

Special Topics in Comparative Politics - Eastern European Politics POLI 359
College of Charleston
Spring 2018

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| Instructor: Dr. Max Kovalov E-mail: kovalovm@cofc.edu Class time: TR 12:15 pm – 1:30 pm | <u>Office:</u> ECTR (Ed Center), Room 206A <u>Office hours:</u> TR 10:45am-11:45am and by appointment. Please email me to schedule a meeting. <u>Classroom:</u> Maybank Hall 316 |
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Course Description

The course examines the developments of contemporary politics across Eastern and Central European countries. These states have undergone a dramatic transformation since World War II - politically, economically, and socially. In order to understand these developments, this course looks at how East Central European states came under the dominance of the Soviet Union, how the rebellious societies contested and resisted the communist regimes, and finally, how those regimes collapsed in the late 1980s. We will also examine the most recent transformations – the integration with the western world, the “color revolutions” of the early 21st century, and recent tensions in relations between Russia and the West. The goal of the course is to introduce students to the major themes of totalitarianism, the “spheres of influence,” the challenges in transitions to democracy, and importance of historical legacies in analyzing the post-communist regimes. Once you have finished reading this syllabus please email me the photo of your favorite character from the Game of Thrones series with the subject line “Winter is coming.” If you have no favorite characters or have not read the books or watched the series email me the photo of Alf with the subject line “It’s Alf” (hint: it’s from the 1980s).

Expectations

I expect students to attend classes and participate in discussions. Each student's participation in this class is essential for its success, and good participation requires good preparation. All students are expected to read the assigned material **prior to each class**. Reading quizzes will be administered weekly to keep students accountable for the reading material.

Course materials

1. Browder, Bill. 2015. *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man's Fight for Justice*. Simon & Schuster.
2. Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 1971. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Macmillan.
3. Other reading materials are available through OAKS.

Grading

- 1) Active participation in class discussions (10%).
- 2) Country reports + keeping up with current events in the country of choice (5%).
- 3) Reading quizzes (15%).
- 4) Paper proposal + annotated bibliography (10%). **Due on March 8** in class + electronic copy should be uploaded to Dropbox.
- 5) Research paper (20%). Paper topics must be discussed and approved by the instructor. **Due on April 23** in class. The paper should also be uploaded to Dropbox through OAKS.
- 6) Midterm exam (20%).
- 7) Final exam (20%). **April 26, 12:00pm-3:00pm.**

Grade scale

A =94-100; A- = 90-93; B+ =87-89; B=83-86; B- =80-82; C+ =77-79; C=73-76; C- =70-72;
 D+ =67-69; D=63-66; D- =60-62; F <60.

Assignments

1) *Participation in class discussions*

The success of this class depends on your active participation. Students are expected to read the assigned material **prior to each class** and be ready for active participation in discussions.

2) *Country reports + current events discussions*

During the first week of the semester each student will select one Eastern European country and will follow current events in this country throughout the semester. Several times during the semester each student will give a 5-minute presentation on current events in the selected country. You may report on political, economic, social developments or relations with other countries. You will be expected to have an **in-depth knowledge of one recent event or phenomena** rather than just a reporting a headline or give an overview of several events. You can select an event from the past 6 months. Be prepared to describe and explain what happened and why (remember 5-Ws: who, where, when, what, and why). Be ready for questions from other students. If you got this far reading the syllabus, please email me your favorite photo of Vladimir Putin with the subject line “It’s Putin!” Use the following checklist to prepare for this assignment:

- Is my report based on a topic from a major newspaper?
- Did I explain why the topic is interesting and/or important?
- Is the topic/phenomenon clearly stated and explained?
- Did I cover the 5-Ws (who, where, when, what, and why)?
- Did my report focus on one topic or did I give an overview of several topics without providing depth?
- Am I reading from my notes? (hint: you can consult your notes but don’t read them).

3) *Reading quizzes*

Reading quizzes will be offered periodically throughout the semester. Some quizzes will be offered in class, while quizzes on Browder’s *Red Notice* will be offered online, in OAKS. Students will have 1-1.5 weeks to read select chapters from the book and take the quiz.

