

Russian & Eastern European Studies (REES)

REES 4361 The Russia-Ukraine War 3 Credits

On January 24, 2022, Putin's Russia invaded Ukraine with the intent to control its government and people. The impact has been devastating for Ukraine, Russia, the region and the globe; the way the war might end remains unclear. This course seeks to comprehend the Russia-Ukraine war by examining four themes: 1) the causes and consequences of the war; 2) historical trends in war termination; 3) U.S. grand strategy toward Russia; 4) and finally, institutions designed to achieve security—the UN, OSCE, NATO—where they fall short, and how they or a new institution might secure the peace. Since we are studying a “moving target,” readings may change with new events and analyses. This is a seminar, so students will be expected to read and write a lot. Over the course of the semester, we will hear from a variety of stakeholders and analysts who are working on these themes. The goals of this course are to survey key debates about the Russia-Ukraine war; to learn how to write a reading analysis; to engage in cause-effect analysis; and to perfect the craft of writing a research paper.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 4375 The Putin Generation 3 Credits

Vladimir Putin was elected to the Russian presidency in March, 2000. He potentially could remain in office until 2036, when he will be in his 80's, although Russia's current war against Ukraine is raising questions about his control of Russia. During the past quarter century, a new generation of Russians has grown up knowing no leader other than Putin. This course seeks to understand how these young Russians, sometimes called the “Putin Generation,” see their lives, their country's leadership, and Russia's - as well as their own - role in the world. This generation is being examined by Russian social scientists and our course materials are based on those studies, as well as on the voices of young Russians expressed in social media, music and other platforms. The course will reflect events in Russia and in the world as they happen and will challenge students to be creative and to carry out their own research. It will be conducted as a seminar, with two required papers on any aspect of what SFS students have learned in class.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4398 REES Senior Colloquium 3 Credits

REES-4398 is a Capstone Seminar course for students completing the Undergraduate Certificate in Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies. Undergraduate Certificate students write a research paper that integrates analysis and empirical material from more than one academic discipline and focuses on a significant analytical question in the region.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4410 Law/Disorder From Socialism-Post Soc 3 Credits

Western media have often portrayed the former Communist states of Europe and Eurasia as being mired in a peculiar mix of corruption, crime and chaos. The objective of this course is to familiarize students with the legal cultures, institutions, and practices fostered under Soviet style socialism and then analyze with them what happened to efforts to establish new legal systems. We will address the role of law (and criminality) in both the emerging democracies and new illiberal regimes among the states of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. We will give special attention to the influence of Western ideas and institutions, popular attitudes toward mobilizing the law, and current instances where political actors are again degrading human rights and weaponizing law against opponents.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Course attribute: FS54 name

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4425 The Geopolitics of Central Asia 3 Credits

This course will focus on the geopolitical dynamics of the Central Asian region (specifically, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). We will analyze the historical evolution of these states, to include their shared Soviet experience, as well as the current challenges of their state-formation, stability, and economic growth. In addition, the course will examine the policies towards and from outside powers – Russia, China, and the US, and other actors that are important for Central Asia. Some knowledge of comparative politics and/or Central Asia will be beneficial, but not essential.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Course attribute: FS54 name

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4426 Russian Security State 3 Credits

Russian Security State

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4451 Power and Wealth in Russia 3 Credits

From the Tsarist period through the Soviet era to contemporary Russia, political and economic power have been tightly linked. Usually, the goals of economic growth and prosperity have taken a back seat to highly centralized political power. During the first third of the course, we will examine how this phenomenon developed in the Soviet period and how the Soviet Union failed to resolve this dilemma and collapsed. The second part of the course will be devoted to the last twenty-five years of the development of post-Soviet Russia with emphasis on the lasting legacy of Soviet economic decisions, the constraints and benefits of an economy heavily dependent on oil and gas revenues, and the contemporary challenges Russian leaders face as the Russian economy is experiencing an extended recession. In the final section of the course, we will explore alternative scenarios for Russian development and look at comparative experiences of how other authoritarian systems manage political, social, and economic change.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4454 Information Wars 3 Credits

Information Wars: How nations wage online combat. This course will examine how information - and disinformation - have become key elements of modern foreign policy. Massively cheaper than military weapons and hardware, weaponized information can be extremely effective, not only in promoting a country's influence, but in undermining enemy states. Artificial Intelligence is the newest, and most powerful weapon in this information war. The course will include discussions with officials from several countries both employing - and countering - weaponized information.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4455 Demography and Health in Euras 3 Credits

