1. **Course description.** This course traces economic factors leading to the downfall of the Russian Empire and the rise of the USSR, followed by an assessment of the rise of the USSR. Particular attention is devoted to the NEP period, earlier Soviet economic models, the famine of the 1930s, the impact of the Great Patriotic War (WWII), industrialization and urbanization, Soviet planning, and declining productivity growth and life expectancy in the 1970s and 1980s. The course then explores the economic consequences of the USSR's collapse as well as the nature of recovery in various countries that followed. The course concludes with an overview of formal political economy models. Students will be encouraged to explore Census data, household surveys, and other data sources.

2. **Learning objectives.** This course has multiple objectives. [QS] There is a significant amount of economic theory, which presumes and uses mathematics through Math 202/212 to build economic models that explain economic and political behavior. The course also expects students to obtain and utilize a data set of their choice, but with my approval, to analyze issues related to Soviet/post-Soviet economic history, or current issues. All Russian/Soviet censuses are available online, as are standard household datasets such as the Russian and Ukrainian Longitudinal Monitoring Surveys, the Life in Kyrgyzstan survey, a multitude of DHS (Demographic and Household Surveys), World Bank firm-level surveys, and housing and real estate databases such as www.krisha.kz.

The course has a significant writing and presentation requirement, as noted below. I expect that the course will make use of and draw on the Duke Writing Center and the Reader Project, which I have used in other courses.

[CZ, CCI] While this is not a humanities course, it is expected that students will gain an appreciation of civilizations both with respect to Russia and its neighbors/satellite states. Toward that end, a substantial history component will be required (and covered on exams), and on many topics there will be reference to relevant literary works. For example, it is difficult to cover the full impact of the war from dry statistics; the work of Nobel Laureate Svetlana Alexievich will be a valuable complement to the technical work, much as will be the work of the sartirist/novelist Andrei Kurkov when we discuss the 1990s transition period.

[EI] Finally, the entire course focuses on the causes of the rise and collapse of the USSR and then the behaviors of those in its successor states. The political economy aspect of the course focuses on human motivations and seeks to understand the consequences of actions, both individual and societal, and address the ethical and political implications of political choices. This is particularly important in the Soviet/post-Soviet context because of the large number of decisions that had cataclysmic – and generally negative – effects on human welfare.

3. **Prerequisites:** Econ 201 (intermediate micro I) and 208 (econometrics) or equivalent. Working knowledge of
differential and integral calculus, and some data-handling skills are necessary. **Useful skills:** some familiarity with Russian or Ukrainian language, some familiarity with Soviet/Russian empire political history. **If you do not have any language skills, I strongly encourage you to take Russian 101 concurrently.** This will help you navigate websites and access databases which, of course, is the key purpose of language study.

4. **Honor code and course policies.** Failure to acknowledge assistance on an assignment, or to cite a source of information used in an assignment, or to represent the work of others as your own, violates the University's honor code. Any violations may result in failure of the assignment or the course, or expulsion from the University.

Any exam missed for a non-legitimate reason will be accorded the grade of 0. Any exam missed for a legitimate reason will be made up with an oral exam as soon as EcoTeach can schedule it.

Late work will be penalized by 1/3 grade point per day late (excluding Sundays).

Assignments must be submitted via Sakai. An electronic and a hard copy of the term paper must be submitted to the instructor.

Standard formatting for regular text material shall be as follows: 1-inch margins top/bottom/left/right; 1.5 line spacing; extra space between paragraphs; Garamond 12 font; right hand justification for main text. References and footnotes should be single space (with space between individual citations) and Garamond 11 font.

Assignments and term papers that have not gone through a basic spell and grammar check will not be accepted. Files attached with viruses will be deleted and not regarded as submitted; if for some reason the virus gets through and infects one of my computers, you will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment.

