Course Syllabus POL263G: Russian Foreign Policy

Number of ECTS credits: 6

Contact Details for Professor
Instructor: Olesya Tkacheva, Assistant Professor
Tel: 02 614 81 79
E-mail: Olesya.Tkacheva@vub.ac.be
Office hours: VeCo 1.65, Wednesdays noon-13:00 and by appointment
Meeting times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 16:30-18:00
Meeting room: VeCo 1

Course Description
This course introduces students to the key developments in Russia's foreign and defence policy. It closely examines the drivers, policy tools and constraints Russia faces when seeking to achieve its foreign policy objectives. Students also learn to apply major theories of international relations to the analysis of specific countries’ foreign policy decisions and to the development of policy recommendations for emerging security challenges

Course Prerequisites (if any)
There are no course prerequisites, but familiarity with theories of international relations would be helpful.

Learning Objectives
In terms of knowledge:
After this course, the student should have:
- firm understanding of the literature on Russia's foreign policy and current policy challenges posed by Russia;
- better awareness of differences between the Russian, the American, and the European perception of EU-Russia relations;
- sound knowledge of the evolution of EU-Russia relations;
- comprehensive understanding of drivers of Russia’s foreign policy and constraints on achieving them;
- enhanced understanding of the theoretical models of international relations and their relevance to the Russian foreign policy;

In terms of skills:
By the end of the semester, students will obtain the following skills:
- ability to formulate basic policy statements and recommendations regarding EU-Russia policy;
- ability to evaluate critically policy proposals for EU policy towards Russia;
- ability to ask insightful questions about Russian foreign policy;
- improved ability to write critical review of the literature;
- enhanced ability to read efficiently and evaluate critically scholarly literature on international relations and Russian foreign policy;
- ability to apply theoretical concepts to explain foreign policy outcomes beyond those covered in class;
- familiarity with multi-disciplinary approaches to Russian foreign policy;
- improved ability to engage in policy discourse with a diverse audience online and face-to-face.

In terms of attitudes:
- greater appreciation of diverse policy views;
- greater confidence when discussing policy issues with peers.

Appendix A illustrates how this course meets VeCo learning objectives for International Affairs majors.

Course schedule

**Part I: What Drives Russia’s Foreign Policy?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>Jan 17&amp;19</td>
<td>Defining key actors and policy-making institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>Jan 24&amp;26</td>
<td>Defining Russia’s national interests after the collapse of the Soviet Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W3</td>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>In-class practicum on how to write review essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Putin’s vision of Russia’s role in the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W4</td>
<td>Feb 7&amp;9</td>
<td>Russia Relations with EU and NATO, 2000-2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W5</td>
<td>Feb 14&amp;16</td>
<td>“Reset” in Russia’s Relations with the West and the rise of geopolitics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W6</td>
<td>Feb 21&amp;23</td>
<td>Putin’s third term and the rise of nationalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W7</td>
<td>Feb 28 &amp; Mar 2</td>
<td>Midterm review and in-class midterm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mid-term exam on March 2**

**Part II: What tools does Russia have to achieve its policy objectives?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W8</td>
<td>Mar 7&amp;9</td>
<td>Hybrid Warfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W9</td>
<td>Mar 14&amp;16</td>
<td>Russia’s Approaches toward Using Force and Soft Power</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part III: Case Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W10</td>
<td>Mar 21&amp;23</td>
<td>Russia’s intervention in Ukraine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W11</td>
<td>Mar 28&amp;30</td>
<td>Putin’s Military Campaign in Syria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spring recess: April 3-April 14**

**Part III: Implications for EU and NATO in the Aftermath of the Ukraine Crisis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W12</td>
<td>Apr 18&amp;20</td>
<td>Russia Relations with the West in the Aftermath of the Ukraine Crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W13</td>
<td>Apr 25&amp;27</td>
<td>Implications for NATO and Trans-Atlantic Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W14</td>
<td>May 2&amp;4</td>
<td>Review for exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W15</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B provides the list of assigned readings for each week
Course Materials

Required textbooks:
Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia’s Foreign Policy: Continuity and Change in National Identity*

All other assigned readings will be provided by the instructor. The list with further reading is listed for each week and is designed to help students to guide them in writing their papers. Students are not expected to read all the sources listed in ‘further reading’ section, but are encouraged to consult them to further understand the topic covered in class and structure the initial research for research papers and prepare for the seminar discussions.

