

**History 4796G Section 002**  
**Selected Topics in International or Comparative History: Russia,  
The Soviet Union and The Global South**

**Winter 2024**

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This is a **draft** syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

**Course Description**

With the escalation in the Russo-Ukrainian War in February 2022, a notable thread in its development has been Russia's attempts to build on its long-standing relationships with nations in the Global South. While many leaders of nations in the Global South have condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and these nations have abstained in United Nations votes, tacitly showing their disapproval of Russian actions, many nations in the Global South have continued their relationship with Russia for economic or political reasons and necessity. Others have grown closer to Russia, undeterred by its aggression in Ukraine. At the same time, Russia's neighbours in the Global South have seen their relationships change. Central Asian nations, for example, have started to push back on Russia's influence in the region, while China (and India) have sensed a shift in their favour as Russia's war continues.

These relationships stem from a variety of trends. First, the Soviet Union established itself as a counterweight to Western imperialism, especially in the Cold War era, making it a favourable partner, especially as nations in the Global South sought to chart an independent path from Europe. Russia today highlights this history, promoting a simplified narrative of the Soviet Union and Russia as anti-imperial and anti-racist powers. This history is much more complex, especially as both Russia and the Soviet Union engaged in their own imperialistic policies within their borders. Additionally, Russia often was willing to provide political or economic assistance to help local leaders in the Global South navigate uncertain times; today, this assistance remains important, especially with other nations unwilling, or unable, to match what Russia offers. The Global South also used Soviet and Russian support for their own purposes, sometimes even playing the West and Russia off one another in the Cold War era.

This class will serve to provide a glimpse of this broader history focusing on discussions of Russian and Soviet imperialism, Soviet ideas of anti-imperialism and anti-racism, and Soviet & Russian relations with Latin America, Africa and Asia from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present. It will focus on traditional diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, imperialism, and ideology in exploring this history that continues to impact the world today.

**Prerequisite(s):** 2.0 History courses at the 2200 level or above

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your

record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## Course Syllabus

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand how Russia or the Soviet Union conducted diplomacy with the Global South
- Understand how the Global South viewed the Soviet Union or Russia and how unique histories in different regions of the Global South led to different responses, challenges, and rationales in how different nations negotiated with the Soviet Union or Russia
- Explore how the history of Soviet anti-imperialism and anti-racism is much more complex than the Russian government states it today
- Consider how history and historical memory impact current events today
- Develop verbal and written communication skills through class discussion, discussion leadership, and various written assignments
- Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to develop a research paper

## Methods of Evaluation

Participation: 30%

Class Facilitation: 10%

Essay Proposal: 10% (Due January 26)

Annotated Bibliography: 10% (Due February 15)

Research Paper: 40% (Due April 6)

**Participation:** This class will be predominantly discussion based. These types of classes are always stronger when all students are prepared for class, having completed the readings, and are actively participating. Participation will be determined by the quality of student contributions over the entire duration of the course in each class. No marks will be given solely for attendance. Should you be anxious about participating in class, you should contact the professor early in the course.

**Class Facilitation:** Each week, one to two students will be charged with leading discussion. These students will be expected to prepare five discussion questions each which will be sent to Professor Drachewych to be posted on OWL no later than the night before class. In the discussion, these students will be expected to be active, leading discussion, and encouraging deeper discussion of course readings.

**Research Paper:** There will be three parts to the research paper for this class. An important process in this course will be developing a research project which will see students get significant feedback over the course of the term to help develop a polished research paper. The first step will be an *essay proposal*. This will be a two page, double-spaced in 12 pt. font, overview of a research topic. The second step will be a *10 source annotated bibliography*. The

third step will be a 18-20 page, double-spaced in 12 pt. font, *research paper*. Further information about each part will be posted on OWL.

*Students must attend at least half (7 out of 12) of the seminar meetings and obtain a passing grade on the research paper in order to pass the course, regardless of grades received for other assignments.*

### **General Information about Submissions and Deadlines:**

All assignments should be submitted online via OWL at 11:59:59 pm ET on its due date. The timestamp on OWL will be considered final for any disputes regarding the punctuality of submissions.

All written assignments will require citations (endnotes/footnotes and bibliography) in the most recent version of Chicago Style. Hardcopies are not required nor will be accepted.

### **Late Policy:**

For all late assignments, a late penalty of **2% per day** (weekends will count as one day) will be applied. Should you require accommodation due to medical reasons or otherwise, please see the following section, contact Academic Counselling or consult the Undergraduate Policies and Statements on the History Department website.

### **Course Materials**

The following book will be available from the UWO Bookstore:

Jeremy Friedman, *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World* (Harvard University Press, 2022)

All other readings will be linked via OWL. Please note – this is a class that will have a healthy amount of reading. This is to allow some depth of discussion and analysis, but also to allow a comparative approach to a global phenomenon.

*The following books are NOT available at the Bookstore but are recommended should students require further background knowledge:*

Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Soviet Experiment*

Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*

Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War*

### **Course Schedule and Readings**

**Week 1: Course Introduction (January 12)**

**Week 2: An Introduction to Russian Imperialism (January 19)**

**Week 3: The Bolshevik Revolution and the Birth of “Soviet Anti-Imperialism” (January 26)**

**ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE January 26**

**Week 4: The Soviet Union and “Soviet Anti-Racism” (February 2)**

**Week 5: The Soviet Union as Anti-American Counterweight (February 9)**

**Week 6: The Sino-Soviet Split and the Non-Aligned Movement (February 16)**

**ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE FEBRUARY 15**

**READING WEEK**

**Week 7: Soviet-Global South Relations in the Cold War I (March 1)**

**Week 8: Soviet-Global South Relations in the Cold War II (March 8)**

**Week 9: The Soviet-Afghan War (March 15)**

**Week 10: The Soviet Union, Russia and the Global South in the 1980s and 1990s (March 22)**

**Week 11: GOOD FRIDAY – NO CLASS (March 29)**

**Week 12: Russia and the Global South under Putin (April 5)**

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE APRIL 5**

### **Additional Statements**

**Communication policies:** Students are welcome to come to the professor’s office hours or to arrange another time to meet the professor at his office if they have questions or concerns about the course. Additionally, they may contact the professor via email. The professor will aim to respond to students within 24 hours on weekdays and within 48 hours on weekends. Please use your UWO email address for any correspondence.

**Use of electronic devices:** Students are welcome to use electronic devices for the purposes of reading or writing notes or reviewing course materials. Recording tools are not allowed without written permission from the instructor.

**Use of generative AI tools:** Students must obtain permission from the professor before using generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course. Using these tools without his permission puts your academic integrity at risk.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: [https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program\\_module\\_information/policies.html](https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html) for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.

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