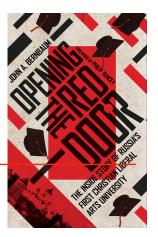
Opening the Red Door CURRICULUM MATERIALS & DISCUSSION GUIDES



Greetings, faculty colleagues!

As a follow-up to our recent email exchange and the shipment of free copies of *Opening the Red Door* to your campus, we have developed a series of discussion guides based on the book (attached). The discussion topics are as follows:

- 1. Evaluating the Response of Western Governments and Advisors
- 2. Leadership Principles A Case Study in International Business
- 3. Overcoming Cross-Cultural Differences
- 4. Political Realities and Strategic Obstacles
- 5. Soviet/Russian Interest in Christianity
- 6. The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) vs. Federal Programs
- 7. The Role of the Christian College Coalition (CCC) and its Member College & Universities

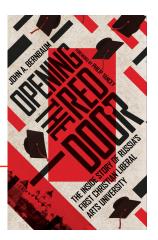
These guides could be used if *Opening the Red Door* were a supplemental course text or an outside reading used in class when these topics are addressed in your course. These subjects are often talked about theoretically, and these guides provide a ground-level case study drawn from 25 years of experience in Russia.

Would you be willing to partner with us by doing the following:

- Share these discussion guides with faculty in your department or other related departments that offer courses dealing with these issues? We can send more free copies (including handling and shipping costs) to these professors if they decide to use these guides.
- Give us an evaluation of these materials if you use them and feedback on how we could make them better tools for classroom use.
- A suggestion: Having visited 65-70 member campuses of the CCC (now the CCCU) over twenty years, I often heard faculty discuss their frustration about rarely spending any time with their colleagues. How about organizing a lunch for faculty friends from different departments and using one or several of these discussion guides as the agenda? Again, we could send you free copies to give to these colleagues.

I hope you have a refreshing Advent and New Year's celebration as you prepare for the next semester, whether on campus or online. *Shalom*!

Dr. John A. Bernbaum



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Evaluating the Response of Western Governments and Advisors

- 1. When you read about the remarkable changes in the USSR under Gorbachev, how do you explain these revolutionary changes after seventy years of top-down, autocratic leadership by the Communist Party?
- 2. The author is critical of western analyses of developments that lead to the collapse of the USSR? What are your thoughts on this?
- 3. The secular mindset of western scholars and policy analysts lead to "blind spots" that resulted in mistaken recommendations offered to Russian reformers, according to the author? What were these "blind spots"?
- 4. Do you agree that the failure of both Russian reformers and western advisors to recognize the potential role of churches, especially the Russian Orthodox Church, proved to be costly mistake? What difference might this have made?
- 5. How do you explain the tone-deafness of the Russian reformers and western analysts to the cries of the Russian people? Is it a surprise to you that the average Russian who lived through the 1990s, following the collapse of the USSR, viewed democracy advocated by the West as the source of their poverty?
- 6. What did some of the leading western advisors say about the advice they offered to the Russian government? Is the "servant posture" proposed by the author unrealistic for government advisors from the West?

7. What lessons can we learn from this experience in Russia? Planting democracy is not an easy task, especially in a country where traditional cultural patterns pose serious obstacles. Any ideas about how to deal with this structural challenge?



LEADER'S GUIDE

Evaluating the Response of Western Governments and Advisors

- 1. When you read about the remarkable changes in the USSR under Gorbachev, how do you explain these revolutionary changes after seventy years of top-down, autocratic leadership by the Communist Party?
 - pp. 1-7 Discussion of Gorbachev's reforms
 - pp. 62-63 Meeting with Gorbachev his insights
 - pp. 72-75 Pressures from Russian writers/critics
- 2. The author is critical of western analyses of developments that lead to the collapse of the USSR (pp. 69-77)? What are your thoughts on this?
- 3. The secular mindset of western scholars and policy analysts lead to "blind spots" that resulted in mistaken recommendations offered to Russian reformers, according to the author? What were these "blind spots"?
 - pp. 75-77 The wrong cures
- 4. Do you agree that the failure of both Russian reformers and western advisors to recognize the potential role of churches, especially the Russian Orthodox Church, proved to be costly mistake? What difference might this have made?
 - pp. 238-239 Comprehensive network of RO churches ignored
- 5. How do you explain the tone-deafness of the Russian reformers and western analysts to the cries of the Russian people? Is it a surprise to you that the average Russian who lived through the 1990s, following the collapse of the USSR, viewed democracy advocated by the West as the source of their poverty?
 - pp. 76-77 Rebuilding from the rubble of Communism