Additional Sources

The following magazines, newspapers, and think tanks’ web sites are recommended for familiarizing yourself with most recent events and developments.

http://russialist.org/ (Johnson’s Russia List: A daily newsletter with English-language translations of articles published in Russia’s mainstream media)
www.ft.com (The Financial Times)
www.economist.com (The Economist)
www.rferl.org (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty)
http://www.ecfr.eu/ (European Council on Foreign Relations)
www.chathamhouse.org (Chatham House, London)
www.carnegie.ru (Carnegie Centre, Moscow)
http://carnegieeurope.eu/ (Carnegie Centre, Europe)
https://www.csis.org/ (Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC)

Course Assessment

The students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance as follows:

- Five discussion questions 10% (2% each)
- Midterm examination 30%
- Critical review essay 30%
- Final examination 30%
- TOTAL 100%

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy, in line with the Flemish Educational norms, is now as stated follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Scale of 20</th>
<th>Scale of 100</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
<td>81-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
<td>69-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
<td>66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
<td>62-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>11.5-12.2</td>
<td>58-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
<td>54-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10.0-10.6</td>
<td>50-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-9.9</td>
<td>0-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description of Activities and Grading Criteria

10%: 5 discussion questions

Students are expected to complete assigned readings **before** the class and for five weeks to submit one or two discussion questions based on the assigned readings. Questions are due before the class, no later than 10:00AM of the day of the class. Submit your questions via e-mail with a subject line: “POL263: Discussion Questions.” Students are free to choose for which weeks to submit these questions. The instructor will give the opportunity to students who submitted the questions to raise them during in-class discussion. Each question is graded on Pass/Fail scale. The instructor will provide both oral and written feedback on the submitted questions.

The goal of this assignment is threefold:
1. Ensuring that students keep up with the readings;
2. Facilitating in-class discussion;
3. Developing critical thinking skills;
4. Conduct constructive discussion on public policy matters.

30%: Critical review essay (3000-3500 words)

Students are required to submit a critical review covering one-week of assigned readings. Students are free to choose any week on which to submit the essay. The essay is due within two weeks of the week on which these readings were covered. The essay should cover all assigned readings for that week. For example, if the readings were assigned for Feb 7 & 9, the last day to turn in your essay is Feb 23. If you choose to write the critical review on the week when reading load is slightly lighter because of a guest speaker, you are required to include at least one additional reading from the list of recommended ones. Feel free to discuss with instructor which reading to choose. Do NOT wait until after the spring recess to complete this assignment.

This assignment seeks to prepare students for writing original research papers for upper-level courses. The goal is to develop the following skills:
1. to think critically;
2. to paraphrase and summarize accurately points made by other authors;
3. to identify logical inconsistencies in the author’s argument;
4. to write clearly and concisely;
5. to understand implicit and explicit assumptions made by the authors;
6. to prepare students to engage in peer-review.
30%: in-class mid-term (on March 2)
The exam will consist of an essay and short-answer questions. It is a closed-book exam. In the short-answer section, students will be expected to define key concepts covered in readings, identify key events and/or actors. Essay questions will ask students to evaluate critically the plausibility of alternative explanations of policy choices covered in the readings. The exam will test the following:

30%: in-class final (TBD)
The same format as the mid-term. The final will be based on materials for the entire course.

Further description of assessment activities

The following criteria will be applied in assessing your written work:

Discussion Questions
Asking interesting policy questions is a valuable skill. To write discussion questions students will to complete reading before the class and prepare one or two discussion questions that seek to motivate discussion of the readings. A good discussion question starts with a brief summary of the author's point and then asks to either clarify seeming inconsistencies in the argument.

Mid-term and Final Exams:
The mid-term and final will comprise of short-answer questions and an essay. You will be expected to demonstrate mastery of the key concepts and definitions as well as provide analysis of the core topics covered in class and in the assigned readings. Both mid-term and final will be in class and will be closed-book.

Critical Review Essay
A critical review essay helps a reader to determine whether to read a selected article or a book. As such, it should contain enough information about author’s main points, including the question asked by the author, the methodology and data the author used to answer those questions, and key conclusions. However, the review essay should also evaluate the quality of the research and help the reader to understand potential shortcomings either of the chosen methodology or data used for the study, or any other issues that affect the validity of the argument. A good essay usually ends with suggestions for future research on the same topic.

