

Advanced Contemporary Russian and East European Politics

Final year module

Lecturer: [Dr David White \(/schools/government-society/departments/political-science-international-studies/staff/profiles/white-david.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/political-science-international-studies/staff/profiles/white-david.aspx)

The module focuses on contemporary Russia and Ukraine as the two biggest Soviet successor states. The underlying theme of the module is the progress or otherwise of democracy.

The module is split into the following blocks:

- The collapse of the Soviet Union
- The Soviet political system, nationality policy, causes of collapse
- Institutions, Power and Political Actors
- Institutional choice, informal power, party development
- Spatial Politics
- Centre-regional relations, the Chechen Wars
- Foreign Policy
- Relations between Russia and Ukraine, relations with former Soviet states and relations with the West and Western institutions
- State and Nation Building
- Challenges of post-communist nation-building
- Developing post-Soviet states
- Conceptualising political change
- Problems of transition, democratisation, new models of political change

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module the student should be able to:

- Understand the key features of the USSR as a political system and the role of nationalist movements in the disintegration of the USSR.
- Apply and develop broad concepts of 'transformation' in the Russian and Ukrainian cases.
- Identify key political developments facing Russia and Ukraine since the break-up of the USSR.
- Identify major political forces in Russia and Ukraine and to identify their distinctive features.
- Conceptualise Europe from an eastern European perspective, and understand the dynamics of regional integration within the former Soviet Union.

Assessment

- **Term One/Two:** Presentation (15%)
- **Term Two:** 1 x 3,000 assessed work (50%)
- **Term Three:** 2 hour examination (35%)