- p. 145 Democracy a "dirty word"
- 6. What did some of the leading western advisors say about the advice they offered to the Russian government? Is the "servant posture" proposed by the author unrealistic for government advisors from the West?
 - pp. 224-226 Western experts speak up
 - pp. 75-77 "Servant posture" needed
- 7. What lessons can we learn from this experience in Russia? Planting democracy is not an easy task, especially in a country where traditional cultural patterns pose serious obstacles. Any ideas about how to deal with this structural challenge?
 - pp. 75-77 The challenge of exporting democracy
 - pp. 235-241 Are changes in traditional culture possible?
 - pp. 243-244 Peter Deyneka's perspective



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Leadership Principles – A Case Study in International Business

- 1. How would you evaluate the formation of the American Working Group (AWG) and their initial steps to launch the development of the Russian-American Christian University (RACU)?
- 2. Did the plans for the initial visit of the Russian delegation in September 1990 seem appropriate? What changes might you have made in these plans?
- 3. If you were responsible for creating this new private college in Russia, would you have followed the advice offered by business and church leaders in Russia (p. 102)?
- 4. In 1994-95, the RACU Board made a number of key decisions about how to build the school, what its focus ought to be, and how its president should handle his responsibilities (pp. 108-111). Any thoughts about how these policies were developed and then implemented?
- 5. How would you assess the decision about the school being binational (Russian-American) or starting up as a binational school and then becoming a Russian institution?
- 6. The appointment of competent and committed Trustees both Americans and Russians was of critical importance in the development of RACU. How would assess this process and what would you have done to get more active Russian ownership of the school?

7. What options did RACU's leadership have when faced with Russian government bureaucrats who were hostile as Putin turned against the U.S., when dealing with constant demands for the payment of bribes, and when the whole system of Russian higher education was fundamentally corrupted (by their own admission)?



LEADER'S GUIDE

Leadership Principles – A Case Study in International Business

- 1. How would you evaluate the formation of the American Working Group (AWG) and their initial steps to launch the development of the Russian-American Christian University (RACU)?
 - pp. 78-84 AWG's formation and early decisions
- 2. Did the plans for the initial visit of the Russian delegation in September 1990 seem appropriate? What changes might you have made in these plans?
 - pp. 14-21 Soviet delegation visit
- 3. If you were responsible for creating this new private college in Russia, would you have followed the advice offered by business and church leaders in Russia (p. 102)?
 - pp. 101-103 Seeking counsel in Moscow
- 4. In 1994-95, the RACU Board made a number of key decisions about how to build the school, what its focus ought to be, and how its president should handle his responsibilities (pp. 108-111). Any thoughts about how these policies were developed and then implemented?
 - pp. 89-92 Early Board development
 - pp. 108-111 Foundational principles of operation
- 5. How would you assess the decision about the school being binational (Russian-American) or starting up as a binational school and then becoming a Russian institution?
 - pp. 79-81 Initial American recommendations
 - pp. 116 Russian input

- 6. The appointment of competent and committed Trustees both Americans and Russians was of critical importance in the development of RACU. How would assess this process and what would you have done to get more active Russian ownership of the school?
 - pp. 89-92 First Board appointments
 - pp. 158-161 Major additions to the Board
 - pp. 192-194 More Board growth
 - pp. 227-230 The challenge of building a partnership
- 7. What options did RACU's leadership have when faced with Russian government bureaucrats who were hostile as Putin turned against the U.S., when dealing with constant demands for the payment of bribes, and when the whole system of Russian higher education was fundamentally corrupted (by their own admission)?
 - pp. 223-226 The trauma of the post-Communist transition
 - pp. 236-241 What lies ahead for Russia?



