



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin

ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME

European Interdisciplinary Studies, Natolin campus (Advanced Academic Master)

YEAR

2023-2024

COURSE TITLE

Contemporary Russian Foreign and Security Policy

SEMESTER

2

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

PYNNÖNIEMI Katri Pauliina

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

BOURGOIS Kilian

COURSE TYPE

Specialist Course

MAJOR(S)

EUW

ECTS CREDITS

4

TEACHING HOURS

20

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

80

TUTORIAL(S)

NO

COEFFICIENT

1

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The course provides overview of contemporary Russian foreign and security policy, focusing on historical trajectory and political worldview that has shaped Russia's strategic choices as well as set of means used in advancing Russia's national (foreign and security political) interests in Europe and globally.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students acquire a sound understanding of Russia's strategic culture, strategic decision-making system and key historical, institutional and political elements shaping Russia's foreign and security thinking and its impact on contemporary European security. They are able critically to analyse Russia's role in the European and world (dis)order and to understand historical and political worldview guiding Russia's strategic thinking. Students master a significant body of literature on Russia's foreign and security policy, the Kremlin decision-making system, and theoretical discussion on strategic culture, threat perceptions and political realism.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

None.

TEACHING METHOD(S)

Lectures with slides, assigned texts, discussion.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

The final mark will be based on:

- Closed-book, written, digital, in-class exam (2 hours) that accounts for 70% of the mark.
- Class presentations accounting for 30% of the mark.

The College of Europe reserves the right to change the delivery and assessment of the course in case of circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the College (*force majeure*). Any communication from the campus administration in this regard takes precedence over the information provided in the ECTS card.

Retake examinations, that is, exams passed in the second examination session, will have the same format as those taken during the first exam session. When a student takes an examination during the second session, the final mark for the course is based solely on the result of the retake examination. No other element of evaluation which would have been taken into consideration in the calculation of the final mark during the first examination session will be considered in the second session.

COURSE CONTENTS

The course will focus on contemporary Russian foreign and security policy, tracing the historical and structural factors influencing Russia's thinking on national security, post-Soviet and international order.

1. Introduction: theoretical and conceptual background
2. Historical background: war, empire, and Russia's exceptionalism
3. Strategic planning in Putin's Russia: doctrines and agencies
4. Shaping the domestic debate on foreign policy: think tank and academic community
5. The Kremlin vision of the international order
6. Russia's national interests: view from the military
7. Russia facing Europe and the US: strategic balancing
8. Strategic deception in the service of Russian foreign policy
9. A countdown to war: conspiracy thinking and external enemies
10. Russia and European security after the war in Ukraine

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

Reading list available in the course outline.