We begin with an examination of the Soviet Union in the 1930s and pay special attention to the establishment of the Stalinist political, social, economic, and cultural systems. After devoting attention to the strengths and weaknesses of Stalin regime, we will turn our gaze to the post-Stalinist era and focus on the factors that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The course will finish on the enduring legacy of communist rule and the consequences of the former Soviet Union’s embrace of the free market.

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation in class discussions
Three four-page papers. You will have a choice of selecting from four papers during the course of the semester.
Eight-page final paper

Except for required books, all readings are available on Blackboard. In addition, I have placed on course reserve the following texts. You are required to consult one of the texts as we progress through the course.

Required Books (Also on Reserve)

Stephen Cohen, *Failed Crusade*
Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*
Bruce Grant, *In the Soviet House of Culture*
Stephen Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*
Valentin Rasputin, *Siberia on Fire*

Reserve Texts

Geoffrey Hosking, *The First Socialist Society*
David MacKenzie and Michael Curran, *A History of the Soviet Union*
Ronald Suny, *The Soviet Experiment*
John Thompson, *A Vision Unfulfilled*

**Week One: Roots of the Stalinist System**

January 20: The Revolutionary Promise
January 22: Historians and the Course of Soviet History

Stephen Cohen, “Scholarly Missions”
Stephen Cohen, “Bolshevism and Stalinism”

**Week Two: The Stalinist System**

January 27: The Stalinist System

Lewis Siegelbaum, “Building Stalinism, 1929-1941”
Lev Kopelev, “The Last Grain Collections”
Maxim Gorky, “Socialist Realism”
“Stalin, Vodka, and Herring”
Document 170: NKVD Operational Order Concerning the Punishment of Former Kulaks

January 29: The Cult of Stalin

**Week Three: World War II and Stalin’s Last Years**

February 3: The Devastation of War

William C. Fuller, Jr., “The Great Fatherland War and Late Stalinism, 1941-1953”

February 5: Life under Uncle Joe

Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*

**Week Four: Stalin’s Last Hurrah**

February 10: Film

**FIRST FOUR-PAGE PAPER DUE BY FEBRUARY 10. YOU MAY SUBMIT ANYTIME BEFORE FEBRUARY 10.**

February 12: Enemies Everywhere

The Campaign Against ‘Cosmopolitanism’
The Doctors’ Plot
Conference of Musicians at the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, Moscow

**Week Five: Great Expectations**
February 17: The Promise of Reform

Stephen Cohen, “The Stalin Question Since Stalin”
Nikita Khrushchev’s Speech at the 20th Party Congress (1956)
Joseph Starobin, “1956—A Memoir”

February 19: The Thaw in Literature

Iulii Daniel, “This is Moscow Speaking”

Week Six: Hopes Dashed

February 24: Main Currents of Dissent

Documents on Andrei Sakharov, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and Roy Medvedev

February 26: Psychiatry and Politics

The Case of Boris Kochubiyevsky
The Sinyavsky-Daniel Trial

SECOND FOUR-PAGE PAPER DUE BY FEBRUARY 27. YOU CAN SUBMIT THE PAPER ANYTIME BEFORE FEBRUARY 27.

Week Seven: The Origins of Stagnation

March 2: The Pros and Cons of Brezhnev’s Soviet Union

John Bushnell, “The `New Soviet Man’ Turns Pessimist”
James Millar, “The Little Deal: Brezhnev’s Contribution to Acquisitive Socialism”
Finish Gregory Freeze, “From Stalinism to Stagnation”

March 4: Library Workshop. Meet in Electronic Resource Classroom, 4th Floor, McCabe

Week Eight: Culture and Society under Brezhnev

March 16: Women and Soviet Society

Natalia Baranskaia, “A Week Like Any Other”
Carole Hansson and Karen Liden, eds., Moscow Women, selections
Discussion of Film: Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears (160 minutes)

March 18: Soviet Nationality Policy: A Case Study

Bruce Grant, In the Soviet House of Culture
Week Nine: Environmental and Youth Concerns

March 23: The Crisis of Youth

Jim Riordan, “Teenage Gangs, ‘Afgantsy’ and Neofascists”
Film: Discussion of Little Vera (110 minutes)

March 25: Soviet Power and Environmental Disaster

Valentin Rasputin, Siberia on Fire
Murray Feshbach and Alfred Friendly, Excerpts from Ecocide in the USSR
Film: The BAM Zone (20 minutes)

Week Ten: Gorbachev Comes to Power

March 30: The Advent of Reform

Martin McCauley, “From Perestroika towards a New Order”
Tatiana Zaslavskaya, “Report on the Necessity of a Deeper Study in the USSR of the Social Mechanism of the Development of the Economy” or “The Gathering Crisis”
Gorbachev and Reform

April 1: The Reaction to Gorbachev: Love Him or Hate Him

Nina Andreeva, “I Cannot Forgo My Principles”
Martin Malia, “To the Stalin Mausoleum”
“A Pamyat Manifesto”
The Rehabilitation of Bukharin
Alexander Tsipko, “The Roots of Stalinism”
Catherine Merridale, “Perestroika and Political Pluralism: Past and Prospects”

THIRD FOUR-PAGE PAPER DUE BY APRIL 2. YOU CAN SUBMIT ANYTIME BEFORE APRIL 2.

Week Eleven: Understanding the Gorbachev Era

April 6: Coming to Grips with the Past

Film: Discussion of Repentance (151 minutes)
Catherine Merridale, “Death and Memory in Modern Russia”

April 8: Gorbachev as a Sign of Soviet Modernity

Moshe Lewin, The Gorbachev Phenomenon
Week Twelve: What Happened?

April 13: The Age of Disillusionment

Prostitutki (55 minutes) and Chernobyl (54 minutes)

April 15: Stephen Kotkin, Armageddon Averted

Week Thirteen: The Party’s Over

April 20: The August Coup

Victoria Bonnell and Gregory Freidin, “Televorot: The Role of Television Coverage in Russia’s August 1991 Coup”
Boris Yeltsin Resigns from the Communist Party and Boris Yeltsin Calls for Gorbachev’s Resignation

April 22: Life after Communism: Could It Get Any Worse?

Stephen Cohen, Failed Crusade

Week Fourteen: What Now?

April 27: Will It Get Better?

Ryszard Kapuscinski, Excerpts from Imperium
Disgraced Monuments (48 minutes)

April 29: Discussion of Final Papers

FOURTH FOUR-PAGE PAPER DUE BY MAY 3.

FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5 PM ON FRIDAY, MAY 14.