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Overcoming Cross-Cultural Differences

- 1. Dealing with the issue of bribery when working with Russian government officials was a continuing problem. Was the approach of the RACU leadership no bribes a wise policy or was more flexibility needed to get major goals achieved in a more timely fashion?
- 2. How would you handle the different approaches between American and Russian Trustees? American Trustees argued for no exceptions on bribes, while Russians insisted that we needed to do things the "Russian way" or we will keep failing.
- **3.** Many Christian ministries in Russia kept "double books" so they could avoid Russian taxes. RACU's leadership refused to do this and the costs were extremely high as a result. Payroll taxes often meant a 50% increase in monthly fees. What would you have done?
- **4.** When encountering Russian Christian students cheating on their exams, RACU leadership tried an unusual approach. What did you think about this effort to change their conduct during exams?
- **5.** What would you do to get Russian faculty to integrate faith with their academic discipline when they showed little interest in this? Any ideas about changing this mentality?
- **6.** Russian Trustees on RACU's Board struggled with the "culture of dependency" that characterized their Protestant churches. How would you have handled this challenge?

7. RACU's staff solicited advice on how to operate in Russia in the 1990s. How would you evaluate this advice (p. 102) in light of RACU's subsequent development?



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- 1. Dealing with the issue of bribery when working with Russian government officials was a continuing problem. Was the approach of the RACU leadership no bribes a wise policy or was more flexibility needed to get major goals achieved in a timely fashion?
 - p. 104 Pressure for bribes everywhere
 - p. 190 Government permits bribes?
 - pp. 216-217 Pressure to secure property title bribes?
- 2. How would you handle the different approaches between American and Russian Trustees? American Trustees argued for no exceptions on bribes, while Russians insisted that we needed to do things the "Russian way" or we will keep failing.
 - pp. 172-73 loss of campus facility because of bribery
- **3.** Many Christian ministries in Russia kept "double books" so they could avoid Russian taxes. RACU's leadership refused to do this and the costs were extremely high as a result. Payroll taxes often meant a 50% increase in monthly fees. What would you have done?
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 - p. 141 Student cheating on exams
- **5.** What would you do to get Russian faculty to integrate faith with their academic discipline when they showed little interest in this? Any ideas about changing this mentality?

- pp. 144-145 Attitudes of Russian faculty
- p. 177 Grow our own faculty
- **6.** Russian Trustees on RACU's Board struggled with the "culture of dependency" that characterized their Protestant churches. How would you have handled this challenge?
 - pp. 160-161 Russian Trustees raise this issue
 - pp. 209-210 Obrovets discusses lack of Russian financial support
- 7. RACU's staff solicited advice on how to operate in Russia in the 1990s. How would you evaluate this advice (p. 102) in light of RACU's subsequent development?



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Political Realities and Strategic Obstacles

- 1. What domestic events in Russia began to change the openness to the West and the desire to cooperate as friends and possibly as allies?
- 2. What were some of the first indications that Russia's remarkable freedom of religion law of October 1990 was going to be changed and non-Orthodox churches would face discrimination?
- 3. U.S. policymakers were firm in their commitment to Boris Yeltsin, especially during his presidential election campaign in 1996. Why did this support continue as his administration evolved into a "mafia state" as described by the U. S. Embassy in Moscow?
- 4. Relations between the U.S. and Russia appeared to be promising between the newly elected presidents of both countries in 2000. When did this bilateral relationship begin to deteriorate? Was the growing hostility between these two countries generated by Moscow or were there mistakes made by the U.S. government that also contributed to this tension?
- 5. There appeared to be hope that the newly elected presidents of Russia (Dmitry Medvedev) and the U.S. (Barack Obama) in 2008 could improve the relationship between these two countries? Why didn't this happen?
- 6. What were the charges made against the U.S. by the Putin administration and could these accusations have been dealt with through diplomatic negotiations?