The objective of the course is to familiarize students with health and demographic issues and trends in the countries of the Eurasian, Russian, and East European region. Emphasis in the course will be on developments during the post-Soviet period, on situating these issues within a broader social, economic, historical, political, and cultural context, and on understanding how they have benefited or constrained development and reform in countries across the region. The course starts with a brief introduction to basic health and demographic concepts. This is followed by a review of the demographic history of the USSR and Eastern Europe. Students are then given an introduction to sources of health and demographic data on the countries in the region. Following this are sections on each of the components of population change in the region – fertility, morbidity, mortality, and migration -- along with domestic and international policies and programs that have attempted to address those changes. Russia's impact as a colonial power will be examined, as will global and regional aid and partnership programs involving Russia and other countries in the region, and of course the seismic impact of Russia's war on Ukraine. The format of the course is a combination of lecture, case studies of actual health and demographic issues taken from the region (including in-class workshops), guest lectures by authors of some of the assigned reading for the course, and discussion. A research paper is required on a health or demographic issue from the region, and there will be two take-home examinations. Knowledge of one of the languages of the region is desirable but not mandatory. No prior knowledge of health or demography is required.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Course attribute:

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4460 Ukraine at Crossroads 3 Credits

The course surveys historical foundations of the current political system of Ukraine. It will analyze the Ukrainian struggle for self-determination and democracy in the 20th century and today. Key actors, institutions and values that have shaped the Ukrainian government and society since the collapse of the Soviet Union along with important regional dynamic will be critically assessed.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4462 Hitler, Putin, Ukraine 3 Credits

Embark on a profound journey through Ukraine's tumultuous history, exploring the haunting theme of genocide from the era of Hitler to the present day under Putin's regime. This course offers a meticulous examination of historical events and political dynamics, providing students with a deep understanding of the tragic occurrences that have shaped Ukraine's destiny. By engaging with primary sources and expert analyses, participants will critically evaluate the far-reaching impact of genocidal actions against Jews and Poles on the nation's culture, identity, and relationships with its neighbors. Additionally, the course will shed light on Putin's view of history and global order, highlighting their relevance in Russia's war against Ukraine and offering insights into how historical narratives can be manipulated for political purposes.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4463 Memory Wars: Ukr, Rus EE 3 Credits

What is the context of Putin's bewildering claim of "de-Nazifying" Ukraine in his current war? Why are the European celebrations of May 8 and May 9 – the end of WWII – a constant source of conflict inside societies in Eastern Europe? Why does the history of WWII create tension in the post-Soviet space, leading to jailed historians, protest movements, and diplomatic expulsions? Why has 20th-century history remained such a gripping topic in peoples' minds today, and how has it shaped contemporary relations between countries in the region? This course will help students to find answers to these and other challenging questions related to the unprecedented weaponization of history and memory in the region.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4464 Fascism and Its Legacy 3 Credits

What are the origins and manifestations of fascism? Why did fascist ideology entice so many Europeans from different social backgrounds between World Wars I and II? Is fascism something that belongs to the history of the 20th Century, or are there parallels with what some call fascism today? In this course students will find responses to these and related questions, learning about the nature of fascism as an ideology and as a set of practices. The course will explore the birth and first flourishing of fascism in interwar Italy, Germany, Romania, Hungary, and other regions, before turning to its legacy for today's far-right populism and debates about fascism's resurgence.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4465 Gorbachev to Putin Soviet Collapse 3 Credits

This course is an introduction to how and why the Soviet Union imploded in the 1980s and how that chaotic, hopeful and sometimes violent process impacted the fifteen new countries that emerged in the 1990s. We will cover the underlying forces that created an opening for reform during the transition from Brezhnev to Andropov and Gorbachev and see how reform led to revolution and collapse in late 1991. The second half of the course will cover the very different stories of how the countries that emerged from the Soviet Union experienced the transition and the first decade of independence up to 2000 and how the legacy of those times persists today. Side plots will be learning how Western Sovietology observed this in real time – what it got right and what it got wrong--and exploring the transformation of daily life and political participation from the bottom-up. Source material will include Western analysis and Soviet primary sources materials from the time as well as popular film, music and other cultural products.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4480 Protest and Politics in Russia 3 Credits

What kind of political participation is possible under a strong state? With brief interludes of openness, the Soviet and post-Soviet leaderships have sought to limit and control popular feedback. Electoral mechanisms in Russia in particular have been shaped and manipulated to manage participation. Therefore, this course explores non-ordinary politics—from petitions to demonstrations—from the post-Stalin years to the present with an emphasis on various forms by which citizens have attempted to influence shifting political regimes. Topics include dissent, social movements, media and social media channels of protest, and state responses. While the course focuses on Russia, we will be drawing on comparative cases from other post-Soviet countries. Students will conduct independent research on protest manifestations in Russia or neighboring states.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 4516 The Future of Russia 3 Credits

