depending on public health)

Students with conflicting work obligations will have an alternative assignment. Extra credit towards participation can be earned by participating in the Government Department Omnibus survey.

- **Midterm.** This in-class exam will consist of short essays. It will cover all readings and lectures through Mar. 8. It will be on **Mar. 10.**
- **Analytical paper.** Students must draw on a diverse range of materials from the course and several outside sources of high scholarly quality (books from academic presses or articles from academic journals) to write an approximately 6-paged paper on one of several topics, or a self-designed one about political dynamics in the post-Soviet region. **Due Apr. 21.** Students must submit their papers electronically to SafeAssign.
- **Final.** This online exam, submitted to SafeAssign, will consist of several medium-length essays on material covered after the midterm. Final exam: Fri., **May 13, from 9 a.m.-12 noon.**

**Policies re: the pandemic.** This semester, the world will enter its third year with COVID. Consistent with W&M's belief that learning is most effective when the instructor and students convene, our course this semester is scheduled for in-person instruction. Our main watchwords for this semester are: Patience, Compassion, and Communication. We must anticipate that some of us may get ill, and sometimes—individually or collectively—we may have to be virtual temporarily for the safety of all. I want this to be an engaging and challenging class. I also want you to be mentally and physically safe and well, and I want you to be able to support your family, friends, and community through these difficult times. All of us will follow W&M requirements - vaccinations and boosters, indoor masking, as well as quarantine and isolation when ill. For those who have tested positive, W&M's requirements must be fulfilled before class can be attended in person, and, out of an abundance of caution, anyone with symptoms consistent with COVID- even if they don't have a positive test- should not come to class. To help keep us all safe and in-person, students may drink but not eat in class. Let us be even more thoughtful than ever about being patient and compassionate with each other, while also keeping the lines of communication very open.

Please email me immediately if you are not able to attend class in person (either because of having tested positive, having symptoms consistent with COVID, or other health matters). In that case, I will activate our course Zoom link so that you can temporarily join class remotely &/or work with you to accommodate necessary absences. These accommodations include meeting remotely during regular or extended office hours and/or, on prior request, viewing of a class recording. But equally important, please email me at any time in the semester with questions, thoughts, and concerns, or more simply talk to me after class. Likewise, if for any reason I cannot attend class in person, I will email you immediately and post an announcement on blackboard to explain how we will proceed.

**Other policies & information:** To pass this course, students must **pass all segments of this course** specified above. All students are responsible for saving a copy of their papers. To ensure fairness, extensions will be considered only with prior communication with me from a student about an illness or emergency or with supporting information from the Dean of Students, a health professional, work supervisor, academic advisor, or coach. Please read and follow the Honor Code. I may make minor adjustments to the syllabus. During class, all cell phones/PDAs need to be turned off completely and laptops may be used only for class purposes. Please note that the add/drop deadline is Feb 4 and the withdrawal deadline is Mar. 28.

William & Mary **accommodates students with disabilities** in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2509 or at [sas@wm.edu](mailto:sas@wm.edu) to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see [www.wm.edu/sas](http://www.wm.edu/sas).

William & Mary recognizes that students juggle different responsibilities and can face challenges that make learning difficult. There are many **resources available at W&M to help students navigate emotional/psychological, physical/medical, material/accessibility concerns.** Asking for help is a sign of courage and strength. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these challenges, we encourage you to reach out to the following offices:

- For psychological/emotional stress, please consider reaching out to the W&M Counseling Center <https://www.wm.edu/offices/wellness/counselingcenter/>; or (757) 221-3620, 240 Gooch Dr., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Services are free and confidential.
- For physical/medical concerns, please consider reaching out to the W&M Health Center at <https://www.wm.edu/offices/wellness/healthcenter/>; or (757) 221-4386, 240 Gooch Drive.
- For additional support or resources, please contact the Dean of Students by submitting a Care Report at <https://www.wm.edu/offices/deanofstudents/services/caresupportservices/index.php>; or by calling 757-221-2510, or by emailing [deanofstudents@wm.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@wm.edu).

• For a list of many other resources available to students, see [Health and Wellness Resources for Students](#). As your professor, I also ask you to reach out to me if you are facing challenges inside or outside the classroom; I will guide you to appropriate resources on campus.

I consider it part of my responsibility as instructor to address the learning needs of all of the students in this course. I will **present materials that are respectful of diversity**: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship, or national origin among other personal characteristics. I also believe that the diversity of student experiences and perspectives is essential to the deepening of knowledge in a course. Any suggestions that you have about other ways to include the value of diversity in this course are welcome.

