

UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

# RUSSIA'S WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

## POL 2145B

### SYLLABUS

Winter 2026

Format: Online Asynchronous  
Lessons posted Wed @ 12:00 noon

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Thurs: 12:00 – 1:00

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### What This Course is About

On 24 February 2022 Russia escalated and launched a full-scale war against Ukraine. This non-essay course with no pre-requisites gets behind the headlines and explores the what, why, and how of this brutal, unprovoked war in modern Europe. Themes include hybrid warfare, disinformation, geo-politics, international law, humanitarian impact, and more.

### How This Course is Structured

This online course is offered online asynchronously which means that our OWL site will be our virtual classroom and we will not be meeting in person. Please familiarize yourself with the course site. Every week students will be expected to complete the required readings then view the lecture videos which will include guest lecturers and afterwards to complete a short quiz. The lecture videos will be posted weekly, at noon every Wednesday, and students can view them at their convenience. There will be a mid-term test and a final exam. Both will be online and students will have a one week window in which to complete them.

## What Students Need to Do

- Complete the assigned weekly required readings and take individual notes
- Watch the weekly lecture videos and take individual notes
- Complete the weekly quiz, each one is worth 3% of the final mark
- Complete the mid-term test worth 30% of the final mark
- Complete the final exam worth 40% of the final mark

## What Students Will Learn

This course is designed to increase student knowledge and skills. At the end of this course students will understand the details of Russia's 21<sup>st</sup> century war against Ukraine, the larger geo-political and historical context and its international implications including Canada's role. Equally importantly students will improve their media literacy and critical analysis skills through our discussions about information warfare, competing narratives and how to weed through the disinformation that continues to cloud these events.

## How Students Will Be Evaluated

- |                                              |     |
|----------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Weekly quiz, each worth 3%                | 30% |
| 2. Mid-term test, Week 7 (multiple choice)   | 30% |
| 3. Final Exam, Exam period (multiple choice) | 40% |

Every week there will be a short quiz based on the material from the required readings and lecture videos. The quizzes will be on the OWL site in the Quizzes section. Each quiz will have 3 short questions, each correct answer worth 1%, for a possible total of 3% per quiz. There will be a total of 11 quizzes, students need to complete 10 for a total of 30% of the final mark. In week 7 there will be an online mid term test, the format will be multiple choice, it will be worth 30% of your final mark and will be on Quizzes Tab. There will be a Final Exam also online and multiple-choice format. For both the Mid Term Test and the Final Exam students will have a one-week window in which to complete the 2-hour test/exam.

## Readings and Additional Materials

Each week there will be a few articles which students will be required to read. These readings will be available online, although some of the articles which are not available open access will need to be accessed through the university library catalogue. Students will also be provided with suggested further readings and materials, for anyone who would like to learn more about any topic. These are optional and students will not be tested on the content of the suggested readings/materials.

## **Topics**

### **Week 1 Introduction to course themes and requirements**

7 January 2026

### **Week 2 Ukraine and Russia – The Big Picture**

14 January 2026

### **Week 3 Russia's 21st Century Hybrid War Against Ukraine**

21 January 2026

### **Week 4 Putin and His People**

28 January 2026

### **Week 5 The Zelensky Factor and the Ukrainian Spirit**

4 February 2026

### **Week 6 Information Warfare**

11 February 2026

### **14– 22 February 2026 Reading Week NO CLASS**

### **Week 7 MID TERM TEST**

25 February 2026

### **Week 8 International Dimensions**

4 March 2026

### **Week 9 The International Response**

11 March 2025

### **Week 10 International War Crimes**

18 March 2026

### **Week 11 Canada's Role**

25 March 2026

### **Week 12 Prospects for Peace**

1 April 2026

**PLEASE CONSULT:**

<https://politicalscience.uwo.ca/undergraduate/docs/outlines/2025-26/APPENDIX%20TO%20UNDERGRADUATE%20COURSE%20OUTLINES.pdf>

I acknowledge that Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron peoples, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous peoples whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.