

## POLITICAL SCIENCE 475

### Problems of International Politics: Gorbachev, the End of the Cold War and the Collapse of the Soviet Union

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#### ABOUT THE COURSE

This seminar is about personality and political leadership: It is a case study of a leader who changed his country and the world. It is also about to degree to which, and the ways in which, his personality shaped his leadership. What was Gorbachev's role, along with other factors and forces, in ending the cold war and in the collapse of the USSR? How did he get to be the man who loomed so large in history? How to explain and evaluate his behavior? In keeping with this biographical focus, after three initial sessions on general issues, the course will proceed through his life and career chronologically.

The main requirement for the course will be a term paper, between 20 and 30 pages long, which will be due on May 9, the third day of examination period. I will suggest some possible topics for such research in the first class, but students are encouraged to devise their own. Students should consult me very early on about topics they are considering, and should begin preparing a bibliography almost immediately. During the first two weeks of the class, we will have a briefing on research for the course by a Frost Library reference librarian. Preliminary bibliographies should be handed in on February 14, and a preliminary outline on March 27. By Monday morning, April 23, students will email two-page summaries of their papers to all fellow students and to Professor Taubman. These summaries will provide the basis for class discussion of papers during the last two classes on April 24 and May 5. Students need not prepare oral reports on their papers on those dates; rather, the discussions will be based on their written summaries.

In addition to the research paper, students are expected to send me a brief, one-page response paper before each class via email, not later than 7 a.m. on the morning of the class. Based on the assigned reading for that class, these short papers should raise and comment on what the student regards as the main issue he or she would like to see discussed in class that day. I will take account of these comments in planning our discussions and will call on students to voice their views during the conversation in class.

Because this will be an intensive course that meets only once a week, attendance at all meetings is required.

Grades will be based primarily on the term paper, but faithful submission of all response papers, and participation in classes will also be taken into account.

#### BOOKS, ETC.

Richard Herrmann and Richard Ned Lebow, eds., Ending the Cold War: Interpretations, Causation and the Study of International Relations, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004 (E-Book)

Michael Kort, The Soviet Colossus, 6<sup>th</sup> edition, M. E. Sharpe, 2005 (P)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era {draft manuscript} (M)

Archie Brown, The Gorbachev Factor, Oxford University Press, 1997 (OP)

Anatoly Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev, Penn State Press, 2000 (P)

Books marked (P) are available for purchase at Amherst Books. Likewise (although in more limited numbers) books marked (OP). Books available online as an E-BOOK are marked (E-Book). Readings marked (M) constitute the Multilith which can be ordered at the following link:

[https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/political\\_science/multilithorderform](https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/political_science/multilithorderform) .

They can be picked up at the Political Science Department once they arrive. Readings marked (E) are available online electronically as E-reserves. Readings marked (R) are on Reserve at Frost Library. PLEASE NOTE that Gorbachev's Memoirs and Levesque's The Enigma of 1989 are special cases. Ordinarily, they would be available for purchase, but since they are out of print, with only a handful of used copies available at Amazon, Frost Library has purchased more than usual number of multiple copies of each and placed them on Reserve. Since large sections of these books are assigned, you are STRONGLY URGED to read them early each week, rather than waiting until the last moment when they are unlikely to be available.

#### VIDEOS

The BBC Television series, The Second Russian Revolution, consists of eight parts, which are available electronically (E). Various parts should be watched before classes #7-10, as indicated on the syllabus.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

1. INTRODUCTION (Thursday, January 24)
2. EXPLAINING THE COLD WAR'S END (January 31 Guest participant:  
Professor Constantine Pleshakov

Richard Herrman and Richard Ned Lebow, "What Was the Cold War and Why Did it End?" in Richard Herrmann and Richard Ned Lebow, eds., Ending the Cold War: Interpretations, Causation and the Study of International Relations, pp. 1-27 (E) (M)

Archie Brown, "Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War," in Herrmann and Lebow, Ending the Cold War, pp. 31-32, 37-57 (E) (M)

George W. Breslauer and Richard Ned Lebow, "Leadership and the End of the Cold War: A Counterfactual Thought Experiment," in Herrmann and Lebow, Ending the Cold War, pp. 161-188 (E) (M)

Vladislav M. Zubok, "Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War: Different Perspectives on the Historical Personality," in William C. Wohlforth, ed., Cold War End Game: Oral History, Analysis, Debates, pp. 207-241(E)(M)

3. EXPLAINING THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION (February 7)

G. G. Vodolazov, "Gorbachev: A Nomenklatura Utopia," Russian Studies in History, Spring 2004, pp. 80-87 (E) (M)

Archie Brown, The Gorbachev Factor, pp. 1-17 (OP)

Stephen F. Cohen, "Was the Soviet System Reformable?" Slavic Review, fall 2004, pp. 459-488 (E) (M)

Archie Brown, "Reform of the System or Systematic Transformation?" Slavic Review, fall 2004, pp. 489-504 (E) (M)

4. EXPLAINING PERSONALITY (Tuesday, February 14)

Fred Greenstein, Personality and Politics, pp. 27, 33-68 (M)

Calvin S. Hall and Gardner Lindzey, Theories of Personality, Chapter 2 [on Sigmund Freud] (R)(M) NOTE: The chapter number may vary in different editions, but the chapter to read is on Freud.