Grading scale for critical review essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paraphrasing and summarizing</th>
<th>D to C</th>
<th>C+ to B</th>
<th>B+ to A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omits important points or misrepresents the author's argument</td>
<td>Makes minor mistakes or omissions when presenting authors’ point of view;</td>
<td>Points made by the author are accurately summarised in authors’ own</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical thinking</strong></td>
<td>Does not go beyond summary of the author’s work</td>
<td>Identifies some of the limitations of the author’s approach</td>
<td>Clearly explains pros and cons of the approach chosen by the author and assesses the validity of the conclusions</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding of the literature</strong></td>
<td>Does not contain any discussion of the contribution to the literature</td>
<td>Clearly explains the logic for choosing a specific approach</td>
<td>Provides clear explanation on how the specific study advances the literature on this topic; identifies fruitful direction for further research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing skills</strong></td>
<td>Poorly written and disorganized, contains plenty of typos or uses incorrect grammar</td>
<td>Well organized and clearly written, but contains minor errors</td>
<td>Carefully edited and clearly written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Course Policies**

Students are expected to arrive to class on-time. Repeated lateness will reflect poorly on their participation grade.

Respecting other students’ opinions and being collegial with your peers is critical for learning. Students are expected to treat their classmates with respect.

**Policy on Late Assignments**

The College considers late submissions as disruptive and disrespectful practices and strongly recommends students to work on their time management. Late assignments will be penalized by one-third of the letter grade reduction for each day late. Works submitted after seven days delay without valid and documented reason are graded with an F (0). Unless an incomplete is granted, no submission is possible after two weeks delay.

In the event of exceptional circumstances which impede the delivery of assignments within the due date, a student may request prior to the assigned due date an extension without penalty. Students must accompany this request with a medical certificate or other proof of the extreme circumstance that impeded the fulfillment of the task. Professors will examine the request and decide whether an extreme circumstance exists or does not exist. ‘Extreme circumstances’ must be significant, unpredictable and serious.
As follows, these include medical treatment or distress for a family crisis or loss. These do not include time management problems, technical problems with the computer, inability to find sources, attending a wedding.

**Policy on Grade of “Incomplete”:**

Grade “Incomplete” can be assigned only in case of extreme circumstances.

**Academic Honesty Statement**

Academic dishonesty is **NOT** tolerated in this course.

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else’s work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

Students are required to complete writing assignments by themselves.
# Appendix A: Major Learning Objectives, Teaching Methods, Testing and Feedback Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Course Learning objectives addressing the Major Objectives (choose the most important ones that your course actually addresses)</th>
<th>Methods used to Teach Course Objectives</th>
<th>Methods (and numbers/types of assignments) used to test these learning objectives</th>
<th>Type, Timing and Numbers of Feedback given to Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor has a profound knowledge of the main actors and the main processes in European and global international affairs and is able to apply this knowledge in the current international affairs.</td>
<td>In-depth understanding of the drivers of Russian foreign policy and implications for the future EU-Russia relations; comprehensive knowledge of the evolution of EU-Russia relations</td>
<td>In-class lectures; and assigned readings; in-class exercises</td>
<td>mid-term and final exams</td>
<td>Pass/fail grade for discussion questions (5 times within 24-hours of submission); mid-term exam (1 time within a week from the date of the exam) final exam (1 time within a week from the date of the exam) oral feedback at the end of the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor has a demonstrable insight in the theoretical and historical frameworks in the academic literature on international affairs. He is able to apply these frameworks in order to understand and interpret the current processes and dynamics in international affairs.</td>
<td>Enhanced understanding of the theoretical models of international relations and their relevance to the Russian foreign policy; ability to apply theoretical concepts to explain foreign policy outcomes beyond those discussed in class;</td>
<td>In-class discussion on the relationship between ongoing events and assigned readings</td>
<td>Critical review essay</td>
<td>Written feedback on the proposed research question (1 time within a week from the due date); written feedback on paper outline (1 time within a week from the due date); written feedback on final draft of the paper (1 time within 10 days of the due date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor has insight into the broad societal context and is able to take this societal context into account in the analysis and interpretation of current problems in international affairs.</td>
<td>a better awareness in differences between the Russian, the American, and the European perceptions of EU-Russia relations</td>
<td>Readings assignments that include the U.S., European, and Russian sources</td>
<td>Mid-term and final exams</td>
<td>Written feedback (2 times, within a week from each of the exams)</td>
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</table>