I encourage students to talk with me during office hours to discuss material; pose any questions about readings, lectures, or assignments; or discuss how we can work together to improve your understanding of Post-Soviet political developments. **My office hours are times devoted to students.**

I suggest students stay informed about **current developments** in the post-Soviet region. Some good English-language sources of news about and analysis on Russia and the post-Soviet states, include: US-Government-funded: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: <http://www.rferl.org/>; independent news: *Moscow Times*, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/>; sponsored by the Russian government: Sputnik, <http://sputniknews.com/>, Valdai discussion club: [valdaiclub.com/](http://valdaiclub.com/); news and analysis sponsored by GWU: *Johnson's Russia List*; <http://www.russialist.org/>; *PONARS Eurasia*, <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/>; Others: *Transitions Online*: <https://tol.org/> and, *Eurasianet.org*: <http://www.eurasianet.org/>. Please scrutinize the sources & content of on-line information. I will also provide links to other web sites and to academic journals on Russian and Post-Soviet politics on the course's Blackboard site.

#### SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:

Week 1

Jan. 27

- Introduction to the course

Week 2

PRE-COMMUNIST AND COMMUNIST APPROACHES TO GOVERNING AND REACTIONS TO THEM

Feb. 1

- **How did the Tsarist regime, Lenin, and Stalin approach state-building and governing?** Describe personalization of power. How and why was terror used?
  - \*Remington, Thomas F. 2012. *Politics in Russia*, Seventh Ed., pp. 31-33; 35-1<sup>st</sup> para. 37.
  - \*McAuley. 1992. Mary, *Soviet Politics 1917-1991*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 24-31.
  - \*Siegelbaum, Lewis, 1997. "Building Stalinism," in Freeze, ed., pp. 292-303, end 306-315.

Feb. 3

- **Modernization, Muddling Through, Reform...or Revolution of the State-socialist Model?** What were the USSR's sources of stability? Describe the social contract. What were the possibilities for and obstacles to political reform?
  - \*Remington, Thomas F. 2012. *Politics in Russia*, Seventh Ed., pp. 42 (first full para.)-49.
  - \*Bialer, Seweryn. 2013. (originally published in 1980). "Soviet Stability and Its Sources," in Ostrow, Joel, ed., *Politics in Russia, a Reader*, Los Angeles: Sage, pp. 50-64.
  - \*Verdery, Katherine. 1996. "What Was Socialism, and Why did it Fall?" in *What was Socialism and What Comes Next*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 19-top 29.

Week 3

Feb. 8

- **Why did the USSR collapse?** Why did it collapse when it did? Was it inevitable?
  - Sakwa, Richard. 2019. "Politics in Russia," pp. 4-8 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds., *Developments in Russian Politics 9* [Hereafter, "Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds."] [FROM OUR REQUIRED BOOK]
  - \*Dallin, Alexander. 1992. "Causes of the Collapse of the USSR," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, no. 4, pp. 279-302.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE POST-SOCIALIST RUSSIA'S POLITICAL DYNAMICS & DEVELOPMENT  
Feb. 10

- **Designing political institutions:** How do the rules of Russia's 1993 Constitution and the 2020 amendments affect power in post-socialist Russian politics? What are the positive and negative political consequences of a strong presidency? How different are the Yeltsin and Putin regimes?
  - Sakwa, Richard. 2019. "Politics in Russia," pp. end of 8-17 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - Willerton, John. 2019. "The Hegemonic Executive," pp. 18-37 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - Felgenhauer, Pavel. 2020. "Vladimir Putin: Russia's Eternal Leader," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol 17, No. 96, pp. 1-2.

Week 4

Feb. 15

- **Political parties:** What roles do political parties play in Russia? Characterize the relationship between politicians and citizens; between politicians and the Kremlin. Why did post-Soviet Russia become a dominant party system?
  - Reuter, Ora John. 2019. "Political Parties" pp. 38-53 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Rogov, Kirill, 2018. "Administrative Mobilization and the Dynamics of Electoral Manipulations on Putin's Presidential election," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 537*, pp. 1-8, August.

Feb. 17

- **Parliamentary politics:** What is the role in practice of Russia's parliament and how did it evolve and why? What are the checks and balances on power in the Russian political system? What formal laws and informal practices influence how power is exercised in Russia's parliament?
  - Noble, Ben. 2019. "Parliamentary Politics in Russia," pp. 54-66 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Pertsev, Andrei, 2021. "Why the Kremlin Isn't Celebrating the Duma Election Results," Opinion in the *Moscow Times*, September 24.

