

Politics of Russia
University of Utah
Political Science 5960: 3 credits
Spring 2023

Instructor: Tyler Pack

Email: tyler.pack@utah.edu

Office: GC 3345

Office Hours: TBA

Class Schedule: TuTh:10:45am-12:05pm in BEH-S 105

Course Website: <https://utah.instructure.com/> (Canvas)

Course Description and Objectives:

This course focuses on the domestic and foreign policy of Russia, with a particular emphasis on how the state and the people see and interact with each other and the rest of the world. We consider the politics, institutions, economy, and society of Russia, and a large portion of the course is dedicated to understanding Russia's relationships with its "Near Abroad", or the countries of the former USSR. This includes significant coverage of Russia's relationship with and war against Ukraine. Among other topics, this course considers the following questions:

- How do historical developments in Russia, including its transformations into and out of the Soviet Union, influence modern politics?
- How did changes in politics and economics in the 1990s after the collapse of the USSR interact with each other and affect society?
- Why and how did Russia move from a fledgling democracy in the 1990s to an authoritarian state under the decades-long rule of Vladimir Putin?
- What are the formal and informal institutions and networks that influence modern Russian politics?
- Where does the Russian regime find its domestic legitimacy, and how does the population view the regime?
- What historical and recent factors explain Russia's complicated relationships with the states of the former USSR?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will have improved your ability to:

- Analyze current trends in Russian politics in light of Russian history and long-term trends.
- Compare and evaluate Russian political, economic, and social institutions in regards to other systems.
- Produce analytical, prescriptive, and persuasive writing related to issues of Russian politics.
- Evaluate Russian political behavior according to major theories of domestic and foreign policy.