7.	In increasingly autocratic states, how can people-to-people organization open doors to cooperative relationships?	ns



LEADER'S GUIDE

Political Realities and Strategic Obstacles

- 1. What domestic events in Russia began to change the openness to the West and the desire to cooperate as friends and possibly as allies?
 - pp. 1-7 Gorbachev's desire for reform
 - pp. 32-33 Unprecedented educational cooperation
 - pp. 41-45 Desire to reform business/economics disciplines
- 2. What were some of the first indications that Russia's remarkable freedom of religion law of October 1990 was going to be changed and non-Orthodox churches would face discrimination?
 - p. 97 Oppositions pressures Yeltsin to amend the law
 - p. 133 Yeltsin signs the amended religious freedom law
- 3. U.S. policymakers were firm in their commitment to Boris Yeltsin, especially during his presidential election campaign in 1996. Why did this support continue as his administration evolved into a "mafia state" as described by the U. S. Embassy in Moscow?
 - p. 52 Emergence of Yeltsin
 - pp. 86-88 US support despite Yeltsin's failures
 - p. 139 Election of 1996 substantial US support fear of Communist Party re-emergence
 - pp. 245-226 Lack of clarity about who leads democratic forces in Russia
- 4. Relations between the U.S. and Russia appeared to be promising between the newly elected presidents of both countries in 2000. When did this bilateral relationship begin to deteriorate? Was the growing hostility

between these two countries generated by Moscow or were there mistakes made by the U.S. government that also contributed to this tension?

- pp. 181-182 Domestic terrorism in Russia
- 5. There appeared to be hope that the newly elected presidents of Russia (Dmitry Medvedev) and the U.S. (Barack Obama) in 2008 could improve the relationship between these two countries? Why didn't this happen?
 - pp. 194-5 Effort to modify relations btw US & Russia
- 6. What were the charges made against the U.S. by the Putin administration and could these accusations have been dealt with through diplomatic negotiations?
 - pp. 183 Expansion of NATO; US attack on Iraq
 - pp. 191-192 US was the cause of the 2008 global economic crisis
 - pp. 214-215 Putin's return to the presidency; US- sponsored riots
 - pp. 220 West does not participate in Russian Olympics
- 7. In increasingly autocratic states, how can people-to-people organizations open doors to cooperative relationships?



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Soviet/Russian Interest in Christianity

- 1. How do you explain the intense interest of Soviets/Russians in spiritual issues in the early 1990s? What were they searching for?
- 2. Did you know about Gorbachev's interest in moral and ethical renewal in the USSR? Why was this rarely talked about in western news reports?
- 3. Gorbachev severed the link between Marxism and atheism when he supported the one thousandth anniversary of Christianity in Russia in 1988, a decision largely ignored in the West? The "Red Door" was opening. What was an appropriate response from Christians in the West?
- 4. Did the response of the students and faculty at Nizhni Novgorod State University surprise you, when the Bernbaums arrived there in 1992 as the first Americans in this closed city since the 1930s?
- 5. What did the Russian political leaders who invited western Christian leaders to visit their country in 1991 hope to achieve and how would you assess the goals set by the American delegation?
- 6. When and why did this openness to cooperation with Western Christians begin to change?
- 7. At what point did Vladimir Putin make Orthodox Christianity a weapon in a "culture war" against the West and has his policy been successful in Russia?
- 8. Since RACU closed and many Western Christian ministries have been forced out of Russia, are you aware of any further changes in the status of

cooperation between Russian Christians and Christians from other countries?

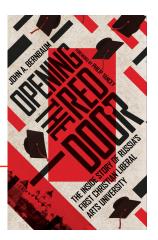


LEADER'S GUIDE

Soviet/Russian Interest in Christianity

- 1. How do you explain the intense interest of Soviets/Russians in spiritual issues in the early 1990s? What were they searching for?
 - pp. 4-5 Gorbachev's attitude toward religion
 - pp. 30-31 exchange with Orthodox priest in Moscow
 - pp. 33-34 prayer before the banquet
 - p. 35 request for Western professors to teach on the history of Christianity
- 2. Did you know about Gorbachev's interest in moral and ethical renewal in the USSR? Why was this rarely talked about in western news reports?
- 3. Gorbachev severed the link between Marxism and atheism when he supported the one thousandth anniversary of Christianity in Russia in 1988, a decision largely ignored in the West? The "Red Door" was opening. What was an appropriate response from Christians in the West?
 - pp. 62-63 Gorbachev's personal views about religion
- 4. Did the response of the students and faculty at Nizhni Novgorod State University surprise you, when the Bernbaums arrived there in 1992 as the first Americans in this closed city since the 1930s?
 - pp. 23-27 the intense interest in religion in Nizhni Novgorod
- 5. What did the Russian political leaders who invited western Christian leaders to visit their country in 1991 hope to achieve and how would you assess the goals set by the American delegation?
 - pp. 56-63 invitation and exchange about our visit

