

HISTORY 420  
Russian History to 1890

Kate Transchel  
Department of History  
ktranschel@csuchico.edu  
Office phone: 898-6417  
Trinity 221

Office Hours:  
T TR 9:30-12:00

**Course Description:** In 1917 the tsarist government of the Russian Empire toppled in what has been called the greatest event of the twentieth century. Nearly seventy-five years later the world witnessed the dramatic events in Moscow that led to the end of the Soviet Union and the beginning of a restructuring of the world's economic and political order. How and why the so-called Communist revolution took place in 1917, why the Soviet Union broke apart in 1991, and why the former Soviet Union will never "be like us" are issues that are only comprehensible through an examination of Russia's history. This course traces the history of Russia from Kievan Rus' to the 1880s in order to understand some of the issues and problems facing Russia today. In particular we will examine how Russian society and culture was shaped by geographical and historical features unique to that region of the world. By examining some of the significant components of the Russian experience I hope you will gain a fuller understanding of the nature of an important society quite different from our own, and come to appreciate the complexities of events taking place in the former Soviet Union today.

This course is intended to offer you opportunities to improve your research, writing, critical thinking, and discussion skills. To that end, HIST 326 incorporates the Department of History's Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) goals, listed below, into the work we will do during the semester.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Student's work demonstrates critical use and proper citation of both primary and secondary sources.
2. Student's work employs the formal styles of writing, argumentation, and presentation that historians use.
3. Student's work demonstrates a basic mastery of research techniques that historians use.
4. Oral presentations are clear and comprehensive.
5. Student's work reflects an understanding of historiographic traditions.
6. Student's work reflects an understanding of the intellectual, political, economic, social, and cultural history of the United States, Europe, Classical Civilization, the Near East, or one "Non-Western" area.
7. Student's work reflects an understanding the roles of race, class, gender, or ethnicity in history.

**Required Readings:**

Riasanovsky and Steinberg, *A History of Russia*,  
D. Rowley, *Exploring Russia's Past*, vol. 1 to 1856  
P. Avrich, *Russian Rebels, 1600-1800*  
I. Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*  
Gogol, *Inspector General*

### Course Requirements:

- The course offers one mid-term and one final each worth 20% of the grade.
- There will be one short paper on *Fathers and Sons* worth 10%.
- There will also be several writing assignments on primary sources that will count for 25% of the grade altogether.
- Discussion is an essential element of this course and attendance is mandatory. It is therefore important to come to class prepared to talk about the assigned readings. **In order to facilitate discussions, all students must come to class with an outline of that week's Riasanovsky readings.** This will count for 25% of your grade.

Graduate students are required to complete an additional assignment that I will discuss with them separately. All assignments **MUST** be turned in on time. **Students who are unable to meet the deadlines posted may turn in their assignments early. Please note that I do not give an incomplete unless there is a medical emergency.**

**Students who miss 3 or more classes for ANY reason will be dropped from the course--no make-ups, no incomplete, no pleading, no discussion.**

**\*\*\*\*\*VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** *Due to drastic budget cutbacks for the California State University system (thank you, Governor Schwarzenegger and state legislators!), faculty are **REQUIRED** to take nine **mandatory unpaid furlough days** each semester. Three of these have already been pre-set by Chico State for the fall semester: 9/8, 10/15, and 11/2. At this point it is unclear exactly what the remaining six days will be. This syllabus reflects what days I **THINK** I will be forced to stay home. However, this may change over the course of the semester. It is your responsibility to check the syllabus posted online to get the most current furlough days. Even though I may not be in the classroom, you are still responsible for the readings and assignments required for those days.*

*NB: Students with perfect attendance and getting a B+ or better by week 15 may opt out of the final)*

### Classroom Decorum:

Part of your education includes learning to behave in a professional manner. Therefore, **I expect you to come to class on time, prepared for the day's lesson, and showing respect for your colleagues.** I will do the same. To help create the best environment for all of us, I've developed the following guidelines. If you believe that you cannot adhere to them, **I strongly encourage you to drop this class now.**

1. We--**students and faculty**--all contribute to the creation of a classroom atmosphere that encourages the free exchange of thoughts and ideas. To sustain this atmosphere for the duration of the semester, it is important that all members of the class are treated with dignity and respect
2. **You may bring a computer to class for the purpose of taking notes ONLY.** However, you must sit in the front row. If you choose to look at e-mail, Facebook, or anything not pertinent to the class, you will lose the privilege of using the computer in class.
3. **Cell phones must be turned off and remain out of sight during class. Same with iPods and other similar devices.**

4. **Newspaper reading, texting, listening to music, and prolonged conversations** (in person or on a cell phone) are rude and disruptive. Engage in these activities before or after class, but not during. I will drop frequent offenders from the class roster.