4) *Paper proposal + annotated bibliography*

A 1-page description of the research topic **must be submitted by March 8** in class and uploaded to Dropbox via OAKS. Topics for paper proposals **must be discussed with and approved by the instructor.** This description should clearly state:

- a. Your research question or puzzle;
- b. The cases (countries) you examine;
- c. The importance of the research question.
- d. Your expectations based on the reviewed literature.
- e. An annotated bibliography. See the template on the last page of the syllabus. Fill out the table for each of the 5 sources of annotated bibliography. The template is also saved in OAKS under Content.

5) *Research paper*

You need to pick a topic of interest and examine a particular issue in a country of Eastern Europe in a 7-8-page paper. You may develop a research topic as you read the weekly assignments. The topic of your interest does not have to include the most recent developments in your countries of choice. For example, you may choose to examine the choice of institutional arrangements in Eastern European states (presidential or parliamentary system design) or compare two similar (in most aspects) countries in order to explain differences in economic development, civic engagement, political outcomes, etc. **Paper topics must be discussed with and approved by the instructor.** You can find paper guidelines in OAKS under Content.

Late submissions

Late submissions will be penalized by 5% per day (including weekends). Assignments more than two weeks late will receive a “0.” Unexcused failure to show up for an exam will result in a grade of 0% on the exam.

Course/University Policies

Students with Disabilities: The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Center for Disability Services / SNAP, located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104 prior to receiving accommodations in this course. Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact the instructor personally as soon as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate their educational opportunities.

Academic Integrity: Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved. Incidents where the instructor determines whether the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding will be handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others' exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance. Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the *Student Handbook* at <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

Avoiding Plagiarism

“Plagiarism falls into two categories: using someone else's *words* or using someone else's *ideas* as if they were your own. You must be scrupulous in avoiding both categories of plagiarism in your writing. Properly cite all quotations, paraphrases, and summaries of information from other sources. The only exception to this rule is common knowledge, or information commonly known and accessible to your audience... If you are unsure whether certain information constitutes common knowledge, document it. Collusion, a form of plagiarism, occurs when two or more people agree to devise a piece of writing that will be attributed to only one of them... For any individual writing assignment, the idea and the organization of ideas in your paper must be your own... You can incorporate into your writing ideas that have arisen from class discussion [and] lectures... You may revise and edit your writing with other people... but you should not have others do your writing or revising for you.”¹

Laptop and digital device policy

I request that students not use laptops, tablets, phones, or other digital devices in class, unless I ask to do so. If you need to use a laptop due to a medical condition, I will need a not from the SNAP center.

Changes to syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus during the semester. Any changes will be announced in class and via email.

¹ Frank O'Hare and Edward A. Kline, *The Modern Writer's Handbook, Fourth Edition*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996, pp. 447-450.

| Date | Reading and writing assignments |
|----------------------|---|
| Tuesday, Jan. 9 | Introduction, course details, assignments, signing-up for current event reports |
| Thursday, Jan. 11 | <p>Cold War-2 and Spheres of Influence</p> <p>Mcfaul, Michael A. 2014. “Confronting Putin’s Russia.” <i>The New York Times</i>. March 23, 2014. <i>Washington Post</i>. 2014. “Transcript: Putin Says Russia Will Protect the Rights of Russians Abroad”, March 18, 2014.</p> |
| Tuesday, Jan. 16 | <p>Mearsheimer, John. 2014. “How the West Caused the Ukraine Crisis.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 93(5): 77-89. Treisman, Daniel. 2016. “Why Putin Took Crimea: The Gambler in the Kremlin.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 95 (May/June): 47–54.</p> |
| Thursday, Jan. 18 | <p>History and background</p> <p>Stokes, Gale. 1998. “Eastern Europe’s Defining Fault Lines.” In <i>Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture, and Society Since 1939</i>, Indiana University Press, 15–34. Verdery, Katherine. 1996. “What Was Socialism, and Why Did It Fall?” In <i>The Revolutions of 1989</i>, Oxford University Press: 63-88.</p> |
| Tuesday, Jan. 23 | <p>World War II and its effects</p> <p>Gross, Jan T. 1989. “Social Consequences of War: Preliminaries to the Study of Imposition of Communist Regimes in East Central Europe.” <i>East European Politics & Societies</i> 3(2): 198–214. Primary documents: Yalta, in Stokes, G. 1996. <i>From Stalinism to Pluralism</i> (12-27) Bohlen "Poland at the Teheran Conference" in Stokes (28-30) Churchill "The Percentages Agreement" in Stokes (30-31) Truman "The Truman Doctrine" in Stokes (33-37) Zhdanov "The Two-Camp Policy" in Stokes (38-42)</p> <p>Watch film on OAKS: Comrades 1917-1945 (from CNN Cold War series)</p> |
| Thursday, Jan. 25 | <p>Life under Communism: the GULAG</p> <p>Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 1971. <i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i>. (pages 1-104)</p> |
| Tuesday, Jan. 30 | <p>Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 1971. <i>One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich</i> (finish the book) “Stalin Bust Opens Old Wounds in Siberian City.” 2017. Radio Free Europe /Radio Liberty.</p> |
| Thursday, Feb. 1 | <p>State Against Society: Early Revolutions</p> <p>Valenta, Jiri. 1984. “Revolutionary Change, Soviet Intervention, and ‘Normalization’ in East-Central Europe.” <i>Comparative Politics</i> 16(2): 127–51. Brezhnev "The Brezhnev Doctrine" in Stokes (131-134)</p> <p>Watch film on OAKS: Hungarian Revolution and Prague Spring</p> |