The Future of Russia: The war in Ukraine has already altered Russia's future for decades to come. However the war ends (and the end is not yet in sight), it will leave a Russia that is poorer, more backward, and isolated than it was on the eve of the Russian invasion. The damage to Russia will come from three main sources: the long-term impact of international sanctions, the return of the climate-change agenda, and the likely political upheavals as the Putin era comes to an end. For Putin's eventual successors, a great reckoning lies ahead. The Long-Term Impact of International Sanctions: The tidal wave of sanctions that has hit Russia since the onset of the invasion will take a long time to unwind. Russia has been cut off from the international flow of finance; its exports of commodities will be less profitable; and the revenues of the Russian government will be lastingly reduced. The impact of sanctions varies from sector to sector, but overall they will cause a steady drag on Russia's capacity to invest, to innovate, and to provide for its citizens. China beckons, but it is not a solution. The Return of Climate Change to the International Agenda: Of all the countries that stand to be affected by climate change, Russia is at the top of the list. Russia is one of the most dependent on the export of hydrocarbons. One-third of its territory lies north of the Arctic Circle, and its Arctic coastline stretches for 24,000 kilometers, much of it consisting of permafrost. Its forests, vulnerable to disease, drought, and fire, are the world's largest, and account for over half of Russian territory and one-fifth of the world's forested area. And as the world's fourth-largest emitter of CO₂ and many harmful pollutants, Russia is both one of the chief causes and victims of global warming. The Coming Political Succession: By the early 2030's -- if not sooner -- Vladimir Putin will likely leave the political stage, closing a reign that by that time will have lasted longer than Stalin's. The succession is unlikely to be smooth. Putin created a regime in which most of the institutional foundations of government have been systematically weakened; civil society has been reduced to impotence, and no viable mechanism remains for making democratic choices. The result is likely to be a chaotic contest among competing clans, chief among which will be the various security services, which are perennially at war with each other. The Russian population is likely to be confined once again to a spectator role, punctuated only by occasional outbursts of protest that will fail to generate meaningful change. What, then, will be the future of Russia, if the coming era brings economic stagnation, climate-induced stress, and political instability? Or is this bleak future inevitable? These are the subjects of the seminar.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Equivalent to REES 5530

REES 5007 A New Geopolitical Europe 3 Credits

A New Geopolitical Europe? European Foreign Policy and the War in Ukraine

Russia's war against Ukraine has reshaped European foreign and security policy. For the first time, the European Union—designed as a peace project—had to deploy its tools and instruments for a wartime effort: to support Ukraine in its defense against Russian aggression. The crisis has channeled a new geopolitical ambition in Europe. However, many problems of European foreign policy—from unity to autonomy—remain unresolved.

This course will provide an introduction to European foreign and security policy towards Eastern Europe and Russia. It will explain why this region has become the litmus test for Europe's ability to become a geopolitical actor. At the same time, it will explore how Russia has come to regard European foreign and security policy as a competitor and rival. Moreover, this course will analyze the different approaches of Germany, France, and Poland within the EU, and the United Kingdom outside the EU.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5412 Conflict and Peace in Eurasia 3 Credits

This course examines the conflicts of Europe-Eurasia in a case study-based illustration of the various forms of conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, reconciliation, and negotiation. The theory of conflict resolution and basic negotiation is integrated with the context of the many variegated conflicts of this sprawling region from Bosnia to Tajikistan.

This course will examine the various regional institutions (OSCE, EU, NATO, Council of Europe) and international institutions (UN) involved in the implementation of conflict resolution and reconciliation efforts employing guest speakers, crisis simulations, and other insights into the practice of conflict mitigation. It will analyze the ongoing impact of rivalry between the West and Moscow and explore the limits of negotiation. The end of the course assesses the areas in which potential conflicts are possible in Europe.

Level: Graduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5427 Migrants/DisplacedPlp:Eurasia 3 Credits

This course focuses on two neighboring regions of Eurasia - the Caucasus and Central Asia that have witnessed enormous social, political, and economic change since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Drawing on the work of social scientists, especially anthropologists, this course is intended to broaden and deepen students' knowledge and understanding of the ethnic, linguistic, and religious similarities and differences among the people of the Caucasus and Central Asia, with an emphasis on the regions' minority groups. This course also serves to focus students' attention on two of the more pressing issues for both the national governments of the states in these regions and the international community: migration and forced displacement. Tajikistan is consistently one of the top remittance-receiving countries as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) in the world, while Georgia and Azerbaijan host large populations of internally displaced persons (IDPs). This course is divided into three parts: 1) a socio-cultural overview of the Caucasus and Central Asia, with an emphasis on the regions' transformation from Soviet to post-Soviet; 2) an examination of migration in the Caucasus and Central Asia; and 3) an examination of forced displacement in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Undergraduate level students may **not** enroll.

