

Prof. Julie Hessler
email: hessler@uoregon.edu
Office hours: Thursdays 1:30-3:20, McKenzie 351
Telephone: 346-4857

History 446/546 The Soviet Union in World War II
MW 2:00 - 3:20 Lillis 175

Description: This course examines several facets of what was officially termed the “Great Patriotic War.” The Soviet Union lost an estimated 26 million of its citizens’ lives during the war with Germany, and the tragedy had wide repercussions for Soviet culture. The USSR also emerged victorious. The course will analyze the reasons for the Soviet victory and explore the wartime experience as refracted through the eyes of soldiers, diverse groups of civilians, and cultural intellectuals, with particular attention to historical controversies.

Grades will be based on an in-class midterm (30%), a non-cumulative final (30%), and a 10-page research paper (40%). Engaged participation may raise your grade by one or two percentage points (e.g. from 82% to 84%).

Texts available for purchase at the UO Bookstore:

Richard Overy, *Russia’s War*
Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s War*
Karel C. Berkhoff, *Harvest of Despair: Life and Death in Ukraine under Nazi Rule*

Part I. The course of the war. Reading: Overy, *Russia’s War*

Week 1. Opening stages of the war

Mon., Mar. 30 Background (based on *Russia’s War*, 1-72).

Wed., Apr. 1 Barbarossa, Leningrad, and Moscow. Prepare through p. 124.

Week 2. The tide turns

Mon., Apr. 6 Collaboration, terror, and resistance. Discuss 125-154.

Wed., Apr. 8 Stalingrad and Kursk. Discuss 154-222.

Week 3. Victory

Mon., Apr. 13 Soviet victory. Discuss *Russia’s War*, 223-331. ***Paper topics due in class - see paper topic assignment.**

Part II. Soldiers’ experience. Reading: Merridale, *Ivan’s War*

Wed., Apr. 15 Guest lecture: Paul Wanke, author of *Russian/Soviet Military Psychiatry, 1904-1945* (2005). Begin reading *Ivan’s War* (esp. 1-81).

Week 4. Soldiers’ experience from Barbarossa to liberation

Mon., Apr. 20 Soldiers’ experience in the Red Army: from the 1930s to Stalingrad. Discuss 1-186.

Wed., Apr. 22 Liberation of the Fatherland. Discuss 187-262.

Week 5. Liberation, rape, memory

Mon., Apr. 27 The defeat of Nazi Germany. Discuss 263-388.

Wed., Apr. 29 **Midterm exam**

Part III. Culture, daily life, controversies

Week 6. Wartime culture

Mon., May 4 Wartime popular culture. Reading: Richard Stites, *Russian Popular Culture*, 98-116.

Wed., May 6 Wartime journalism. Reading: selections by Ilya Ehrenburg and Konstantin Simonov (Blackboard)

Week 7. Ethnicity, collaboration, and Holocaust: the case of Ukraine. Reading: *Harvest of Despair*

Mon., May 11 Ukraine and the Holocaust. Reading: *Harvest of Despair*, 1-88.

Wed., May 13 Daily life and suffering in occupied Ukraine. Reading: 89-186.

Week 8. Ethnicity, collaboration, and terror

Mon., May 18 German deportations, culture, and nationalism. Reading: 187-313.

Wed., May 20 Lecture: the Chechens and other “traitor nations.” No assigned reading - work on papers.

Week 9. Stalin's wartime role

Mon., May 25 **Memorial Day: No class**

Wed., May 27 Stalin as war leader: some controversies (1940-41). The Katyn massacre: how, why? Reading: George Sanford, *Katyn and the Soviet Massacre of 1940* (Routledge, 2005), 64-123. Stalin in June, 1941. Reading: S. J. Main, "Stalin in June 1941," *Europe-Asia Studies* 48 (1996): 837-9; V. Suvorov, "Who was Planning to Attack Whom in June 1941, Hitler or Stalin?" *Military Affairs* vol. 69 (1989); David Murphy, *What Stalin Knew*, 84-90, 124-36, 162-91.

Week 10. The cultural legacy of the war

Mon., June 1. Begin in-class film: Andrei Tarkovsky, dir., *Ivan's Childhood* [*My Name is Ivan*] (1962) (95 min.)

Wed., June 3. Finish film and discuss; wrap-up on cultural legacy of the war.

Paper due: 10:00, Mon., June 8.

Final Exam: 3:15, Wed., June 10.