

**Kings, Power, and Medieval Empire**  
Christian Raffensperger  
Honors 300  
Fall Semester 2018  
MWF 1:00-2:05P.M.  
Hollenbeck 313

The normative view of medieval power is that of knights, castles, kings and queens. This view is based upon generations of focus upon the polities in the west of Europe, most often England and France in particular. Recent scholarship has expanded our perspective on not only what medieval Europe was, but how it functioned. In this class we will do three things in particular: The first will be a series of readings on the history and theory behind medieval governance to give us a grounding in what scholars are saying and thinking about medieval polities and how they functioned; The second will be a close reading of primary sources for one particular medieval polity, in this case Rus'. From those readings, we will construct our own picture of how the polity was ruled/governed; Finally, we will read secondary sources, from modern scholars, on how they think Rus' was ruled; and we will compare our own views with theirs in an extended historiographical discussion. Out of this, students will (ideally) understand not just how a medieval state was governed, but how we construct modern ideas of governance, how to deal with primary sources, and how to critique and examine both primary and secondary sources.

*Writing Intensive*

*PAST Credit*

Professor: Christian Raffensperger  
Office: Hollenbeck 311  
Office Phone: 937-327-7843  
Office Hours: MW 9:00–10:30 A.M. or by appointment  
E-mail address: [craffensperger@wittenberg.edu](mailto:craffensperger@wittenberg.edu)

**Assignments and Deadlines**

There is a separate assignment sheet that I will hand out which details all of the graded assignments for this class. Please follow that assignment sheet in attempting to understand what each assignment is, and if you do not understand, please ask (in advance of the due date!). Due dates are included here on the syllabus.

Class discussion is 10% of your total grade for this class. As such it is incredibly important that you come prepared each day. This means that you will have with you the materials under discussion and you will have read them. Everyone in class is expected to participate in the discussion. You are also all expected to participate civilly and respectfully. This is a community of learners and we should act as such.

The grades will be weighted as follows:

Attendance: 5%

Participation: 10%

Reading Quiz: 15% (1% / week)  
Group Exercise : 10%  
Theory of Rule-  
    Outline: 2%  
    Paper : 15%  
How Rus' was Ruled-  
    Outline: 2%  
    Paper :15%  
Historiography of Russian Rule-  
    Outline : 2%  
    Paper :15%  
Oral Presentation of Research : 9%

### **Required Books**

All readings will be on Moodle or in the course reader.

### **Schedule of Meetings and Assignments**

*Week 1 (August 20, 22, 24): Ideas and Categories of Rule*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Wednesday***

Wednesday – Ando, “Introduction” and “Ambitions of Government”

Friday – Ando, “Introduction” and “Ambitions of Government” (cont.)

*Week 2 (August 27, 29, 31): Government Theory*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

Monday – Luscombe, “Introduction: The Formation of Political Thought in the West”

Wednesday – Van Caenegem, “Government, Law and Society”

Friday – Nelson, “Kingship and Empire”

*Week 3 (September 3, 5, 7): Medieval States?*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

***Due Friday: Theory of Rule Outlines***

Monday – Davies, “Was there a medieval state?”

Wednesday – Reynolds, “Was there a medieval state? Response”

Friday – Urbańczyk, “Early State Formation in East Central Europe”

*Week 4 (September 10, 12, 14): Theory of Rule Presentations*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

***Due Friday – Theory of Rule Papers***

Monday – Theory of Rule Presentations 1

Wednesday – **NO Class**

Friday – Theory of Rule Presentations 2

*Week 5 (September 17, 19, 21): Povest' vremennykh let*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Wednesday***

***Monday – Group 1 Presentation***

Monday – Group 1 on the PVL

Wednesday – PVL Readings (64-84)

Friday – PVL Readings (84-96)

*Week 6 (September 24, 26, 28): Povest' vremennykh let (Cont.)*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

Monday – PVL Readings (119-139)

Wednesday – PVL Readings (139-150, 154-156, 164-169)

Friday – PVL Readings (174-198)

*Week 7 (October 1, 3, 5): Novgorod Chronicle*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Wednesday***

***Due Monday – Group 2 Presentation***

Monday – Group 2 on Novgorod Chronicle

Wednesday – Novgorod Chronicle Discussion (1-9)

Friday – **NO Class**

*Week 8 (October 8, 10, 12): Novgorod Chronicle (cont.)*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

Monday – Novgorod Chronicle Discussion (10-27)

Wednesday – Novgorod Chronicle Discussion (28-43)

Friday – Novgorod Chronicle Discussion (47-57)

*Week 9 (October 17, 19 – No Class October 15): Russkaia Pravda*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Friday***

***Due Wednesday – Group 3 Presentation***

Monday – **NO Class**

Wednesday – Group 3 Presentation

Friday – *Medieval Russian Laws* Discussion (26-35)

*Week 10 (October 22, 24, 26): Russkaia Pravda*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

***Due Friday – How Rus’ was Ruled Outlines***

Monday – *Medieval Russian Laws* Discussion (35-43)

Wednesday – *Medieval Russian Laws* Discussion (43-56)

Friday – *Medieval Russian Laws* Discussion (61-82)