5. **Habitual late arrivals and early departures** are rude and disruptive. If you need to arrive late or leave early for a *bona fide* reason, please let me know. I will drop frequent offenders from the class roster.

6. **There are NO make-ups** for missed quizzes or homework assignments. Make-up examinations **may** be offered at my discretion. Please note that I am under no obligation whatsoever to offer make-up assignments or examinations.

7. **Students with special needs and circumstances** are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (DSS, x5959). I am happy to accommodate students through DSS, but cannot offer similar support or services independent of that center.

8. **Academic Dishonesty.** Because I value your education, I absolutely do not tolerate cheating including plagiarism. (Please refer to the Chico State Student Judicial Affairs website (<http://www.csuchico.edu/sjd/sja.shtml#Integrity>) for specifics on university policies and procedures. Any cheating will result in a failing grade and I will report you to Student Judicial Services. I mean it. It is not worth it.

### **Course Schedule and Lecture Topics:**

#### **Week 1**

**Aug 25** Introduction and the Steppe Empires  
(Riasanovsky, 1-25; Rowley, 1-18)

#### **Week 2**

**Sept 1** Society and Culture in Kievan Rus'  
(Riasanovsky, 26-57; Rowley, 19-60)

**Discussion: Analyze the text documents in Rowley, pp. 28-35 as historical sources.**

**What are the merits and problems of each?**

#### **Week 3**

**Sept 8 Mandatory Unpaid Furlough Day**  
(Riasanovsky, 59-87; 123-129; Rowley, 61-81)

#### **.Week 4**

**Sept 15** The Rise of Muscovy and the Unification of Russia  
(Riasanovsky, 88-122; Rowley 82-126)

**Discussion: We will begin this class hour by discussing the impact of the Mongols, drawing heavily on the primary sources in Rowley, pp. 71-81**

**Writing Assignment: What does the excerpt from the Domostroi (Rowley, pp. 118-19) tell us about the status of women in Appanage Russia?**

**Week 5**

**Sept 22** Ivan the Terrible, Pt. 1  
(Riasanovsky, 131-143; Rowley, 127-147 )  
**Film “Ivan Grozny”**

**Week 6**

**Sept 29** Ivan “The Terrible” Time of Troubles and the Re-establishment of Autocracy  
(Riasanovsky, 144-180; Avrich, 1-122)

**Week 7**

**Oct 6** Religious and Cultural Crises  
(Riasanovsky, 181-195; Rowley, 148-169)\*\*\*\*\***MIDTERM EXAM**\*\*\*\*\*  
(NB: No outlines due today)

**Week 8**

**Oct 13** Peter the Great Transforms Russia  
(Riasanovsky, 197-234; Rowley, 170-192; Avrich, 132-177)

**Writing Assignment:** Read the document on Peter’s assemblies (Rowley, p. 187). How has the status of women changed from the Muscovite period?

**Week 9**

**Oct 20** Catherine and her Rivals  
(Riasanovsky, 235-278; Avrich, 180-273)

**Week 10**

**Oct 27** Political Reform and the Age of Restoration  
(Riasanovsky, 279-300; Rowley, 218-231)

**Week 11**

**Nov 3** Nicholas I and Conservative Reaction  
(Riasanovsky, 301-322; Rowley, 232-239) **Discussion on Gogol Today**

**Writing Assignment:** Analyze Haxthausen’s essay (Rowley, p. 232) and the two documents in Rowley, pp. 236-239. How would you describe the nature of Russian rule at home? As an imperial power?

**Week 12**

**Nov 10** The Emergence of the Intelligentsia  
\*\*\*\*\* **Papers on Fathers and Sons due today**\*\*\*\*\*

**Week 13**

**Nov 17** **Mandatory Unpaid Furlough Day**

**THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 14**

**Dec 1** The Great (?) Reforms and Post-Emancipation Blues  
(Riasanovsky, 341-361)

**Week 15**

**Dec 8 Daily Life Under the Old Regime**  
**(Riasanovsky, 362-367)**

**FINAL EXAMS DUE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15 AT 6PM**