Course Title: Revolutionary Russia  
Course Code: HIS 186  
Instructor: Kristen Edwards, Ph.D.

Course Summary:  
The course will feature readings from acclaimed British historian, Orlando Figes, and from Walter Laqueur’s “Putinism: Russia and Its Future with the West. Figes’ The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin’s Russia is a detailed account of living conditions in Russia from the Bolshevik revolution to the Cold War and draws on personal stories concealed by the survivors of the Stalin Terror in “secret drawers and under mattresses,” while his Revolutionary Russia, 1891-1991 is a concise overview of prerevolutionary Russia and the entire Soviet period. We will supplement these readings with a selection of influential Russian films and with Seventeen Moments in Soviet History, an online archive of primary sources at soviethistory.msu.edu.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.

Grade Options and Requirements:  
• No Grade Requested (NGR)  
  o This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.  
• Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)  
  o Score will be determined by student attendance and participation.  
• Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)  
  o Written work, as assigned by the instructor, will determine a student’s grade.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Weekly Outline:  

Week 1: January 11  
Revolutionary Currents in Tsarist Russia, 1891-1914  
Film: A Life for a Life (Bauer, 1916)

Figes, Revolutionary Russia (RR), Introduction and chs.1-4, pp. 1-53
Week 2: January 25 (no class 1/18)
World War I and the Revolutions of 1917
Film: Strike (Sergei Eisenstein, 1925)

Figes, RR, chs. 4-6, 55-107

Week 3: February 1
From Bloody Civil War to Revolutionary Golden Age
Film: Man With A Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov, 1929)

Figes, RR, chs. 7-9, pp. 108-148
Or
Figes, Whisperers, ch. 1, pp. 1-75

Week 4: February 8
Stalin’s “Great Break”: Terror and Industrialization
Film: Chapaev (Vasiliev brothers, 1934)

Figes, RR, chs. 10-14, pp. 149-216
Or
Figes, Whisperers, chs. 2-5, pp. 76-378

Week 5: February 22 (no class 2/15)
The Great Patriotic War: Persecution, Perseverance, and Loss
Film: Encounter at the Elbe (Grigori Aleksandrov and Aleksei Utkin, 1949)

Figes, RR, ch. 15, pp. 217-229
Or
Figes, Whisperers, ch. 6, pp. 379-454

Week 6: February 29
Cold War: Stalin Style vs. Khrushchev Style
Film: Ballad of a Soldier (Grigorii Chukrai, 1959)

Figes, RR, chs. 17-18, pp. 230-259
Or
Figes, Whisperers, chs. 8-9, pp. 535-656

Week 7: March 7
Brezhnev: The Revolution Dies
Gorbachev: The Last Bolshevik and the Last Days of the USSR
Film: Assa (Sergei Solovyov, 1988)

Figes, RR, chs. 18-20, pp. 260-296
**Week 8: March 14**
Film: *How I Ended This Summer* (Aleksei Popogrebskii, 2010)


**Week 9: March 21**
Putin Wrestles a Bear, 2000-2015: Whither the Revolution, Part II
Laqueur, *Putinism*, chs. 4-8, pp. 109-207