*Week 11 (October 29, 31, November 2): How Rus’ was Ruled Presentations*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

***Due Friday – How Rus’ was Ruled Papers***

Monday – How Rus’ was Ruled Wrap-up Discussion

Wednesday – How Rus’ was Ruled Presentations 1

Friday – How Rus’ was Ruled Presentations 2

*Week 12 (November 5, 7, 9): Historiography of Rus’*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

Monday – Raffensperger, *Kingdom of Rus’*

Wednesday – Shepard, “Conversions and Regimes Compared: The Rus and the Poles, ca. 1000”

Friday – Continuing Discussion

*Week 13 (November 12, 14, 16): Historiography of Rus’ - Novgorod*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

Monday – Halperin, “Novgorod and the Novgorodian Land”

Wednesday – Granberg, *Veche in the Chronicles of Medieval Rus'*

Friday – Continuing Discussion

*Week 14 (November 26, 28, 30 – No Class November 19): Historiography of Rus' - Kiev*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

***Due Friday – Historiography of Russian Rule Outlines***

Monday – Birnbaum, “Kiev, Novgorod, Moscow”

Wednesday – Price, “Novgorod, Kiev and Their Satellites: The City-State Model and the Viking Age Politics of European Russia”

Friday – Continuing Discussion

*Week 15 (December 3, 5 – No class on December 7): Historiography Discussion and Presentations*

***Assignments: Reading Quiz Monday***

***Due Friday – Historiography of Russian Rule Paper***

Monday – Wrap-up Discussion of Historiography of Russian Rule

Wednesday – Historiography of Russian Rule Presentations

Friday – **No Class**

### **Communication with Faculty**

If you have questions about class, would like to know your grade, would like to set up a time to meet, or need to let me know that you will not be in class, please email me. When you email me, please put the topic in the subject line so I know what you would like to discuss. Your email should begin with a salutation such as “Dear Professor Raffensperger”. It should not begin with “hey” or “I need”. Your email should close with something polite as well. “Best wishes” “have a good day,” or something similar is just fine, followed by your name. I would emphasize that they are not fussy, outdated conventions, but things that you will need to know to live in the world. Employers will not appreciate the casual informality with which you might be most comfortable.

### **Missed Examinations, Papers, and Class Sessions**

A good rule of thumb is do not miss anything. However, if you are ill or have a conflict and cannot make a class, notify me in advance or as soon after the class as is possible. *Do not miss examinations!* If you have a conflict, notify me a minimum of one week in advance and we can schedule an exam as close to the normal time as possible. If you miss an examination for reasons that are not discussed with me ahead of time or are not catastrophic

you will receive a zero, which is much worse than an F in your overall grade. Late papers are accepted for one week, but the grade will drop one full grade when turned in after class the day it is due. For each additional day thereafter (weekend day or weekday) that it is late, it will drop a fraction of a grade, for example—an A paper handed in after class will be a B paper, handed in the next day will be a B- paper, the next day a C+ paper.

### **Attendance Policy**

As part of your grade for this class, and to get the most out of the class, you are required to attend on a regular basis. Attendance in this class is worth 5% of your grade, and attendance will be taken on a regular basis. If you are going to miss class, let me know in advance. If you accumulate 3 unexcused absences over the course of the semester, you will receive a grade of F for your attendance. If you miss 7 or more classes over the course of the semester you will receive a grade of zero for your attendance, much worse than an F when calculating your final grade. You are solely responsible for signing the attendance sheet, or notifying me of your absence, as proof of your presence in class.

### **Special Needs**

Your learning in this course is important to me. I invite you to talk with me about ways to ensure your full participation in this course. Please be aware that Wittenberg is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. If you are eligible for course accommodations because of a disability, you need to register with the Academic Services Office, COMPASS Center located in Thomas Library. After you register, give me your accommodation letter from Academic Services and arrange to talk with me about your learning needs privately in a timely manner. Early identification at the start of the term is essential to ensure timely provision of services. If you have questions or would like more information about services for students with disabilities, please contact Grace Whiteley, Disability Services Coordinator/Student Success Coach, [whiteleyg@wittenberg.edu](mailto:whiteleyg@wittenberg.edu)

### **Weather-Related Concerns**

Whenever weather becomes a problem, I shall do my best to adhere to the university guidelines. If the university cancels classes, there will be no class. If the university has not cancelled class, but I am unable or unwilling to risk traveling, I will do my best to post a notice to this effect on Moodle as early as possible. I will do my best not to cancel class if at all possible.

If there is an exam scheduled or a deadline for a written assignment on a day when class is cancelled, you may assume that the exam or assignment will be due on the following class session.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students in this course are expected to uphold the standards of Wittenberg's Code of Academic Integrity. At its most basic level, this means that you will not turn in someone else's writing as your own, quote from a source without proper acknowledgment, or provide a classmate with inappropriate help. You will be asked to submit papers and exams with the following statement followed by your signature: "I affirm that my work upholds the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity at Wittenberg, and that I

have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance.” Sanctions for violating these rules range from receiving no credit for a particular assignment to failing the course for a significant act of academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of these rules, please talk to me before submitting your work.