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| Tuesday, Feb. 6 | <p>The Communist Collapse: Revolutions of 1989 Gorbachev "A Common European Home" in Stokes (265-267) Chirot, Daniel. 1990. "What Happened in Eastern Europe in 1989?" <i>PRAXIS International</i>: 278–305. Read again Verdery, Katherine. 1996. "What Was Socialism, and Why Did It Fall?" Watch film on OAKS: The Wall Comes Down (1989)</p> |
| Thursday, Feb. 8 | <p>Minorities and discrimination Barany, Zoltan D. 1994. "Living on the Edge: The East European Roma in Postcommunist Politics and Societies." <i>Slavic Review</i> 53(2): 321–44 Younge, Gary. 2003. "Shame of a Continent." <i>The Guardian</i>, January 8.</p> |
| Tuesday, Feb. 13 | <p>The Politics of Gender Rueschemeyer, Marilyn. 2011. "Women's Participation in Postcommunist Politics," in Wolchik and Curry, pp. 109-21. Gülçür, Leyla, and Pınar İlkaracan. 2002. "The 'Natasha' Experience: Migrant Sex Workers from the Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in Turkey." <i>Women's Studies International Forum</i> 25 (4): 411–421.</p> |
| Thursday, Feb 15 | TBD |
| Tuesday, Feb 20 | Midterm exam |
| Thursday Feb 22 | <p>Pedagogy: Preparing proposal and annotated bibliography No readings for class. Start reading Browder's <i>Red Notice</i>. (chapters 1-10)</p> |
| Tuesday Feb 27 | <p>Incomplete Democratization Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 13(2): 51–65. Diamond, Larry Jay. 2002. "Thinking About Hybrid Regimes." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 13(2): 21–35.</p> |
| Thursday March 1 | <p>Color Revolutions D'Anieri, P. 2006. "Explaining the Success and Failure of Post-Communist Revolutions." <i>Communist and post-communist studies</i> 39(3): 331–50.</p> |
| Tuesday March 6 | Way, Lucan. 2008. "The Real Causes of the Color Revolutions." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 19(3): 55–69. |
| Thursday March 8 Midterm grades due at noon. | <p>Paper proposals & annotated bibliographies are due. Bring hard copies to class AND upload digital copies to OAKS. Submit the following: 1) 1-page proposal (400-500 words). 2) Annotated bibliography of at least 5 sources using the template. See the template on the last page of the syllabus. You can download the template in OAKS. Read Browder's <i>Red Notice</i> (chapters 11-22)</p> |
| Tuesday March 13 | Spring Break. No class. |