Week 5

Feb. 22

- **Political culture & behavior:** How does political culture help us understand the political values Russian prioritize? What are the political implications of grass-roots protest against the December 2011 parliamentary elections according to Volkov and those encouraged by Navalny?
  - \*Remington, Thomas F. 2012. "Political participation," pp. 88-89 & "Political Culture and Public opinion," pp. 117-127 in *Politics in Russia*, Seventh Ed.
  - \*Volkov, Dennis, 2012. "The Protesters and The Public," *Journal Of Democracy*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 55-62, [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_democracy/v023/23.3.volkov.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_democracy/v023/23.3.volkov.html)
  - \*Trudolyubov, Maxim. 2021. "What is Navalny Fighting For?" *The Russia File*, a blog of the Kennan Institute, January 22.

Feb. 24

- **What kind of political system do Russian citizens prefer:** An authoritarian, a democratic, or a hybrid one? How about young peoples' political views? Do citizens have the system they want? Why or why not?
  - \*Hale, Henry. 2011. "The Myth of Mass Russian Support for Autocracy: The Public Opinion Foundations of a Hybrid Regime," *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 63, No. 8, pp. 1357-1375, <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=65638190&site=ehost-live>
  - Kolesnikov, Andrei. 2021, "Can the Next Generation of Russians Modernize Their Country?" Carnegie Moscow Center Commentary, March 31.

Week 6

Mar. 1

- **Media:** What functions do the varying forms of media play in Russia and for the regime? Are the internet and social media still capable of providing independent information?
  - Mickiewicz, Ellen. 2019. "Russia, Media, and Audiences, pp. 130-144, in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - Epifanova, Alena. 2021. "Subjugating RuNet: The Kremlin's New Levers of Control over Elections and Society," *The Russia File*, a blog of the Kennan Institute, September 20.

## SWAP RU FOREIGN POLICY??

Mar. 3

- **How the Putin regime cultivates support:** How much of Putin's support comes from the bottom up and how much is cultivated from the top down? How does the "market social contract" encourage loyalty and is it threatened by pension reform?
  - \*Cook, Linda J. and Martin K. Dimitrov. 2017. "The contract Revisited: Evidence from Communist and State Capitalist Economies," *Europe-Asia studies*, Vol. 69, No. 1, pp. 8-24.
  - Meyer-Olimpieva, Irina. 2018. "[Pension Reform, Trade Unions, and the Manipulation of Protest.](#)" *The Russia File*, a blog of the Kenan Institute, August 9.

Week 7

Mar. 8

- **Winning or losing the battle for legitimacy?** Contrast the arguments made by Kolesnikov on the one hand and Blackburn and Petersson on the other hand about the success of the Putin regime in legitimizing itself. Which argument is more convincing? Why?
  - \*Blackburn, Matthew and Bo Petersson. 2021. "Parade, plebiscite, pandemic: legitimation efforts in Putin's fourth term," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, DOI: [10.1080/1060586X.2021.2020575](https://doi.org/10.1080/1060586X.2021.2020575), pp. 1-15.
  - Kolesnikov, Andrei. 2021. "[Why the Kremlin is Winning the Battle for the Average Russian](#)" *Carnegie Moscow Center Commentary*, March 29, pp. 1-3.

Mar. 10

### • Midterm

## Spring Break: Mar. 15-17

Week 8

Mar. 22

- **Economic reform: early stabilization & privatization:** Why did Russia achieve only partial market reform and how did ordinary Russians experience partial market reform and privatization? How do privatization methods and policies managing natural resources in Russia affect economic development and inequality? Discuss the origins and significance of rural citizens' views about early economic reforms.
  - \*Remington, Thomas. 2012. "Between the State and Market," pp. 191-203, in *Politics in Russia, Ed. 7*, Longman.
  - \*Gambold Miller, Liesl L. 2000. "What the Peasants think: The Effects of Agricultural Restructuring in a Russian Village," *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, Vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 15-19.

Mar. 24

- **Recent Economic policies:** What external and domestic factors explain the varying performance of the Russian economy and its recent stagnation? Why has the Russian regime adopted policies rather than reform in response to stagnation and what are the consequences?
  - Hanson, Philip. 2019. "Managing the Economy," pp. 133-149 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Crowley, Stephen. 2020. "[Global Cities Versus Russian Rustbelt Realities](#)," PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 651, pp. 1-6.

Week 9

Mar. 29

- **Rule of Law or Rule by Law?** What are the obstacles to the establishment of the rule of law in Russia? How can they be overcome?
  - Hendley, Kathryn. 2019. "Assessing the Rule of Law in Russia," pp. 108-118 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Tulaeva, Svetlana. 2011. "How Anti-Corruption Laws Work in Russia," *Russian Analytical Digest*, no. 92, 22 February, pp. 9-12.