REES 5455 Demography Health in Eurasia 3 Credits

The objective of the course is to familiarize students with health and demographic issues and trends in the countries of the Eurasian, Russian, and East European region. Emphasis in the course will be on developments during the post-Soviet period, on situating these issues within a broader social, economic, historical, political, and cultural context, and on understanding how they have benefited or constrained development and reform in countries across the region. The course starts with a brief introduction to basic health and demographic concepts. This is followed by a review of the demographic history of the USSR and Eastern Europe, which has been marked by various health and demographic calamities and recoveries. Students are then given an introduction to sources of health and demographic data on the countries in the region. Following this are sections on each of the components of population change in the region – fertility, morbidity, mortality, and migration -- along with domestic and international policies that have attempted to address those changes. Special emphasis will be placed on cardiovascular disease, accidents and injuries, cancers, infectious disease, and other current important causes of morbidity and mortality in the region, along with the policy and prevention programs associated with these conditions. Russia's impact as a colonial power and its recent efforts to establish leadership in the global health community will be examined, as will global and regional aid and partnership programs involving Russia and other countries in the region.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5500 Intro to Area Studies 3 Credits

REES-5500 is a seminar course designed to enhance CERES students' ability to write and conduct research at the graduate level and introduce a variety of disciplinary lenses used to study the region. We will begin with a discussion of the development of 'area studies', turn to the disciplinary approaches that economics, history, political science, literary/cultural studies, and anthropology/sociology use and then focus on individual research projects. Students should end the course with a better understanding of the study of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), the former Soviet Union (FSU) and Eurasia and enhanced skills for rigorous thinking and writing according to the traditions of the disciplines listed above.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to students with a major in Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud, Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud, Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud, Russian East European Stud, Russian East European Stud, Russian East European Stud or Russian East European Stud.

REES 5501 Capstone Seminar 3 Credits

The REES Capstone Seminar is for CERES M.A. students who have completed REES 5500. The goal of this seminar is to enable graduating CERES M.A. and undergraduate Certificate students to write a research paper that integrates analysis and empirical material from more than one academic discipline and focuses on a significant analytical question in the region.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5512 Postcommunist Pol Systems 3 Credits

This course examines the historical experience and current trajectories of post-Communist states, societies and economies. The course takes a comparative, historical, and broadly political economy approach to comparative Communisms and post-Communisms. We will focus on three central themes: (1) the origins of Communist political and economic systems in Europe; (2) the causes behind their decline and collapse in the late 1980s and early 1990s; (3) the making of post-Communist states and economies and the divergence of regimes into democratic and non-democratic types.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5519 Russian Security State 3 Credits

This course seeks to explain the design and implementation of national security and defense policy in the Russian Federation and its predecessor states (Soviet Union, Russian Empire). The lectures and readings are organized into three modules, focusing on how Russia has approached the competing challenges of (1) economic development, (2) internal security, and (3) relations with other actors in the international system. Our attention will be on the interaction between these policy domains over different periods of Russian history — Tsarist, Soviet, and contemporary — with an emphasis on how the legacy of the past has shaped and constrained Russian national security strategy and decision-making. Topics we will cover include territorial and imperial expansion, serfdom, collectivization, industrialization, mass repression, counter-insurgency, military doctrine and organization, nuclear weapons, energy and natural resources, cyber warfare, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Course readings will draw on literature from various disciplines, including political science, economics, history, and public policy. Class meetings will place a heavy emphasis on student participation and activity-based learning through surveys, games, simulations, and debates.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Equivalent to REES 4426

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5520 Russian Military Power 3 Credits

Russian Military Power: The Russian military has recently re-emerged on the global stage as an influential and formidable force that has challenged the existing world order and enabled a more muscular Russian foreign policy. This course explores a broad and inclusive study of the modern Russian military, drawing insights from military history, theory, doctrine, and politics. The course is advanced, but has no prerequisites and assumes no prior knowledge of Russian studies. The organization of the course is principally thematic, and will engage a discursive approach to draw out the political, economic, social, and technological developments of the current Russian military, with forays into the earlier Soviet era. First, we will consider Russia's military past and how history shaped Russia's military doctrine and thinking. Second, we will review patterns in Russian strategic thinking and recent efforts to update and reform Russian military doctrine for the 21st century. Third, we will review Russia's recent operational experiences to contemplate Russia's capability to adapt and refine its doctrine for modern combat. In addition to the weekly readings, I encourage you to read broadly on the topics of discussion, including drawing upon political and analytical commentary, contemporary literature, recent cinema, and other primary texts to investigate a multifaceted view of the military in the Soviet and contemporary Russian experience. The course has two essential goals: (1) to present a basic introduction to the modern Russian military; and (2) to use the study of the Russian military as a means for honing skills in political analysis.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the MA-REES program.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5521 Systemic Corruption in Eurasia 3 Credits

