

Russia, the Soviet Union, and the CIS: Plague Syllabus

HIS 240, Spring 2020

<https://www.russiasovietunionciss20.theleahgoldman.com/blog/>

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Office Hours Online by appointment

NEW Course Requirements

Online Participation:

Every week, I will post **two** videos on the blog, one for each day of content. In these videos, I will give you some information contextualizing our sources and pose a set of discussion questions. I will also post a transcript of the video, for those who may prefer to read rather than watch. Here is what you need to do:

- 1) Watch the videos and/or read the transcripts
- 2) Respond in one of three ways:
 - a) Share your thoughts on one of my discussion questions. (This is similar to a **response** post on the blog from the first half of the semester.)
 - b) Pose your own discussion question or questions. (This is similar to a **conversation starter** post on the blog from the first half of the semester.)
 - c) Respond to someone else's discussion question. (This is also similar to a **response** post on the blog from the first half of the semester.)

You must respond to **every video/transcript**. That means you will add two posts to blog every week. Each post must be one full paragraph long and address the sources in a substantive way.

Format: Your posts can be either in the form of a **video** (see instructions below) or a written paragraph. Either way, please make it clear whether you are posing your own questions or responding to my or someone else's questions.

Deadlines: I will post my videos/transcripts for each week by 9am on Tuesdays. You must complete both of your posts for the week by 5pm on Fridays.

Instructions for video posts: You can record yourself on your computer, with a camera, or with your phone. Upload your video to YouTube. You will need a YouTube account to do this (they are free!). I recommend that you select "Unlisted" as your privacy setting, because there are a lot of weirdos on the internet. Then, you can add a new post to our course blog and embed your video there. Please leave your videos up until the end of the semester (May 15). After that, you are welcome to take them down.

I have added a video tutorial called "How to Upload Videos on YouTube" to the blog under "Writing Resources." We are all learning how to do this—including me!—so please let me know if you have any questions.

I absolutely welcome you to be creative and have fun with this! If you would rather have a sock puppet or Lego person on camera instead of yourself, that's no problem.

Final Paper:

We are going to do a simpler version of the original final paper assignment. You will write a **1500-word** analytical paper, in which you will use two primary sources from the syllabus to answer a historical question. I will give you some topics to choose from. You may also create

our own topic, but you must get my approval before you start writing. You are not required to do any outside research. This assignment has three steps:

- 1) Choose a topic and write a one-paragraph introduction and an outline. Your introductory paragraph must include your thesis statement. Please review my advice on how to write an Introduction and a Thesis Statement in the **HIS240S20 Writing Handout**, which you can find under Writing Resources on the course website. (Due **April 13 at 5pm**)
- 2) Meet with me online via MS Teams to discuss your intro and outline. (Week of April 13)
- 3) Complete and submit your essay (Due May 8)

*Please note that I will be very happy to meet with you more often or correspond with you by email as you are working on your paper.

Grading

Attendance and Participation 10%

Blog Posts 15%

You will get credit for your attendance and participation and for you blog posts as separate categories for the first half of the semester. They will be counted as a single category for the second half of the semester.

Discussion Leadership 10%

Because we cannot continue this activity, everyone will get an A in this category.

Debates 15% (10% team grade, 5% audience grade)

Because we cannot continue this activity, everyone will get an A in this category.

Primary Source Analysis 20%

Final Paper 30% (10% Introduction and Outline, 20% Final Draft)

NEW Course Policies

Office Hours: I am still available to you! We can discuss the class over email or via MS Teams video chat. If you would like to do a video chat you must email me to make an appointment. I will do my best to accommodate your scheduling needs.

Email: Email is more important than ever in these circumstances. Please feel free to email me any time with questions about the class or to schedule an appointment for online office hours. I will respond within 24 hours. You must SIGN your email with your name. **You are responsible for checking your W&J email at least once per day**. Email is my only way to communicate with you, and I need to be able to reach you.

NEW Course Schedule

Week 8 (Mar 23-27): Late Stalinism and the Cold War

Day 1: *Russia's Long Twentieth Century*, chapter 8

Day 2: Central Committee Resolution on the Literary Journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*”

Mikhail Zoshchenko, “The Adventures of a Monkey,” pp. 316-324

Andrei Zhdanov, “The Duty of a Soviet Writer”

Week 9 (Mar 30-Apr 3): Khrushchev's Thaw

Day 1: *Russia's Long Twentieth Century*, chapter 9

Nikita Khrushchev, "The Secret Speech" (abridged)

Evgeny Evtushenko "Mourners Crushed at Stalin's Funeral" and "Stalin's Heirs"

Day 2: *I Walk Around Moscow* (film, watch online)

Week 10 (Apr 6-10): Brezhnev's Stagnation

Day 1: *Russia's Long Twentieth Century*, chapter 10

Day 2: Natalya Baranskaya, "A Week Like Any Other," pp.1-62

Week 11 (Apr 13-17): Dissent and Reconstruction

Introduction + Outline Due April 13 at 5pm!

Day 1: Lyudmilla Alexeyeva, *Thaw Generation*, 3-7, 83-84, 94-105, 119-136, 206-211

Andrei Sakharov, "Progress, Coexistence, and Intellectual Freedom (Liberal Dissent)"

Alexander Solzhenitsyn "Letter to the Soviet Leaders (Conservative Dissent)"

Day 2: *Russia's Long Twentieth Century*, chapter 11

"Gorbachev Challenges the Party (Glasnost)"

Week 12 (Apr 20-24): Perestroika and the Traumas of the 1980s

Day 1: *My Perestroika* (film, watch online)

Day 2: Svetlana Alexeivich, *Voices From Chernobyl*, pp.1-23, 138-149

Oscar Holland, "Photographs Capture an Abandoned World Inside the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone," *CNN.com* (June 12, 2019)

Viktor Kurchatov, "What Society Owes the Afghanistan Veterans"

Week 13 (Apr 27-May 1): Yeltsin vs. Putin

Day 1: *Russia's Long Twentieth Century*, chapter 12

Tatyana Tolstaya, "The Price of Eggs," pp. 206-215

Kombinatsiya, "American Boy"

Day 2: Arkady Ostrovsky, *The Invention of Russia*, chapter 9

Vladimir Putin, "Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy" (Feb. 10, 2007)

Singing Together, "A Man Like Putin"

"Vladimir Putin: 20 Years in Power—In Pictures," *The Guardian* (Aug. 9, 2019)

Week 14 (May 4-5): Russia Without Putin?

Day 1: Arkady Ostrovsky, *The Invention of Russia*, chapter 10

Ilya Budraitskis, Ilya Matveev, and Sean Guillory, "Not Just an Artifact," *Jacobin* (Aug. 1, 2017)

Pussy Riot "Punk Prayer," "Putin Will Teach You How to Love," and "Chaika"

***Final Papers due at 10pm, Friday, May 8* Good luck!!!**