Jess Feist and Gregory J. Feist, Theories of Personality, Chapters 4 [on Alfred Adler] and 6 [on Karen Horney] (R)

Dan P. McAdams, The Person pp. 354-358 (R)

Jerrold M. Post, ed., The Psychological Assessment of Political Leaders, pp. 69-104 (M)

5. UNDER STALINISM: 1931-1955 (February 21)

Michael Kort, The Soviet Colossus, chapters 13-15 (P)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era, chapters 1-2 (M)

Mikhail Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 2-3 (R)

Raisa Gorbachev, I Hope, pp. 41-74 (R)

6. FROM THE THAW TO STAGNATION: 1955-1978 (February 28)

Kort, The Soviet Colossus, pp. 261-312 (P)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era, chapters 3-4 (M)

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 4-6 (R)

Raisa Gorbachev, I Hope, pp. 75-119 (R)

Robert English, Russia and the Idea of the West, pp. 60-115 (R) (M)

7. ON THE EVE: 1978-1985 (March 6)

Kort, The Soviet Colossus, pp. 313-329 (P)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era, chapter 5 (M)

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 1, 7-8 (R)

Anatoly Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev, pp. 3-22 (P)

VIDEO: “The Second Russian Revolution, Pt. I: Enter Gorbachev.”

NOTE that only the first few minutes of this film pertain to the period, 1978-1985. (E)

8. PERESTROIKA: 1985-1987 (March 13)

Kort, The Soviet Colossus, pp. 333-361 (R)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era, chapters 6 & 8 (M)

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 9-page 248 in chapter 12 (R)

Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev, pp. 24-133 (P) NOTE: Concentrate on coverage of domestic politics. Later you will be asked to read through these chapters again with a focus on foreign affairs.

“Session of the Politburo of the CC CPSU, 11 March 1985” (M)

“Session of the Politburo of the CC CPSU, 4 April 1985” (M)

Alexander Yakovlev, “Memorandum to Mikhail Gorbachev: ‘The Priority of Political Development,’” December 25, 1985 [Excerpt]” (M)

VIDEO: “The Second Russian Revolution: Pts. 1-3: Enter Gorbachev, Battle for Glasnost, Yeltsin File” (E)

9. DEMOKRATIZATSIIA: 1988-1990 (March 27)

Kort, The Soviet Colossus, pp. 361-374 (P)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era, chapter 9 (M)

Brown, The Gorbachev Factor, pp. 172-211 (P)

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 12 (p. 248)-17 (R)

Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev, pp. 134-295 (P) NOTE: Again, please focus on the coverage of domestic issues.

VIDEO: “The Second Revolution: Pts. 4: Revolution from Below, and Pt. 5: Breaking Ranks” (E)

10. COLLAPSE: 1991 (April 3)

Kort, The Soviet Colossus, pp. 375-384 (P)

Brown, The Gorbachev Factor, pp. 252-318 (P)

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 27, 30-31 (R)

John Dunlop, "The August 1991 Coup and Its Impact on Soviet Politics," in Journal of Cold War Studies, Winter 2003, 94-127 (M)

Archie Brown, "The August 1991 Coup & the End of the Soviet Union." (M)

Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev, pp. 297-399 (P)

VIDEO: "The Second Russian Revolution: Pts. 6: The End of the Beginning"; 7: "Countdown to a Coup"; and 8: "Coups"

#### 11. FOREIGN POLICY, I: EAST-WEST RELATIONS (April 10)

William Taubman, Gorbachev: The Man and His Era, chapters 7, 10-11

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 18-20, 23-25, 28-29, 32 (R)

Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev, (P) Reread previously read pages in Chernyaev, this time focusing on foreign affairs.

William Taubman and Svetlana Savranskaya, "If a Wall Fell in Berlin and Moscow Hardly Noticed, Would It Still Make a Noise? In Jeffrey A. Engel, The Fall of the Berlin Wall, pp. 69-95 (M)

#### 12. FOREIGN POLICY, II: THE LIBERATION OF EASTERN EUROPE (April 17)

Gorbachev, Memoirs, chapters 21-22, Epilogue (R)

Jacques Levesque, The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe, pp. 37-258 (R) (M)

Vladislav Zubok, A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev, 321-335 (M)

"Memorandum to Alexander Yakovlev from the Bogomolov Commission (Maria Sylvanskaya), February 1989," in Cold War International History Project Bulletin, #12/13, Fall/Winter 2001, pp. 52-61 (M)

"Memorandum from the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU to Alexander Yakovlev, February 1989," in Cold War International History Project Bulletin, #12-13, Fall/Winter 2001, pp. 62-68 (M)

13. REPORTS ON PAPERS, I (April 24)

Term paper summaries to be read.

14. REPORTS ON PAPERS, II (May 1)

Term paper summaries to be read.