Russia’s Muslim population, estimated at 16.4 million in 2010, is a potential source of instability, given perennial concerns about threat of extremist movements, particularly in the North Caucasus, and the efforts of ISIS and other organizations to inspire radical Islam in Russia. However, the combination of fiercely expressed loyalty to Putin and support for his policies, protection of local autonomy, social conservatism, and endorsement of violence espoused by Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov may also hold broad appeal for Russia’s Muslims. Alternatively, a long history of integration in Russian society and political culture may have produced a Muslim population that is indistinguishable from ethnic Russians in terms of its political and social orientations. The lecture provides an empirical portrait of public opinion among Russia’s Muslims based on data from a Russian survey the authors conducted in 2015 with oversamples from four heavily Muslim regions, with particular attention to regional and other variations in their attitudes and to comparisons with the views of the native-born ethnic Russian population.

Theodore P. Gerber is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He conducts research on social stratification, public opinion, social demography, and other topics in Russia and other former Soviet countries. He is currently working on a study (with Jane Zavisca) of housing as a source of social stability or conflict in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Ukraine.

Wednesday, April 20, 2016, 4:30pm - 6:00pm
1957 E St., NW, Voesar Conference Room, Suite 412
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This event is on the record.