The bachelor knows n/a
and is able to apply common qualitative and quantitative research methods and is able to apply these in the field of international affairs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The bachelor has an open and academic attitude, characterized by accuracy, critical reflection and academic curiosity.</th>
<th>ability to evaluate critically policy proposals for EU policy towards Russia; ability to ask insightful questions about Russian foreign policy</th>
<th>In-class discussions and group exercises; Discussion questions</th>
<th>Oral feedback (5 times at the end of the class); pass/fail grade on discussion questions (5 times within 24 hours of the submission)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor is able to apply a multi-disciplinary perspective in his analysis of international affairs.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor is able to work in a multi-cultural team.</td>
<td>improved ability to engage in policy discourse with a diverse audience online and face-to-face; greater tolerance of non-mainstream point of view; greater appreciation of diversity of opinions</td>
<td>Class discussions conducted by a student or student committee; production of charts and diagrams in class by a group of students</td>
<td>Out-reporting by students at the end of in-class exercises; in-class assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor recognizes the importance of life-long learning.</td>
<td>creation of on-line community of peers to facilitate a dialog after the end of the class; enhanced ability to read efficiently and evaluate critically scholarly literature on international relations and Russian foreign policy</td>
<td>guest speakers</td>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The bachelor is able to communicate clearly, fluently and accurately; as well in a written report as in an oral presentation.</td>
<td>improved ability to write concisely and clearly under the time constraint; improved ability to engage in policy discourse with a diverse audience both online and face-to-face; greater confidence when discussing</td>
<td>In-class group exercises, stimulation of in-class discussions</td>
<td>Discussion questions, critical review essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy issues with peers</td>
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<tr>
<td>The bachelor is able to include ethical judgments in his analysis of current problems in international affairs and assesses the impact of these ethical judgments on the solutions proposed for current international affairs.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Detailed Course Schedule
Part I: What Drives Russia's Foreign Policy?
The paradox of the Russian foreign policy is that it does not fit completely with the existing exiting theories of international relations. On the one hand, realists argue that the Russia's current behavior is driven by the shifts in global distribution of power. On the other, constructivists perceive Russian foreign policy as driven by the national interests. Still others assert that current policy reflect Putin's priorities. This section provides an overview of competing explanations.

**Week 1** (Jan 16&19): **Defining key actors and policy-making institutions**
Assigned readings:

*Guiding Questions:*
1. Who are the key actors involved in framing Russian foreign policy?
2. What powers do they have to influence policy outcomes?
3. Do you agree with the statement that all foreign policy decisions are made by Putin?
4. What are the principal vectors of foreign policy?
5. What is the role of civil society in framing Russian foreign policy?

*In-class activity:* simulation exercise by students to unpack formal and informal influence on foreign policy process. Students will be asked to represent a specific institution and will use their institutional and personal influence to achieve preferred policy outcome.

Further readings:

**Week 2** (Jan 24 &26): **Defining Russia’s National Interests in the Aftermath of the Collapse of the Soviet Union**
Assigned readings:
Tsygankov, *Russia’s Foreign Policy*, Chapters 1-4.

*Guiding questions:*
1. What is national interest?
2. How has the Russian leadership perception of the Russia’s national interest evolved since the collapse of the Soviet Union?
3. What factors have influenced it?
4. How can we explain continuity and change in the perception of national interests?
5. How has Russian leadership perception of Russian national interests may have shaped Russia’s relations with the West?
6. What are the three schools of thinking about Russian foreign policy and what are the key differences among them?

Further readings:

Week 3:
Jan 31: Learning to write critical literature review essay
Assigned reading:

In-class practicum: Students will work in class to apply the strategies outlined by Bryman to write a one-page critical review of the readings covered during Week 1 and 2. The instructor will provide samples of critical review essays before the class and students will work in groups to evaluate the strength and limitation of each essay.

Feb 2: Putin’s Vision of the Russia’s Role in the World
Putin came to power at the time of seeming disintegration of the country. Fueled by the Chechen separatists, calls for greater independence from Moscow were voiced by ethnic republics. Enhancing the sovereignty of Russian state became the major focus of Putin’s domestic and foreign policy.

