

The Prairie Workshop:

Decolonizing European and Soviet History Curricula

Thursday–Saturday, May 11–13, 2023

Format: Hybrid (in person with a small online component)

The Prairie Workshop seeks to develop new perspectives on teaching about (eastern) Europe, Ukraine, and the Soviet Union. Since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, many scholars of Russia, the Soviet Union, and eastern Europe have started to discuss how we can “decolonize” the field. This workshop invites participants to discuss this idea of decolonization further and explore whether it can be an effective way to foster new ways of thinking about and teaching (eastern) European, Ukrainian, and Soviet history.

There will be two parts to the workshop. During Part 1, participants will present and discuss their course syllabi and rethink how the history of Europe and the Soviet Union can be reconceptualized and how we can incorporate topics, regions, and peoples that have often been obscured. During Part 2, we will discuss databases, collections, and potential sources that we can incorporate into our course readings and that students can use when completing course assignments.

There are both theoretical and practical goals of the workshop. Theoretically, the workshop aims to stimulate discussion about decolonization and explore how including new sources and themes can change the epistemological frameworks and structures through which we understand the region. Practically, the workshop will include discussions of how to incorporate new sources and enrich current sources to expand students’ understanding of the region’s history.

Organized by the Prairie Centre for the Study of Ukrainian Heritage (PCUH), located in Saskatoon, Canada, the workshop also aims to stimulate conversation about the spatial dimension of knowledge production and distribution in academia. Academic centres that are perceived to be located on a “periphery” are excellent places to lead discussions about decolonization and epistemic hierarchies of academic knowledge production and distribution.

Therefore, the workshop will be held at the University of Saskatchewan, which, having first introduced Ukraine-related courses in the 1940s, has one of the oldest Ukrainian studies programs in North America. Moreover, PCUH, which was founded in 1998, has offered a Ukrainian studies program for more than 20 years and offers Ukrainian courses on anthropology, languages, folklore, political science, and history. We welcome applications from course instructors across academic disciplines, including but not limited to history, political science, literature, anthropology, language studies, war studies, displaced people and refugee studies, human rights, genocide studies, sociology, and international law, who teach courses on European, Soviet, East Central European, or Ukrainian history and are willing to discuss their syllabi. We welcome applicants at any career stage, but they must be teaching or anticipate teaching a relevant university-level course in the 2023/2024 academic year.

We also welcome applications from educators, archivists, librarians, or project managers who are involved in educational, translational, or digitalized collections projects on Ukrainian, Jewish, or East Central European history.

The workshop will be held in English.

Applications must include: (1) proposal (up to 350 words) of a course and set of topics/issues the applicant is willing to discuss, (2) a short bio (up to 150 words), (3) personal contact details, (4) a draft syllabus of a course the applicant has taught or plans to teach in 2023/2024.

The application must be **sent as one file** (.doc, .docx, or .pdf).

Limited funds for travel and accommodation are available for participants in need. If you wish to apply for a grant, please include a one-paragraph statement requesting financial support.

Application deadline: Monday, April 17, 2023.

Applications should be sent to Oksana Dudko at odudko@stmcollege.ca

Organizer: Oksana Dudko, Petro Jacyk Postdoctoral Fellow in Ukrainian Studies, Prairie Centre for the Study of Ukrainian Heritage, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan.