

RUSS 20251

The Making of Modern Russia

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Tsar Peter the Great (portrait by Jean-Marc Nattier, after 1717)



Tsar Nicholas II and Tsaritsa Alexandra in 17th-century court dress (1903)

What is the course about?

This course aims to introduce students to the study of Russia from a variety of different perspectives (e.g. historical, cultural, social and political). The course is structured around a series of pivotal events that have shaped Russia's development from the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725) to the reign of Nicholas II (1894-1917). Each event is examined in its appropriate historical context, through documentary evidence, cultural artefacts and contemporary debates, as well as through scholarly works. The relevance and legacy of the selected events for Russia's present and future are also considered.

How is it taught?

One one-hour weekly lecture and one two-hour seminar per week.

How is it assessed? [subject to confirmation]

One 750-1000 word response paper (40%) and one 2000-word essay.

Indicative List of Weekly Topics:

Course Introduction: Russia before Peter the Great

Topic 1: The Founding of St. Petersburg (1703)

Topic 2: The Pugachev Rebellion (1773-1775)

Topic 3: The Battle of Borodino (1812)

Topic 4: The Decembrist Uprising (1825)

Topic 5: The Slavophile-Westerniser Debates (1840s)

Topic 6: The Siege of Sevastopol (1854-1855)

Topic 7: The Emancipation of the Serfs (1861)

Topic 8: The First Russian Revolution (1905)

Topic 9: The Stolypin Reforms (1906-1911)

Course Conclusion

Sample reading:

Freeze, Gregory, ed., *Russia: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)

Riasanovsky, Nicholas V. and Mark D. Steinberg, *A History of Russia*, 8th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010)

Hosking, Geoffrey, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997)

Hosking, Geoffrey, *Russia and the Russians* (London: Allen Lane, 2001)