Mar. 31

- **Social challenges, opportunities, and visions:** Evaluate the argument that there “several Russias.” How has society changed since the fall of one-party rule? How do social dynamics affect governance?
  - \*Laruelle, Marlene and Jean Radvanyi, 2018. “A Troubled Identity” and “Society: Fragmented but Reinvented?” in *Understanding Russia*, Rowman & Littlefield, pp. 23-31; 33-45.
  - \*Nidoev, Eradzh. 2013. “My Two Days Working Undercover at Moscow’s Sadovod Market,” *Moscow Times*, November 7, pp. 1-6.

Week 10

Apr. 5

- **Civil Society:** How have civic activists and citizens adapted to increasing restrictions imposed by the Russian government on civil society? What are the implications for the ability of civil society to make a difference?
  - \*Sundstrom, Lisa, Laura Henry, and Valerie Sperling, “The Evolution of Civic Activism in Contemporary Russia,” *East European Politics and Societies*, forthcoming in 2022.
  - \*Hopkins, Valerie and Ivan Nechepurenko 2021. “As the Kremlin Revises History, a Human Rights Champion Becomes a Casualty,” *New York Times*, 29 December.

Apr. 7

- **National identity:** Contrast different ideas of Russian national identity and their impact. Discuss citizens’ ideas of the Russian dream and their implications.
  - Laruelle, Marlene. 2019. “National identity and the Contested Nation,” pp. 67-79 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Tikhonova, N.E. 2018. “Russians’ Dreams for Society and Themselves,” *Russian Social Science Review*, 59 (6), **only** bottom p. 521-bottom of 529.

Week 11

Apr. 12

- **Federalism:** How has Moscow’s approach to the periphery affected: 1) democracy, 2) stability, 3) management of diversity, and 4) autonomy?
  - Slider, Darrell. 2019 “A Federal State?” 119-132, in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Yusupova, Guzel. 2019. “Why Ethnic Politics in Russia will Return,” PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 584, March.

Apr. 14

- **Russian Foreign Policy:** What internal and external factors shape Russia’s international behavior, explain different phases of foreign policy toward the West and toward the former Soviet States? Assess the seriousness of Russia’s foreign policy dilemmas and the 2021-2 standoff between Russia and the West.
  - Feklyunina, Valentina. 2019. “Russian Foreign Policy,” pp. 165-179 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - \*Dixon, Robyn. 2021. “Six ways Russia views Ukraine — and why each should worry the West,” *Washington Post*, December 11.
  - \*Berkhead, Samantha and Pjotr Sauer, 2021. “Russia Issues Demands to Limit NATO’s Influence in Post-Soviet Space, Eastern Europe,” *Moscow Times*, December 20.
  - (May need to be updated) \*Sonne, Paul and Robyn Dixon. 2022. “Putin has many options short of a multi-front invasion of Ukraine,” *Washington Post*, January 21.

## ASSESSING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES ACROSS POST-SOVIET STATES

Week 12

Apr. 19

- **Visiting Speaker:** Dr. Steven Hanson, W&M Vice Provost for Academic and International Affairs (VPAIA) and Lettie Pate Evans Professor of Government
- **Western CIS:** How have Ukraine’s post-socialist political system, political competition, and relationship between citizens and elites evolved since 1991? How has this evolution differed from Russia’s? Why?
  - \*D’Anieri, Paul, 2021. “Ukraine” in Zsuzsa Csergo, Daina Eglitis, and Paula M Pickering, eds., *Central and East European Politics: Changes & Challenges*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield pp. 565-589.

- Hanson, Steven, 2022. “Standoff in Ukraine.” *William & Mary News*, January 25.

Apr. 21

- **Paper Due** (no class)

Week 13

Apr. 26

- **Visiting Speaker:** Dr. Ivan Gomza, Head of Dept. of Public Governance, Kyiv School of Economics
- **Understanding violence in Ukraine:** Compare D’Anieri, Kudelia, and Wilson’s discussions of external and internal factors contributing to violence and irresolution of conflict in Ukraine.
  - \*Kudelia, Serhiy. 2014. “Domestic Sources of the Donbas Insurgency.” *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo*, No. 351, September, pp. 1-7.
  - \*Wilson, Andrew. 2016. “The Donbas in 2014: Explaining Civil Conflict Perhaps, but not Civil War,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, 68:4, pp. 631-652.