5. **Grading and assignments.** The grades will be determined as weighted averages of exam and homework performances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USSR overview quiz</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Sept 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature survey</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Sept 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical presentation of a research paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Oct 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research project/term paper (including oral presentation)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Dec 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination¹</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Dec 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The essays/presentations include (1) a brief literature survey on a policy topic of interest, with dissemination via Sakai to the class, and (2) a technical presentation (via Sakai, but also possibly "live"): short but detailed presentation of a formal (i.e., mathematical) economic model or econometric application pertinent to The USSR. Topics must receive the instructor's approval.

The term paper is expected to be 15-30 pages in length plus tables, on a topic of the student's choice, but subject to instructor approval. The paper is expected to involve [a] original empirical or theoretical research (required of graduate students in Econ 296), or [b] a comprehensive survey a topic, and provide policy analysis in light of recent data and research. However, I will push strongly for all students to undertake original empirical work, regardless of whether or not it makes use of sophisticated statistical techniques.

The final examination will be comprehensive.

6. **Texts and major books.** There are no required books, though I recommend buying and skimming through the Gregory-Stuart text. I will ask you to read from Alexeev-Weber as well. My class notes will be posted on Sakai.

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¹ I reserve the right to cancel the final, in which case the presentation and survey will count for 30% (combined) and the term paper 45% of the total grade.
These are intended to be supplemental, and are neither a perfect substitute for class or for the readings. Special thanks are due to Andrei Markevich, Yuri Zhukov, and Rustem Nureev for thoughtfully posting their reading lists on line, and to Anna Rafferty for help in preparing this reading list.


7. **Course outline and lots of literature.** As we come to each topic, I will note required and optional readings. The class itself will be conducted as a guided discussion, except when it is necessary to present formal models, or when students are making presentations. Thus, it is essential that everyone have done a substantial amount of reading on each subject prior to the class. **As a general policy, I expect each student to read the Alexeev-Weber book as assigned, background from Gregory-Stuart, and one paper (or chapter from a book) for each class, and to contribute to the discussion based on that reading. Readings may be chosen from the syllabus below, or from the journals and websites listed above, or found elsewhere. Each student will be expected to submit an annotated log of notes on readings at the time of the final: these will be permissible “open book” materials for the exam.**

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**[1]** **The big picture: becoming familiar with the USSR**


**[2]** **Economic conditions in the late Tsarist era**


• Dennison, Tracy and Nafziger, Peter. ‘Micro Perspectives on Russian Living Standards, 1750–1917,’ *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 2013 42(3): 397-441;


• Gregg, Amanda. 'Factory Productivity and the Concession System of Incorporation in Late Imperial Russia,' Mimeo http://eh.net/eha/wpcontent/uploads/2014/05/Gregg.pdf


• Gregory, Paul R. ‘Russian Living Standards during the Industrialization Era, 1885-1913’, *Review of Income and Wealth*, 1980, 26(1);


• Миронов Б.Н. Благосостояние населения и революция в имперской России: 18–начало 20 веков. Москва, 2011.

• Moon David ‘Reassessing Russian Serfdom’, *European History Quarterly*, 1996, 26: 483-526


• Nafziger, Steven. ‘Peasant Communes and Factor Markets in Late Nineteenth Century Russia,’ *Explorations in Economic History*, 2010, 47(4): 381-402;

• Nafziger, Steven. ‘Serfdom, Emancipation, and Off-Farm Labor Mobility in Tsarist Russia’, *Economic History of

- Nafziger, Steven. 'Did Ivan’s Vote Matter? The Case of the Zemstvo in Tsarist Russia,' *European Review of Economic History* 2011, 15: 393-441.


### Revolution and economic chaos


- Markevich Andrei and Mark Harrison. ‘Great War, Civil War, and Recovery: Russia's National Income, 1913 to 1928’, *Journal of Economic History* 71 (3): 672 – 703

### The NEP years


- Ellman, Michael. ‘On a Mistake of Preobrazhensky and Stalin,’ *Journal of Development Studies*, 1978, 14(3);

- Ellman, Michael. ‘Did the Agricultural Surplus Provide the Resources for the Increase in Investment in the USSR During the First Five Year Plan?’ *Economic Journal*, 1975, 85(340);

- Erlich, Alexander. ‘Preobrazhenski and the Economics of Soviet Industrialization’ *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1950, 64(1)


### Collectivization and industrialization


**Agriculture, income, and famine**

- Chen, Shuo, and Xiaohuan Lan. "There will be killing: Collectivization and death of draft animals."