Assigned readings:

Guiding Questions:
1. What are Putin’s foreign policy priorities?
2. What is “new realism” and how has it influenced Russia’s foreign policy?
3. What is statism and how has it shaped Russia’s foreign policy?
4. How does Putin’s perceives Russia’s role in the global system?
5. How has this statist approach shape Russia’s relations with other states?
6. Who are ‘siloviki’ and how they may have influenced Russian foreign policy?
Further Readings:

**Week 4 (Feb 7&9): Russia Relations with EU and NATO, 2000-08**
This section examines how Russia’s relations with the West have evolved during Putin’s first two terms in office and the factors that have influenced their trajectory.

**Assigned readings**
Gvosdev and Marsh, *Russian Foreign Policy*, Chapters 3, 6, 7.

**Guiding questions**
1. What have been the major drivers towards closer cooperation with the West?
2. What has been the major constraint on these relations?
3. What tools has Russia used to achieve its policy objectives?
4. What factors can explain the diversity of approaches that Russia used to achieve its interests in the region?
5. How successful has it been in achieving its goals?
6. What factors has shaped Russia’s perception of national interests during 2000-2008

**In-class activity:** Understanding divergent perspectives on Russia’s relations with the West. Students will be assigned to groups that correspond to distinct ideological approaches and will asked to develop foreign policy recommendation that would be consistent with the specific group policy position.

Further readings:
Hiski Haukkala, *The EU-Russia Strategic Partnership: The Limits of Post-Sovereignty in International Relations* (London and New York: Routledge Advances in International Relations and Global Politics, 2010).


**Week 5 (Feb 14&16): Geopolitics and Russia’s Foreign Policy**

During the Medvedev’s presidency the United States made an attempt to start a new phase in the U.S.-Russia relations that came into history as a “Reset.” This occurred concurrently with the growing importance of geopolitics in Russia’s relations with its neighbors.

Assigned readings:

Tsygankov, *Russia’s Foreign Policy*, Chapter 7


Stephen Kotkin, “Russia’s Perpetual Geopolitics: Putin Returns to the Historical Pattern,” *Foreign Affairs* 95 no. 3 (2016):


Guiding Questions:

1. What factors undermined ‘reset’?
2. What constraints did Medvedev face when pursuing modernization agenda?
3. What is “geopolitics”?
4. How can geography account for both continuity and change?
5. What implication has the 2008 Georgia-war had for the Russia relations with the West?

Further Readings


Week 6 (Feb 21 & 23): Putin’s Third Term and the Rise of ‘Civilizationalism’ and Nationalism

Putin’s third term has been characterized on the one hand by a greater concentration of the state control over society, but on the other a remarkable level of popular support towards Kremlin’s foreign policy choices. Was it an outcome of the profound shift in popular preferences and revival of nationalism or was it an outcome of the state propaganda that steered popular opinion behind Putin? What impact did the democratic backsliding have on foreign policy choices?


Tsignakov, Russian Foreign Policy, Chapters 8 and 9


Guiding questions:
1. What factors may have contributed to the rise of nationalism in Russia?
2. How do Russian nationalist perceive Russia’s role in the world?
3. What evidence have the authors provided to demonstrate the link between nationalism and foreign policy?
4. How convincing is this evidence?
5. Are there any differences between nationalism and ‘civilizationalism’?

Further readings


Andrei P. Tsygankov, 'Assessing Cultural and Regime-Based Explanations of Russia’s Foreign Policy: Authoritarian at Heart and Expansionist by Habit’?" Europe-Asia Studies 64.4 (2012): 695-713.


Week 7 (Feb 28 & Mar 2): Midterm

Feb 28: Review
Mar 2: In-class exam

Part III: What tools does Russia have to achieve its policy objectives?

Russia has a wide range of tools to achieve its policy objectives: diplomacy, trade policy, propaganda, and the use of force. This section examines in depth how the Kremlin has used these policy and which factors may have influenced its choices.

Week 8 (March 7&9): Hybrid Warfare

The term “hybrid warfare” has been frequently used by policymakers and the media to describe Russia’s interactions with its neighbors. This section focuses on the range of
capabilities that could be used to conduct hybrid warfare and traces how the Russian thinking has evolved on the use of hybrid warfare.

