

**FALL 2020**

**RUSS 115: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF VLADIMIR PUTIN**

**MWF 3.00-3.50 PM**

**PROFESSOR RICHARD TEMPEST**



Prof. Tempest examines the figure (physical and political) of Russian President Vladimir Putin against the backdrop of imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet history, literature, and art while exploring his connections to American society and culture. In addition to Putin's life story, a representative selection of relevant artistic productions is covered, from classical Russian poetry and prose to gangster movies, rock, pop, and hip-hop. Russia is treated as a national space with unique defining characteristics, yet one that constantly assimilates Western forms, using them to generate new meanings and cultural productions, which it shares with the world. One of those productions is Putin himself. The course will also compare Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump as charismatic leaders and subjects or objects in Russian and American culture. In addition to Putin, other Russian rulers, politicians, and celebrities will be discussed. RUSS 115 satisfies the Gen Ed requirement for Humanities – Literature and Art, and Cultural Studies – Western.