In certain countries of the Eurasia region corruption is systemic. Government institutions are captured by informal networks of political, business, and criminal actors who control the allocation of public resources, strategic industries, and key security and law enforcement functions. This seminar analyzes the political economies, power relationships, legal, institutional, historical and normative factors that have engendered systemic corruption across Eurasia, including Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia and the Caucasus. We examine how systemic corruption in Eurasia causes economic stagnation, political repression, conflict -- and war -- and poses a threat to the international liberal rules-based order and democracy. A key learning objective of the seminar is to co-create and innovate solutions to systemic corruption in specific countries that the students will choose.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5522 From Runet to Cyberwar 3 Credits

Whether through election meddling and disinformation or ransomware and critical infrastructure attacks, Russian strategy and capabilities in cyberspace have come to be considered a prominent threat to Western cybersecurity. Yet there is much about Russia's unique approach to cyberspace and how it has developed that remains poorly understood though critically important to making sense of the regime's growing authoritarianism at home and belligerence abroad. This course examines Russia's relationship with the global Internet and its role in the evolution of domestic politics and foreign policy. In tracing the evolution of the Russian Internet, RuNet, and its important role in fostering new forms of political discourse, journalism, and protest mobilization, we will examine how these developments have been met with increasing efforts at control and manipulation of the information space. Likewise, the course will examine Russia's understanding of threats and conflict in and through cyberspace and their impact on current international affairs and the future of the global Internet.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5525 Security Issues:Russia/Eurasia 3 Credits

The security challenges facing Russia and the Eurasian states appear to be increasing in number and in complexity. This course seeks to examine how these states are addressing such concerns, either individually or through collective approaches. In order to better understand the security dynamics of the broader Eurasian space, we will review how "security" was framed during the Soviet period and at the end of the 20th century. We will then look at how the respective states have adapted and/or altered this approach; specifically Russia, the Western states (Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova), the Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan), and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan). The latter part of the course will evaluate how current threats and issues are being addressed in the region, including energy and economic security, military development, terrorism and trafficking, and the presence of external powers in the region. There will be two written assignments and a final examination in the course.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5530 The Future of Russia 3 Credits

This course considers the major challenges-political, economic, and strategic-facing contemporary Russia.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5531 Russ/Eur Rels: Clim/Energy/War 3 Credits

The seminar is intended to take a comprehensive look at the possible impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on Russian-European relations, seen from three different angles: climate, energy security, and defense. The emphasis will be on the European responses to the invasion, the Russian counter-responses, and their effects on both Europe and Russia, in the short term and in longer-range perspective. The seminar will be divided into four parts: 1. The Impact of the Ukrainian War in Historical Perspective 2. On the Eve: Energy and Climate Policy in Europe and Russia on the Eve of COVID and the Outbreak of War 3. The Explosion and its Immediate Repercussions. 4. Climate, Energy Security, and War: The Longer-Term Questions

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Equivalent to GOVT 5458

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5535 Russian Foreign Policy 3 Credits

The course will focus on post-Soviet Russian affairs, including Russia's relations with its neighbors as well as grand strategy.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5536 US-Russia Foreign Policies 3 Credits

The U.S. and Russia did not have an easy relationship during the 20th century. During the Cold War, the conflict between two ideological systems — Communism, which the Soviet Union sought to expand, and democracy, which the United States has used to counter Communism — has led to a number of direct and indirect clashes between these two superpowers, including wars in Vietnam and Korea, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Berlin Blockade, and the creation of the Berlin Wall. The collapse of the Communist system, along with the perception of the “End of History,” spread a feeling of optimism about U.S.-Russian relations. Originally, optimism strengthened due to initially amicable relations between the Russian and U.S. presidents. However, subsequent relations took a wrong turn and went through a downward spiral, worsening after each crisis (including the NATO bombings of Yugoslavia, the Color Revolutions in the post-Soviet space, Russia’s wars with Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria in 2008, 2014, and 2015, respectively, Russia’s interference in the U.S. elections in 2016 and Russia’s ongoing 2022 war in Ukraine). As of today, U.S.-Russian relations are at the lowest point since the end of the Cold War. Many observers wonder to what extent such an outcome was inevitable and who is to blame for it. This course will address this and related questions in depth by analyzing the foreign policy between the U.S. and Russia. We will cover U.S.-Russian foreign policy, Russian geopolitics, the influence of Marxist-Leninist theory, the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia’s foreign policy under Putin, and the recent U.S. responses to Russia’s assertive behavior on the international stage. We will also reflect on the future of the U.S.-Russian relations. Some of these topics intersect with issues related to international relations (IR), national security, political theory, political economy, geopolitics, and, of course, history.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5537 Democr Erosion Orban to Putin 3 Credits