[7] **War! (and terror)**

- Ellman, Michael. ‘Soviet Repression Statistics: Some Comments,’ *Europe Asia Studies*, 2002, 54(7);


• Miller, Marcus and Jennifer Smith. 'In the shadow of the Gulag: worker discipline under Stalin', Journal of Comparative Economics, 2015.


• Voznesenskii, Nikolai Alekseevich. The economy of the USSR during World War II. Public Affairs Press, 1948.


[8] **Industrialization, Stagnation, Agricultural Struggles, and Decline**


• Easterly, William, and Fischer, Stan. ‘The Soviet Economic Decline,’ World Bank Economic Review, 1995, 9(3);


• Шевельков, Анатолий Иванович. "Аграрная политика и нарастание кризиса в сельском хозяйстве РСФСР во второй половине XX века." Вестник Челябинского государственного университета 6 (2009).

[9] Militarization

[10] Demographic change
• Росстат и МинЗдрав РФ, *Репродуктивное Здоровье Населения России 2011*. Москва 2012

• Махрова, Алла Георгиевна, Татьяна Григорьевна Нефедова, и Андрей Трайяш. Московская область сегодня и завтра: тенденции и перспективы пространственного развития. Новый хронограф, 2008.

[12] **Collapse, Crisis, and Catastrophe: the 1990s**


• Harrison, Mark 'Coercion, Compliance, and the Collapse of the Soviet Command Economy,' *Economic History Review*, 2002, 55(3);


• Ponomareva, Maria, and Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. "Federal tax arrears in Russia Liquidity problems, federal redistribution or regional resistance?" *Economics of Transition* 12.3 (2004): 373-398.


- Малева Т. М. Родители и дети, мужчины и женщины в семье и обществе. – НИСП, 2007.

[14] Oligarchs and corruption

- Alexeev, Michael and James Leitzel "Collusion and Rent Seeking," Public Choice 69, 241-252, 1991

[15] **Building a modern economy**

• Iwasaki, Ichiro, “Corporate governance system and regional heterogeneity: evidence from east and west Russia,” Hitotsubashi Univ: Russian Research Center working paper no. 72, Nov. 2017.

An afterthought: you should be learning the literature as well. In case you haven’t had a course, favorite authors of mine who will give you a sense of different eras of the USSR and thereafter include:

Svetlana Alexievich
Mikhail Bulgakov
Dmitrii Bykov
Sergei Dovlatov
Andrei Kurkov
Alexandra Marinina
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
Vladimir Voinovich

For those who read Russian:

Novaya Gazeta  [https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2017/12/06/74821-vozhd-ne-sobiraetsya-umirat](https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2017/12/06/74821-vozhd-ne-sobiraetsya-umirat)

Films:

• Road to Berlin  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHm8MqZw5Jg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHm8MqZw5Jg)
• Komanda  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dz6bnVS9kF1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dz6bnVS9kF1)
• Irony of Fate  [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1urecgk](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1urecgk) (part I). parodies:  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U29CVBHTpU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U29CVBHTpU) and  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEssugLwxMo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEssugLwxMo)
• He Isn’t a Demon to You  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrwlk7_GF9g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrwlk7_GF9g) (Navalny expose on Medvedev)
• Yachts, oligarchs, girls: a huntress of men exposes a bribe-taker (with sub-titles)  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=ROZr2NgKPiU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=ROZr2NgKPiU) (Navalny, on Russian oligarchs and Trump’s inner circle)
• Brother 2  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9TRaGNNjEU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9TRaGNNjEU)
• Russia88  [http://russia88.com/](http://russia88.com/)