- 6. When and why did this openness to cooperation with Western Christians begin to change?
 - pp. 97 early signs of opposition to freedom for "foreign religions" in Russia
 - p. 133 Yeltsin signs a revision of the religious freedom law
 - pp. 182-187 RACU is attacked on religious grounds
- 7. At what point did Vladimir Putin make Orthodox Christianity a weapon in a "culture war" against the West and has his policy been successful in Russia?
 - pp. 215-220 after the anti-Putin riots when he again became president
- 8. Since RACU closed and many Western Christian ministries have been forced out of Russia, are you aware of any further changes in the status of cooperation between Russian Christians and Christians from other countries?
 - See recent articles in the **East-West Church Report** and other current news sources about religion in Russia.



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) vs. Federal Government Programs

- **1.** What advantages did NGO's have when originally operating in Russia, as opposed to U.S. government officials or business leaders?
- 2. How would you evaluate the decision of the RACU Board not to accept government funding from either the U.S. government or the Russian government? Would this have been your choice?
- 3. Working in a "low trust" society that characterized most of the post-Communist world, what lessons did the staff and Board of RACU learn about meeting their goal of building a new private school in Moscow?
- 4. How did political relationships between American and Russian leaders affect the ability of RACU staff to operate in Russia?
- 5. When the plans for RACU were being developed, the American Working Group assumed that the new school would begin as a joint Russian-American institution, but would then be taken over and solely owned by the Russians. The Russian Trustees insisted that the school remained a binational institution. Looking back, would this have made any difference?
- 6. What happened that changed the remarkable openness to Western educators in the 1990s under Boris Yeltsin? The Russian Ministry of Education accredited RACU as the first private Christian university in Russia's history in November 2003, yet five years later the Ministry made it impossible to have this accreditation renewed. From your perspective, why did this happen?

7.	In a context where the state has historically provided free education, can an NGO overcome this obstacle and build private schools? How can in-country support be raised for a Christian liberal arts college?



LEADER'S GUIDE

The Role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) vs. Federal Government Programs

- **1.** What advantages did NGO's have when originally operating in Russia, as opposed to U.S. government officials or business leaders?
 - pp. 63-64 Deputy Ambassador Collin's comments
- 2. How would you evaluate the decision of the RACU Board not to accept government funding from either the U.S. government or the Russian government? Would this have been your choice?
 - pp. 110-111 Goal: create a unique privately-owned school
- 3. Working in a "low trust" society that characterized most of the post-Communist world, what lessons did the staff and Board of RACU learn about meeting their goal of building a new private school in Moscow?
 - pp. 227-228 Deep distrust permeated Russian society
 - pp. 237-239 Changes needed in traditional Russian culture
- 4. How did political relationships between American and Russian leaders affect the ability of RACU staff to operate in Russia?
 - pp. 181-182 Government officials follow Putin's approach
 - p. 190 Bias against private schools
 - pp. 214-215 Putin becomes increasingly anti-US
 - p. 240 Putin needs an external enemy
- 5. When the plans for RACU were being developed, the American Working Group assumed that the new school would begin as a joint Russian-American institution, but would then be taken over and solely owned by the

Russians. The Russian Trustees insisted that the school remained a binational institution. Looking back, would this have made any difference?