Assigned readings:
Trenin, Should We Fear Russia?, Chapter 1

Guiding questions:
1. What does term “hybrid warfare” entail?
2. How does hybrid warfare differ from conventional warfare?
3. What capabilities are required for engaging in hybrid warfare?

Further readings:


Week 9 (Mar 14 & 16): Russia’s Approaches toward Using Force and Soft Power
This section examines alternative explanations on Russia’s use of force vis-à-vis soft power.
Frederick Westerlund and Johan Norberg, “Military Means for Non-Military Measures: The Russian Approach to the Use of Armed Force as Seen in Ukraine

Samule Charap, “Russia’s Use of Military Force as a Foreign Policy Tool: is There a Logic? PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo No. 443 October 2016.


Guiding questions:

1. What does the Ukraine crisis reveal about the logic for the use of power?
2. How does Russia’s use of military power fit with its hybrid warfare strategy?
3. What are the limitations on the use of soft power?
4. What is the logic behind using soft power?
5. Does the use of propaganda constitute the use of soft power?

Further readings:

*Soft Power*


Joanna Szostek, "Russia and the News Media in Ukraine A Case of “Soft Power”?” *East European Politics & Societies August 2014 28*: 463-486


*Military capabilities*


Part II: Case Studies 
The goal of this section is to provide an opportunity to students to apply alternative theoretical frameworks to specific cases: 

Week 10 (Mar 21& 23): Explaining Russia’s intervention in Ukraine 
Assigned readings 
Guiding questions: 
1. What factors have shaped Russia’s relations with Ukraine? 
2. Why has Russia pursue different policies in Crimea and Donbas? 
3. What role, if any, the rise of nationalism play in Russia’s policy towards Ukraine? 
4. What implications has the crisis had for the West? 
5. What constraints has the West faced seeking to resolve the crisis? 

In-class activity: students will work in groups to develop alternative explanations of Russia’s intervention into Ukraine and propose alternative policy recommendations resolve crisis. 

Further readings: 
Valentina Feklyunina, "Soft power and identity: Russia, Ukraine and the ‘Russian world (s).’" European Journal of International Relations (2015): 
Rajan Menon and Eugene B. Rumer, Conflict in Ukraine (Boston, MA; MIT Press, 2015).


Andrew Willison, Ukraine Crisis; What it Means for the West (New Heaven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

**Week 11 (Mar 28 & 30): Putin’s Military Campaign in Syria**

Assigned readings:

*Russia and the Conflict In Syria* Special Issue of Russian Analytical Digest 175 (2015).


Guiding questions:

1. Does this intervention was driven by Putin's opportunism or by Russia's national interests?
2. What objectives does Russia seek to achieve in the region and what constraints does it face?
3. What implication does Russia’s presence in Syria may have for the distribution of power between NATO and Russia?
4. What are the medium-terms implications for NATO and EU?

*In-class activity:* students work in groups to propose alternative explanations of Russia’s intervention in Syria.

Further readings:

Nikolay Kozhanov, *Russia and the Syrian Conflict: Moscow’s Domestic, Regional and Strategic Interests* (Berlin: Gerlach Press, 2016)


**SPRING BREAK**
Part IV: Implications for EU and NATO

Week 12 (April 18 & 20): Russia Relations with the West in the Aftermath of the Ukraine crisis

This section provides competing assessments of the implication of Russia's foreign policy for the European security

Guest Speaker: TBD

Trenin, Should We Fear Russia?, Chapters 3 & 4.

Andrew Wilson, Ukraine Crisis; What it Means for the West (New Heaven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), Conclusion.

Guiding questions:
1. What are security implications for EU and NATO of the Ukraine crisis?
2. Is return to normalcy feasible and/or desirable?
3. In which areas can EU and Russia still cooperate?

Further Readings


Week 13 (April 25 & 27): Implications for NATO and Trans-Atlantic Relations

Papers are due on April 28

Guest Speaker: TBD

Assigned readings:


Guiding questions:
1. What has Russia’s campaigns in Syria and in Ukraine reveal about security challenges to NATO?
2. What measures has NATO taken to address these security challenges?
3. How sufficient are these measures?
4. What implication has Russia had for trans-Atlantic relations?

Further readings:


**Week 14** (May 2 & 4): **Review for the Final Exam**
No readings

**Week 15** (TBD): **In-class final**