Apr. 28

- **Central Asia:** How different are Central Asian political systems, in paper and in practice, from Russia? Does “Soft Authoritarianism” clarify or muddle our understanding of how politics works in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan? Will Kazakhstan’s authoritarian learning process help it survive the resignation of its first Post-Soviet President?
  - \*Schatz, Edward. 2009. “The Soft Authoritarian Tool Kit: Agenda-Setting Power in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan,” *Comparative Politics*, January, pp. 203-218.
  - \*Junisbai, Azamat K. 2020. “Authoritarian Learning: Making Sense of Kazakhstan’s Political Transition.” *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* no. 660, July, pp. 1-5.

Week 14

May 3

- **Explaining variation in post-Soviet Reforms: the case of policing.** What are the conditions under which international assistance facilitates democratic police reforms in the post-Soviet region? Do Marat’s and Junisbai’s analysis help us understand the protests and violence used against protestors in Kazakhstan in 2022? What are the implications for police reforms for democracies beyond the post-Soviet region?
  - \*Marat, Erica. 2016. “Reforming Police in Post-Communist Countries: International Efforts, Domestic Heros, April 16, pp. 333-349.
  - \*Zhandayeva, Raushan and Alimana Zhanmukanova. 2022. “Kazakhstan’s Instability Has Been Building for Years,” *Foreign Policy*, January 10, pp. 1-3.

THINKING AHEAD

May 5

- **What is next for Russia:** Has Putin created a model of governance that works uniquely well for Russians? How stable is the current Russian political system, why, and what are alternatives?
  - Hale, Henry. 2019. “The Continuing Evolution of Russia’s Political System,” pp. 205-216 in Sakwa, Hale, and White, eds.
  - T.B.D: short news analysis on one of the evolving crises in the Post-Soviet region.

### Additional information about participation grade

In general, here is what I consider excellent participation and attendance:

- **Level of involvement:** You make a strong effort to contribute often to large and small group discussions. You kick off discussion at times, but you do not consistently dominate the room. You know when to cut yourself off and to give others a chance to speak.
- **Substance of comments:** Your comments demonstrate knowledge of the readings and not simply your own personal experience or opinion. You bring the readings to class and point us to specific pages to back your points. Your remarks build momentum, are focused and relevant. You do not speak just to get your voice on record.
- **Attendance:** You attend class every day, unless you offer a reasonable explanation such as exposure to COVID, an illness, family emergency, extra ordinary work commitment, or your required presence at a non-optional William & Mary event (e.g., class field trip).
- **Common courtesies:** You arrive on time every day and take your seat quietly if you are late. You disable your cell phone and other gadgets before class starts. You do not check email or instant messages, surf the web, do other classes' homework, or do other similar distracting behaviors during class. You listen carefully to others when they are speaking. You respect the right of your classmates to express their analysis, even if you might disagree.

Grade range	Description
A- A (90-100)	--Frequent contributor in large group discussions each week (or to discussion board). Active and engaged in small groups and paired discussions. --Comments grounded in the readings and demonstrate depth of understanding or attempts to grapple with them; ideas help to build momentum in discussions. -- Has self-awareness and does not ramble or try to dominate the room. Attends class essentially every day (e.g., 0-1 absences for the semester-excluding illness or emergency), always brings readings & is always courteous.
B- B B+ (80-89)	--Consistent commenter each week in large group (or to discussion board), but some runs of silence or inactivity occasionally detectable. Active and engaged in small groups or pairs, and might excel slightly more there than in the large group. Occasionally may lack good self-awareness. --Comments are helpful and draw upon readings, but less consistently so and occasionally may be more grounded in intuition or personal experience. --Attends class most days (e.g., 3 absences for the semester), brings readings most days, and is always courteous.
C- C C+ (70-79)	--Infrequent participant each week in large group (or to discussion board), but may be reasonably engaged in small groups. Attentive, but not involved. Often an imbalance between small group and large group effort. May have inconsistent self-awareness. --Comments are infrequently grounded in the readings; more reliant on opinion. --Absences becoming somewhat frequent (e.g., 4-5 absences for the semester), infrequently brings readings, but is always courteous.
D- D D+ (60-69)	--Extremely rare or essentially no participation each week in large group (or to discussion board). Rarely attentive; largely uninvolved, including in small groups. May have very little self-awareness. --Hard to tell to what extent this person is trying to engage the readings because comments are so infrequent, or nonexistent. --Frequent absences (6 absences for the semester), but is always courteous.
F (<60)	--No engagement in large group discussion (or to discussion board). During small group or paired time, still tends to work alone or be distracted. May demonstrate no self-awareness. --Impossible to tell to what extent the person has tried to engage the readings. --Excessive absences (7 or more absences for the semester). --May consistently fail to demonstrate courtesy.