In recent years, challenges to the liberal democratic order have mounted as civil liberties around the world have deteriorated to their lowest point in more than a decade: 2021 marked a 16th consecutive year of decline in global freedom (Freedom House, 2022). But while democratic decline has occurred all over the world over the last decade, Central and Eastern Europe have been particularly affected by this trend: by 2020 democracy scores there fell to a record low since the breakup of the Soviet Union. The great optimism of the 1990s and the jubilation over the “transition paradigm” are now things of the past. How did this become possible? This course will explore the factors that contributed to the ongoing erosion of democracy with a particular focus on post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. We will look at countries ranging from the quick failures (Russia and Belarus) to those that recently started backsliding even though they were once the front-runners of democratization (Hungary and Poland). We will explore commonalities and differences among these countries’ dynamics while also drawing parallels from consolidated democracies from the West, and will try to understand which factors are driving this democratic erosion, as well as ways to counter the democratic backsliding in the region.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5538 Russian Influence in Europe 3 Credits

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the MA-ERES program.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5548 Politics of South Caucasus 3 Credits

The countries of the South Caucasus are rapidly undergoing a political, economic, and strategic transformation, during a period of remarkable international turbulence. A cascade of events, including Russia’s war in Ukraine, changing domestic politics, the emergence of the Middle Corridor, growing U.S. and European engagement, and the search for new energy and critical mineral supply chains, are key factors influencing the region’s reconfiguration. Once characterized as a passive zone of frozen conflicts and a Russian backwater, the South Caucasus is returning to its roots as a strategic crossroads of Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

This course examines the contemporary politics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, beginning with the collapse of the Soviet Union to present-day events, including Soviet legacies, domestic political systems, nationalism/identity, regional and conflicts and security challenges. The course also investigates the impact of Trans-Caspian connectivity, energy security, international sanctions, AI, critical minerals, and increased international attention. Designed for students interested in international affairs, security studies, and Eurasian politics, the course emphasizes real-world policy analysis and current events. Students will develop the analytical tools necessary to understand and evaluate contemporary political developments and emerging strategic trends in this dynamic region.

Level: Graduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5549 The Caucasus: Hist, Cult, Pol 3 Credits

This course examines the history, politics, and culture of the modern Caucasus as a discrete area – that is, including both North and South Caucasus in the current parlance – from approx. the 18th century to the present. We will explore how such concepts as religion, nation, ethnicity, territory, empire, and class have been employed to explain components of Caucasian history and the extent to which they succeed or fail to explain developments from the perspective of the Caucasus' diverse populace. Moreover, we will explore how entanglements and tensions among actors in the Caucasus in the 18th-19th centuries evolved through the twentieth century and beyond, including examination of current political, social, and geopolitical dynamics in the Caucasus. In addition to history, we will incorporate perspectives from anthropology and ethnography, literature, and politics to broaden our conceptual and methodological toolkit for examining this region.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to students with a program in Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud, Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud, Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud or Eurasian, Russian, E Euro Stud.

REES 5550 Geopolitics of the Black Sea 3 Credits

The Black Sea region has reemerged as a highly significant theater of geopolitical conflict--most dramatically as a battlefield in Ukraine's struggle against Russia, in which other littoral states have played critical roles. Simultaneously, military action on the eastern flank of the region in the South Caucasus has involved Russia and at times Turkey decisively. Both Moscow and Ankara have also competed for influence in the region's western flank where the conflicts among the successor states of the former Yugoslavia continue to smolder, fanned by disinformation campaigns, foreign political manipulation, and attempted coup d'etats. The region is crisscrossed by critical energy, commodity, and transportation networks which have been suppressed by inter-state conflict. Nationalism and conflicting historical narratives compete as former imperial spheres have been resurrected while uncertainty about future membership in the European Union or NATO perpetuates a security dilemma. The course methodology combines an education in foreign policy practice with academic analysis of geographic, economic, historical, military, ideological, and cultural regional factors to ask: What kind of Greater Black Sea region is likely to emerge from the conclusion of the War in Ukraine? Is the sea a strategic bridge between Europe and Asia, or a wall?

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5556 Looking for Trouble in Cn Asia 3 Credits

This course will focus on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan -- countries mostly seen as undifferentiated and static "post-Soviet 'stans," as chess pieces in a "Great Game" between global and regional powers, or as countries known for what they mean to conflicts outside the region. We will dive into what drives conflict inside the region itself and try to understand great power competition and collaboration from the perspective of the Central Asian countries. Along the way we will get to know the recent history of the different countries individually as well, and students will learn how to keep up on and analyze events in the region from real-time sources. We will start with how the trauma of perestroika and the collapse of the USSR shaped the new countries of the region. We will examine the regional revival of Islam and how Central Asians became involved with the Islamic state; the rise of nativist ethnic nationalism; economic dependence on labor migration; resource conflict and borders; climate change and Central Asia's role in a global post-carbon future. We will also look at how great power competition and geopolitical developments in China, Afghanistan, and Ukraine have challenged the security of the region.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5562 Afghanistan:Pol/Geopol/Sec 3 Credits

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5575 Russian Law in Comp Persp 3 Credits

This seminar is devoted to an examination of post-Soviet Russian law and the periodic attempts to implement legal reform as part of the modernization process. Among the questions to be considered: What were the starting points for reform of the Soviet legal system? What was accomplished over the past 30 years? How has Putin rolled back this progress? And what are the continuities from the past that have yet to be broken?