Election commercials you always wanted to see:  
[https://ok.ru/video/4684253737](https://ok.ru/video/4684253737)  
Dashcam favorites:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGlI87tyr_4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGlI87tyr_4)  
Quick Russian language text (Alexander Lipson’s classic):  
[https://www.adme.ru/zhizn-%D1%83%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B8-639205/](https://www.adme.ru/zhizn-%D1%83%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B8-639205/)  
[http://masterrussian.net/f24/alexander-lipson-%D1%83%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B8-9114/](http://masterrussian.net/f24/alexander-lipson-%D1%83%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B8-9114/)  
Photos:  
[http://www.netlore.ru/sssr-foto](http://www.netlore.ru/sssr-foto)  
[https://repository.duke.edu/dc/esr](https://repository.duke.edu/dc/esr)

8. **Useful data and research sites:**
http://www.ristat.org - various regional indicators on economics and social development for five cross-sections (1795, 1858, 1897, 1959 and 2002);
http://www.hist.msu.ru/Dynamics/ - time-series on various aspects of Russian development (national level) in the 19th – early 20th century;
http://www.ggdc.net/maddison/ - Russian/Soviet statistics in cross-country comparison;
http://src-home.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/database/SESS.html - Soviet statistics;
http://www.hist.msu.ru/Labs/Ecohist/version/r_databa.htm - Russian statistics and some archival micro data;
http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/pril.php - population statistics;
http://memo.ru/history/ - historical sources and statistics on political repression.
http://history.nsc.ru/kapital/project/about.html - historical sources and statistics on Siberia.

Demographic & Health Surveys http://www.measuredhs.com/
Demoscope http://www.demoscope.ru
e-Library.ru https://elibrary.ru
Gaidar Institute https://www.hoover.org/profiles/paul-r-gregory
Gregory, Paul https://www.hse.ru/org/hse/sei/demo
Higher School of Economics, Institute of Demography https://international.ipums.org/international/
Human Mortality Database http://www.mortality.org/
Kazakhstan health statistics http://www.krisha.kz/ https://krisha.kz/content/analytics
Kommersant https://www.kommersant.ru/
Life in Kyrgyzstan survey https://lifeinkyrgyzstan.org/
Markevich, Andrei https://www.nes.ru/en/people/catalog/m/amarkevich
Migration Research Center http://migrocenter.ru/
Moscow State University Dept of Econ & Geography News http://www.ecoross.ru/tematukaz/tematuk.htm
Old Map Collection http://old-map.narod.ru/
Penn World Tables http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/
Russia Federal Statistics Service (English link; all censuses from 1897) http://www.gks.ru/
Russian 2010 census (you can find others as well) http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/perepis_itogi1612.htm
Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/rlms-hse
Sova (owl) anti-racist site http://www.sova-center.ru/
Transparency International http://www.transparency.org/policy_research
University of Central Asia http://www.ucentralasia.org/Resources/ItemRussian/1233
Urbanistics Institute http://www.urbanistika.ru/index2.php
VoxUkraine http://voxukraine.org/en/
World Health Organisation statistical information system http://www.who.int/whosis/en/

World Bank data
Yandex (Google equivalent; great for geocoding needs and more) www.yandex.ru
Useful journals and research centers:

Comparative Economic Studies
Demographic Review (Higher School of Economics)  https://demreview.hse.ru/en/ (complete papers in Russian)
Economic History Review
Economics of Transition
European Review of Economic History
Explorations in Economic History
Journal of Comparative Economics
Journal of Economic History
Stockholm Institute of Transition Economics (SITE)  https://www.hhs.se/en/research/
World Development
Forbes Kazakhstan https://forbes.kz/process/urbanity/kak_reanimiruyut_monogoroda (and many others)
Vlast Kazakhstan https://vlast.kz/novosti/19951-v-almaty-planiruetsov-gulnara-zonu-ot-ulicy-saina-do-ozera-sajran.html (and many others -- but especially great series on urban planning)