Course Description:
This course is an introduction to the study of the great social revolutions of the modern world, beginning, of course, with the first and probably greatest one, the French revolution. It also is an opportunity for students to develop their skills in social science writing, in qualitative comparative methods, and in theory-building. We will examine competing theories about social revolution’s causes, outcomes, and processes. While carefully examining the cases of France, Russia, and China, we will be concerned with developing our own theories of why revolution occurs. We will also visit a nearby museum of the French revolution as a way to explore the depth of cultural change attempted by revolutionaries. We will finish up by doing a critical reading of Theda Skocpol's States and Social Revolutions. That book, which compares the causes of social revolution in France, Russia, and China, is a foundational text in the study of social revolution; it nevertheless has major methodological and empirical shortcomings that our earlier work will have given us the tools to critique in our final papers.

The course fulfills the Comparative Politics and Government subfield requirement and the methodologically-focused course requirement for the Political Science major, as well as the social sciences distribution requirement. In the IR major, it fulfills the social science requirements for TC 1A (Europe and the Former Soviet Union), TC 1B (East and Southeast Asia), and TC 6A (Ideologies).

Textbooks:
4. Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, any edition

Requirements:
(a) attendance and participation: 10%.
(b) Written reflection exercise based on field trip to the Museum of the French Revolution: 10%.
(c) short paper #1 comparing the cases of France and Russia to build a theory of the causes of social revolution, 5 pages: 30%.
(d) short paper #2 comparing the cases of France, Russia and China, and contrasting with cases where revolution didn’t happen, to build a theory of the causes of social revolution, 6 pages: 30%.
(e) open-book exam: critical essay on Skocpol's State and Social Revolutions: 20%.

If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, please contact me as soon as possible to make the appropriate arrangements.
PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Class 1

Approaches to the study of revolution
What is revolution? What different approaches have scholars taken to studying its causes? What different levels of analysis have they used to explain it?

Reading:
(3) Charles Tilly, "Does Modernization Breed Revolution?" in Goldstone, pp. 45-54.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Class 2

The Old Regime and why it fell

Reading:
(1) Popkin, chapters 1-2, pp. 1-36.

Class 3

What caused the liberal revolution to give way to the radical Republic?

Reading: Popkin, chapters 3-4, pp. 37-72.

Class 4

Political thought of the French revolution

(1) The old ways of thinking: selections from Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.
(2) New ways of thinking: selections from the Robespierre archive, https://www.marxists.org/history/france/revolution/robespierre/
(3) Selections from Abbé Sieyès, Thomas Paine.

Class 5

The Terror and Thermidor

Reading: Popkin, chapters 5 and 6, pp. 73-111

Class 6

Revolutionary outcomes: How did Napoleon end the Terror and establish a new Empire?

Reading: Popkin, chapters 112-139.
THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION:
How is it similar to and different from the French Revolution?

Class 7

part 1
The Old Regime and why it fell
Reading:
(2) DeFronzo, pp. 33-46.

part 2
What is Leninism? What did the Bolsheviks want?
Reading:
(1) Selections from V.I. Lenin, What is to be Done? (If the links below don’t work, try starting from the main What is to be Done? index page, http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/witbd/index.htm)
(2) Selections from "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" on website http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/index.htm
Please read the first preface (one paragraph); read Chapter I; look at the chapter headings after Chapter I; read Chapter VII and Chapter X. What is Lenin's main point? What is imperialism, where does it come from, and what will be its ultimate fate? For him, why is imperialism important to understand?

Class 8
What factors led to the Revolutions of 1917?
Reading:
(1) DeFronzo, pp. 46-54.
(2) Fitzpatrick, chapter 2, pp. 40-67

Class 9
What caused the Civil War and the rise and fall of the NEP? Why did Stalin come to power? What were the outcomes of the Russian Revolution?
Reading: Fitzpatrick, chs 3 and 4, pp. 68-119
THE CHINESE REVOLUTION: How is it similar to and different from the French and Russian Revolutions?

Paper #1 on causes of revolution in France and Russia due this week.

**Class 10**
The Old Regime in China
*Reading:*
1. DeFronzo, pp. 79-87.
2. Schoppa, 1-123, selections to be determined.

**Class 11**
The fall of the Old Regime in 1911, the founding of the Republic of China, the Warlord era, and the Nationalist period
*Reading:*
2. Schoppa, pp. 124-220, selections to be determined.

**Class 12**
The principles of Mao Zedong Thought
*Reading:*
2. Mao Zedong, three important writings:
   1. "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," paying close attention to the first seven parts and then making sure you know what the "fourteen great achievements" are from the next section: [http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_2.htm](http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_2.htm)

**Class 13**
The Japanese occupation, the Civil War, and the Revolution of 1949. Did the Communists win because of nationalism, or because of their revolutionary policies? Was the period after the founding of the PRC a Thermidor?
*Reading:*
2. Schoppa, pp. 241-304, selections to be determined.

**Class 14**
Why did the revolution re-radicalize in the late 1950s? What led to the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and finally a second Thermidor?
*Reading:*
2. Schoppa, pp. 305-392, selections to be determined.
NEGATIVE CASES THAT HELP US CHECK OUR HYPOTHESES

Class 15
What do we gain theoretically from looking at cases where revolution did not occur? How many cases do we need to study to get a conclusive result?

Reading:
(2) Theda Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, pp. 99-111.
(3) Case study: Why didn't revolution occur in Meiji Japan? How is it similar to and different from the French, Russian, and Chinese Revolutions?

A THEORY OF SOCIAL REVOLUTION: SKOCPOL'S STATES AND SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS
Paper #2 on France, Russia and China, with negative cases, due this week

Classes 16, 17, and 18

This book is a thick and serious academic book. I will ask you to focus on particular selections, and give you a reading guide to help you focus on the important parts of the argument so that the reading will not be too overwhelming.

Old-Regime states in crisis, or why the old regimes fell in France, Russia, and China
Reading: Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, pp. 47-111, selections to be determined.

Explanations: Agrarian structures and peasant insurrections in France, Russia, and China
Reading: Skocpol, pp. 112-157, selections to be determined.

State building as the outcome in France and Russia
Reading: Skocpol, pp. 161-235, selections to be determined.

Outcomes in China, and conclusions;
Reading: Skocpol, pp. 236-293, selections to be determined.

Final exam: an open book, open note critical essay on Skocpol's State and Social Revolutions. Now that you have mastered some of the crucial tools necessary for doing comparative case study analysis, and also studied a considerable amount of empirical/historical information about the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions, what do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of Skocpol's analysis? How could you do it better, avoiding the pitfalls she encounters and making better methodological and empirical choices?