The first half of the seminar will consider the theoretical, political, and historical aspects of the above questions in assessing Russia's legal development since the collapse of the USSR. Admittedly, Russia's negative legal reputation often proceeds it in any discussion of Russian law. Nevertheless, one cannot understand current Russian economic development, politics, civil society and foreign affairs, without an understanding of how Russian law actually works.

The second half of the seminar is devoted to a more substantive examination of selected legal topics, such as grassroots law, property rights, state building, and human rights. Special attention will be given to recent legal developments, including the rollback of civil liberties as introduced in the 2020 constitutional amendments and other repressive legislation (the foreign agent's law, the law on undesirable organizations). The distinctive evolution of Russia's legal institutions (lawyers, judges, prosecutors) will also be discussed with a focus on how they differ from seemingly comparable Western institutions. Finally, the course will discuss the impact of Western sanctions and the growing chorus to hold Russia accountable under international law for its criminal actions in Ukraine.

This seminar takes an interdisciplinary and comparative approach. The legal systems of nineteenth century Russia, the post-socialist states of Central and Eastern Europe, the United States, and Western Europe will all be points of comparison. Special attention will also be paid to Ukrainian legal developments to highlight the alternative paths to legal reform in the post-Soviet space. No previous study of law or legal training (in any legal system) is required, or even expected. Our discussions will center on texts drawn from political science, history, and law.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate or Juris Doctor level students.

REES 5577 SocialistPost-SocialistCities 3 Credits

Historically, the growth of cities has been associated with aspects of modernization such as industry, education, and innovation. Yet cities have also been associated with overcrowding, vice, conflict, and surveillance. Cities are loci of creativity and memory, sites of consumption and inequality, locations for opportunity and exclusion, and places of administration and resistance. This course takes the cultural, social and material lives of cities as a lens for examining the revolutionary dreams and real practices of the Moscow-centric socialist empire that rose and fell in the 20th century. Furthermore, it looks at how once socialist cities have become contested and experimental sites in an age of globalization and neoliberal market reform and at how once socialist states are engaged in redevelopment or building new cities to embody fresh visions of modernity. Topics include architecture as a symbolic tool, housing policy as a driver of social change, public space as an arena for organization and expression, and the politics of commemoration. We will start with the utopian thinking of socialist revolutionaries and Soviet experiments with architecture and city planning. We will visit remade and new cities across the USSR then look at how socialist practices were translated in the post-war expansion into Eastern Europe. We will retrace our steps after the fall of the Berlin wall to see how urban landscapes and lifestyles changed to reflect new economic and political systems and the dual nature of openness/chaos. We will also examine how both memory and visions of the future continue to find expression in the built landscape. Primary sites of investigation will be: Moscow, Magnitogorsk, Tashkent, Nowa Huta, Sofia, Berlin and Astana.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5578 Borders Belonging: Eur E Edg 3 Credits

What does it mean to have lived on the margins of Europe? Indeed, what are Europe's borderlands today? Shifting boundaries, territorial dispossession, contested identities, and the creation and dissolution of states have all featured prominently in the histories of the lands located in between the core countries of the West and the Russian empire/USSR/Russian Federation. World War I resulted in the creation of a myriad of states in Eastern Europe; twenty-five years later these territories found themselves, often with changed borders and changed populations, behind the "Iron Curtain." The collapse of communism gave Eastern European states and peoples a chance to renegotiate their alliances and to connect differently with the West. But as the Russian invasion of Ukraine has tragically demonstrated violent geopolitical and civilizational rivalries have not faded into obsolescence. From an interdisciplinary base, this course will examine nation-building, cultural and economic dis/integration, migration, violence, and security issues in the territory now comprising Poland, Ukraine, the Baltic States, Belarus, and Russia (with some attention to divided Germany as well).

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5600 BusinessMechanicsEurasia/China 3 Credits

This course is designed to expose students to actual international business situations in Eurasia (Turkey/CIS) and China. They will learn "what it takes" to do business in many settings globally, even outside of this geographical sphere. The course is designed to condition students' thinking so that they complete the course: a) asking the right questions; b) dealing with information immediately relevant in any international business setting (and discarding that information which cannot be used by businesses) c) having a concrete understanding of international business mechanics.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment limited to students in the MA-ERES program.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5610 Building Capitalism-Postcomm Tra 3 Credits

The purpose of this course is to provide graduate students with an empirical understanding of what post-communist economic transformation was about, its aims, issues, and outcomes. It offers a broad empirical and thematic overview of post-communist economic transformation in Eastern, Central Europe, and Central Asia. It will discuss how communism collapsed, alternative reform programs, the development of output, liberalization, financial stabilization, privatization, corruption and governance, social developments and policy, and the role of the outside world. It is designed for graduate students in various social sciences with a regional focus on Eurasia. An understanding of economic reasoning is required.