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| Thursday March 15 | Spring Break. No class. |
| Tuesday March 20 | Derailed Democracy or Successful Competitive Authoritarianism in Russia Kotkin, Stephen. 2015. "The Resistible Rise of Vladimir Putin." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> (March/April 2015). <u>Watch film:</u> Frontlines: Putin's Way, PBS Video http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/putins-way/ |
| Thursday March 22 | The Magnitsky List and adoptions of Russian children Browder, Bill. 2015. <i>Red Notice</i> (chapters 23-33) <u>Film:</u> Commanding Heights: The Agony of Reform |
| Tuesday March 27 | Browder, Bill. 2015. <i>Red Notice</i> . (chapters 34-42) |
| Thursday March 29 | TBD |
| Tuesday Apr 3 | Georgia-Russia conflict King, Charles. 2008. "The Five-Day War: Managing Moscow After the Georgia Crisis." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 87(6): 2–11. |
| Thursday Apr 5 | Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity and Euromaidan Protests Onuch, Olga. 2014. "Who Were the Protesters?" <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 25(3): 44–51. Kudelia, Serhiy. "The House That Yanukovych Built." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 25(3): 19–34. |
| Tuesday Apr 10 | Film and discussion: Winter of Fire No readings |
| Thursday Apr 12 | Civil society Howard, Marc Morje. 2002. "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society." <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 13, no. 1: 157–69. Howard, Marc. 2003. <i>The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe</i> (Chapter 3) |
| Tuesday Apr 17 | Hemment, Julie. 2012. "Nashi, Youth Voluntarism, and Potemkin NGOs: Making Sense of Civil Society in Post-soviet Russia". <i>Slavic Review</i> 71 (2): 234–60. Borys, Christian. 2016. "Poland's Massive Abortion Protest Shows That Citizens Are Frustrated With The Country's Rightward Surge." <i>Huffington Post</i> , October 12. |
| Thursday, Apr 19 | Refugee crisis and Eastern Europe Horn, Heather. 2015. "Is Eastern Europe Any More Xenophobic Than Western Europe?" <i>The Atlantic</i> , Oct. 16. Lyman, Rick. 2015. "Eastern Bloc's Resistance to Refugees Highlights Europe's Cultural and Political Divisions." <i>The New York Times</i> , September 12. |
| Monday, Apr 23 | Papers are due. Bring hard copies to my mailbox at 9 Glebe and upload digital copies to OAKS. |
| Tuesday, April 26 12:00-3:00pm | Final Exam, time to be confirmed |

Annotated Bibliography Template

Text highlighted in yellow is an example.

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| 1 | Citation | Meleshevich, Andrey A. 2010. <i>Party systems in post-Soviet countries: a comparative study of political institutionalization in the Baltic States, Russia, and Ukraine</i> . Macmillan. |
| 2 | Topic | Party institutionalization |
| 3 | Research question | Why is party system institutionalization low in post-Soviet states? |
| 4 | Countries | Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania |
| 5 | Findings (brief description) | Party system institutionalization is defined by two dimensions: autonomy and stability. Four factors explaining the low level of party system institutionalization 1) The role of ex-communist political elites. Countries where the elites created favorable conditions for political parties, stopped using force against opposition, and gave the opposition access to the media (the Baltic states), the party system is better institutionalized. The Communist Party was too strong + too long in power in Ukraine → weak party autonomy+stability 2) Constitutional arrangement. Presidential regime (Ukraine) is less conducive to the institutionalization of the party system than parliamentary regime. Ukraine offers the least favorable conditions for party institutionalization. |

Notes:

- 1) Use at least 5 sources for this assignment:
 - a) 1 book, 2 academic articles, 2 news article from a major newspaper (such as The Guardian, Le Monde, The Independent, New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal etc.) or magazines (Newsweek, the Economist, the Atlantic, Der Spiegel, Time, Newsweek)
 - b) You can use primary sources (e.g., government documents, NGO reports, IGO policy assessments) in addition, rather than as a substitution to 5 sources listed above.
- 2) You should not use random websites
- 3) **Citation:** Full bibliographic reference using “CofC Sociology Guide to Citation and Referencing.” See the online guide <http://polisci.cofc.edu/documents/12policitiationguide.pdf>.
 - a) Always use page numbers when you quote text. For example: Berman shows that “flourishing civil society does not necessarily bode well for the prospects of liberal democracy” (Berman 1997, p. 401).
 - b) Use the author’s name and year when you paraphrase. Example: According to Berman, civil society and activism may lead to the breakdown of democracy (Berman 1997).
- 4) **Topic:** Use just two or three words. Examples: “immigration,” “European identity,” “European integration,” “minorities and discrimination,” “citizenship,” etc.
- 5) **Research question:** State briefly the central research question of the book chapter/article (this is NOT the research question of your paper)
- 6) **Countries:** List the countries studied. Examples: “Germany,” “Russia,” “Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary” “Slovakia and the Czech Republic.”
- 7) **Findings:** Write a short (2-3 paragraphs) summary of the most important findings of the research. What was learned from this study?