- pp. 80-81 Early discussion of binational or Russian school
- p. 116 Russian Trustees want a long-term binational school
- 6. What happened that changed the remarkable openness to Western educators in the 1990s under Boris Yeltsin? The Russian Ministry of Education accredited RACU as the first private Christian university in Russia's history in November 2003, yet five years later the Ministry made it impossible to have this accreditation renewed. From your perspective, why did this happen?
 - pp. 175-176 Remarkable accreditation first of its kind!
 - pp. 190-191 No history of private education only suspicions
 - pp. 196-200 Second time around nothing but roadblocks
- 7. In a context where the state has historically provided free education, can an NGO overcome this obstacle and build private schools? How can in-country support be raised for a Christian liberal arts college?
 - p. 97 First signs of opposition to private schools
 - pp. 154-155 Explosion of private colleges in Russia
 - pp. 205-206 State schools offer free education to our students
 - pp. 227-228 Russian churches were not supportive



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

The Role of the Christian Coalition Coalition (CCC) and its Member Schools

- 1. How would you evaluate the response of the CCC's leadership both the CCC's Board of Directors and the president and staff to this invitation to launch the "Russian Initiative" and especially the Russian-American Christian University (RACU)?
- 2. How would you assess the response of the member colleges and universities of the CCC?
- **3.** From the beginning, the CCC Board of Directors decided not to invest in any of the organization's funding related to the creation of a faith-based liberal arts college in Russia, but they did provide modest support for other related programs in Russia. Why do you think this decision was made?
- **4.** Are you surprised by the number of CCC member colleges and universities that joined the "Russian Initiative" and made modest financial contributions to its cooperative programs?
- **5.** If you were the president or academic dean of a CCC college or university, would you have encouraged your faculty to serve as volunteer teachers at RACU? What are the risks involved here and how did those who taught at RACU evaluate their experience?
- **6.** After reading through the history of RACU, how did the decision of the CCC's Board to end any funding for the school in June 1994 affect what happened? What where the negative and positive results of this decision?

7. Why do you think Protestant educators were reluctant to take advantage of the "opening of the Red Door" in the early 1990s, while Catholic entities started five universities in Eastern Europe and one in Australia during this period of history?



LEADER'S GUIDE

The Role of the Christian College Coalition (CCC) and its Member Schools

- 1. How would you evaluate the response of the CCC's leadership both the CCC's Board of Directors and the president and staff to this invitation to launch the "Russian Initiative" and especially the Russian-American Christian University (RACU)?
 - pp. 6-13 Member schools express interest in opportunities for educational exchanges with the USSR
 - pp. 14-16 Hosting Soviet guests
 - p. 36 President Augsburger's response
 - pp. 44-45 A "unique opportunity"
 - pp. 66-69 The "Russian Initiative"
 - pp. 78 CCC's Board is hesitant
 - p. 84 Permission to proceed, but no direct CCC funding
- 2. How would you assess the response of the member colleges and universities of the CCC?
 - p. 38 First schools get involved in exchanges
 - pp. 41-45 Faculty chosen for the MBA project
 - p. 68 Member schools join the "Russian Initiative"
 - p. 98 More member schools get involved in the former USSR
 - p. 230 120 American faculty volunteer to teach at RACU
- **3.** From the beginning, the CCC Board of Directors decided not to invest in any of the organization's funding related to the creation of a faith-based liberal arts college in Russia, but they did provide modest support for other related programs in Russia. Why do you think this decision was made?
 - p. 36 CCC is a service organization for its members

- **4.** Are you surprised by the number of CCC member colleges and universities that joined the "Russian Initiative" and made modest financial contributions to its cooperative programs?
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- **5.** If you were the president or academic dean of a CCC college or university, would you have encouraged your faculty to serve as volunteer teachers at RACU? What are the risks involved here and how did those who taught at RACU evaluate their experience?
 - pp. 107-108 Reactions from the first English Language Institute
 - pp. 120-123 Testimonies of ELI faculty from the second institute
- **6.** After reading through the history of RACU, how did the decision of the CCC's Board to end any funding for the school in June 1994 affect what happened? What where the negative and positive results of this decision?
 - pp. 99-100 CCC decides to end funding for RACU
- 7. Why do you think Protestant educators were reluctant to take advantage of the "opening of the Red Door" in the early 1990s, while Catholic entities started five universities in Eastern Europe and one in Australia during this period of history?
 - For a helpful commentary on this subject, see Perry Glanzer's review of Opening the Red Door in "The Review of Faith & International Affairs" (Fall 2020).