After this course, a student should feel that he or she understands what post-communist economic transformation was about, what the main issues and disputes were, and what the main differences between the transition countries were.

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 5615 Political Economy of Eurasia 3 Credits

This course is concerned with an empirical understanding of postcommunist economic transformations, especially in the former republics of the Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe. A theoretical framework of the transition policy will be reflected in the context of globalization. The objectives of the course are 1) to understand goals, ways, and forms of transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy and 2) to understand the main drivers, successes, and failures of reforms, challenges, and achievements of the transition process. It offers a broad empirical and thematic overview of post-soviet economic transformation. It will discuss why and how communism collapsed, alternative reform programs, the development of output, liberalization, financial stabilization, privatization, corruption and governance, social developments and policy, and the role of the outside world.

The course is designed for graduate students in various social sciences with a regional focus on Eurasia. An understanding of economic reasoning is required. Knowledge of Russian language is welcome but not necessary. After this course, a student should understand what post-Soviet economic transformation was about, which were the main issues and disputes, and what the main differences between the transition countries were. This knowledge should facilitate perception and evaluation of the on-going economic and political development across the region.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5616 Russia-China Rel 21st Century 3 Credits

Russia-China Relations in the 21 Century: Economics & Geopolitical Factors

Russia and China have continued to be major challengers of the current international system and meaningful economic competitors of the West. Will these two biggest world autocracies be able to define the new rules of global economic and political order in the 21st century? Can a rising Russian-Sino partnership form a central alternative model to the democratic market system of the West?

This course seeks to analyze the ways mutual economic needs and geopolitical interests, as well as close relations between Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, have strengthened and diversified the “no-limits” partnership between Moscow and Beijing. We'll evaluate how deeply the bond between these two countries runs, and what critical areas of economic and political friction still exist in their relationship. You'll understand better why the Russia-China interaction has become highly asymmetrical, but not entirely one-sided. That means that although China wields great influence in the Kremlin, it does not exert clear control. However, Moscow has become Beijing's junior partner, turning China into Russia's main hydrocarbon export destination, and its major source of the country's technological imports, while at the same time converting the yuan into Russia's principal reserve currency. In the process, you will develop critical thinking skills, and you will learn how to apply political economy theories to specific issues of bilateral Russia-China relations. You'll also consider if and how U.S.-Russia and U.S.-China relations impact the mutual rapprochement of both countries, and what further dynamics might emerge in the power triangle between Washington, Beijing, and Moscow. You will explore how far Russia and China have moved in their efforts to challenge a unipolar moment and set up a multipolar world order. Along the way, we'll discuss as well if the West is now engaged in a new Cold War with China and Russia.

Our course will offer a review of key thematic points on Russia's and China's mutually supporting positions in multilateral settings - including the UN, the SCO, the G20, and BRICS. We'll analyze their coordinative activities and competition in such ventures as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). We'll also discuss Russia's disruptive role for China in the context of the Ukrainian war and the ensuing unprecedented Western sanctions against Moscow.

In the final part of the course, we will elaborate a set of concrete policy recommendations for how U.S. leaders can counter Russia and China's coordinated challenges to the current “rule-based” order.

Level: Graduate, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

REES 5925 Rees Internship Tutorial 0.25 or 1 Credits

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor

Grading: Pass/Fail Default

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to students with a major in Russian East European Stud, Russian East European Stud, Russian East European Stud or Russian East European Stud.

Enrollment limited to students in the MA-ERES program.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 6415 Geospatial Data Science 3 Credits

This course provides an introduction to geospatial data science and its applications to public policy, political economy, and international relations. The course will enable students to work with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data structures and understand cartography, transformations, georeferencing, geocoding, and spatial analysis. It will provide students with hands-on experience in using open-source GIS software to visualize and analyze multiple types of data, including administrative records, historical maps, boundaries, weather, climate, roads, and satellite images/remote sensing. Applications will include data on elections, armed conflict, crime, public infrastructure, and economic activity, plus a series of specialized topics selected by students. Class meeting time will be split between lectures and lab exercises, where students will use GIS software to complete assignments.

Level: Graduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 7949 Tutorial:Russ/East Euro Stud 0.025-3 Credits

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: Main Campus (UGrad, Grad)

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 9991 Continuous Registration

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: No Grade

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 9992 Continuous Registration

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: No Grade

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 9993 Continuous Registration

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: No Grade

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 9994 Continuous Registration

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: No Grade

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

REES 9999 Thesis Research

Level: Graduate, Juris Doctor, Undergraduate

Grading: No Grade

Course registration restrictions:

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.