

Special Topics in Comparative Politics - Eastern European Politics POLI 359
College of Charleston
Spring 2017

Instructor: Dr. Max Kovalov E-mail: kovalovm@cofc.edu Class time: TR 12:15 pm – 1:30 pm	<u>Office:</u> 284B King St., Room 303 <u>Office hours:</u> TR 10:45am-11:45am and by appointment. Please email me to schedule a meeting. <u>Classroom:</u> Maybank Hall 111
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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 through memberships in NATO and the European Union, 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,” democratic transitions and its challenges, path dependence and importance of historical legacies in analyzing the post-communist regimes.

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. Ash, Timothy Garton. 1999. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. Reprint edition. New York: Vintage.
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 (15%).
- 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 3** in class + electronic copy should be uploaded to Dropbox.
- 5) Research paper (15%). Paper topics must be discussed and approved by the instructor. **Due on April 19** in class. The paper should also be uploaded to Dropbox through OAKS.
- 6) Midterm exam (20%).
- 7) Final exam (20%). **May 4, 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 and will follow current events in this country throughout the semester. Once or twice a 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. 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.

4) *Paper proposal + annotated bibliography*

A 1-page description of the research topic **must be submitted by March 3** 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 minor 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.

Week 1

January 12. Introduction, description of the course

Week 2

January 17. Brexit, Trump, Russia, and Eastern Europe

Readings TBD

January 19. Cold War-2 and the Revival of Spheres of Influence

The Economist. "Diplomacy and Security after Crimea: The New World Order." March 22, 2014.
McFaul, Michael A. 2014. "Confronting Putin's Russia." *The New York Times*. March 23, 2014.
Mearsheimer, John. 2014. "How the West Caused the Ukraine Crisis." *Foreign Affairs* 93(5): 77-89.
The Economist. 2015. "From Cold War to Hot War; What Russia Wants," February 14.

Week 3

January 24. History and background

Stokes, Gale. 1998. "Eastern Europe's Defining Fault Lines." In *Eastern Europe: Politics, Culture, and Society Since 1939*, Indiana University Press, 15–34.
Verdery, Katherine. 1996. "What Was Socialism, and Why Did It Fall?" In *The Revolutions of 1989*, Oxford University Press: 63-88.

January 26. World War II and its effects

Gross, Jan T. 1989. "Social Consequences of War: Preliminaries to the Study of Imposition of Communist Regimes in East Central Europe." *East European Politics & Societies* 3(2): 198–214.

Primary documents:

Yalta, in Stokes, G. 1996. *From Stalinism to Pluralism* (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)

Watch film on OAKS: Comrades 1917-1945 (from CNN Cold War series)

Week 4

January 31. Life under Communism: the GULAG

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 1971. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Macmillan. pages

Berman "The Case for Stalinism" in Stokes (44-50)

Watch film on OAKS: Iron Curtain (1945-47)

February 2. Life under Communism: the GULAG

Solzhenitsyn, Aleksandr. 1971. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*. Macmillan. pages

Film: Eastern Europe & Marshall Plan - watch the first 30 minutes

Week 5

February 7. State Against Society: Early Revolutions

Valenta, Jiri. 1984. "Revolutionary Change, Soviet Intervention, and 'Normalization' in East-Central Europe." *Comparative Politics* 16(2): 127–51.

Brezhnev "The Brezhnev Doctrine" in Stokes (131-134)

Watch film on OAKS: Hungarian Revolution and Prague Spring

February 9.

Garton Ash, Timothy. 1999. *The Magic Lantern*, pp. 11- 46

Week 6

February 14. Solidarity and Revolutions of 1989

Garton Ash, Timothy. 1999. *The Magic Lantern*, pp. 47-77

February 16. 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?" *PRAXIS International* : 278–305.

Revisit Verdery, Katherine. 1996. "What Was Socialism, and Why Did It Fall?"

Watch film on OAKS: *The Wall Comes Down* (1989)

Online discussion on OAKS: Read the articles above and be ready for an online discussion

Week 7

February 21.

Garton Ash, Timothy. 1999. *The Magic Lantern*.

Finish the book (pp. 78-165) and review the whole book.

February 23. The Politics of Economic Reform: Gradualism vs Shock Therapy

Aslund, Anders. 2002. "Strategic Policy Choices." In *Building Capitalism: The Transformation of the Former Soviet Bloc*, Cambridge University Press, 70–112.

Film: *Commanding Heights: The Agony of Reform*

Week 8

February 28. Midterm exam

March 2. Working with library resources

Bring your laptop computers.

March 5-11 Spring Break

Week 9

March 14. Minorities and discrimination

Barany, Zoltan D. 1994. "Living on the Edge: The East European Roma in Postcommunist Politics and Societies." *Slavic Review* 53(2): 321–44

Younge, Gary. 2003. "Shame of a Continent." *The Guardian*, January 8.

March 16. The Politics of Gender

Marilyn Rueschemeyer, "Women's Participation in Postcommunist Politics," in Wolchik and Curry, pp. 109-21.

Hughes, Donna. 2014. "Supplying Women for the Sex Industry: Trafficking from the Russian Federation" In *Sexuality and Gender in Postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia*, eds. Edmond J. Coleman and Theo Sandfort. Routledge.

March 16: 1-page research proposals+ annotated bibliographies are due. Bring hard copies of proposals to class on March 9 and upload an electronic version to Dropbox.

Week 10

March 21. Incomplete Democratization and Problems with Transitions

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan Way. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 13(2): 51–65.

March 23. Derailed Democracy or Successful Competitive Authoritarianism in Russia

Kotkin, Stephen. 2015. "The Resistible Rise of Vladimir Putin." *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2015).
Watch film: Frontlines: Putin's Way, PBS Video <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/putins-way/>

Week 11

March 28. Russian Oligarchs after Communism

Bill Browder. 2015. *Red Notice: A True Story of High Finance, Murder, and One Man's Fight for Justice*, Karen Dawisha, *Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?* (Simon & Schuster, 2014).

March 30. Ukraine's Euromaidan Protests

Kudelia, Serhiy. "The House That Yanukovich Built." *Journal of Democracy* 25(3): 19–34.
Kudelia, Sergiy. 2014. "Ukraine in Context: What Happens When Authoritarians Fall." *Foreign Affairs*, Feb 27.

Week 12

April 4. Color Revolutions

D'Anieri, P. 2006. "Explaining the Success and Failure of Post-Communist Revolutions." *Communist and post-communist studies* 39(3): 331–50.

Way, Lucan. 2008. "The Real Causes of the Color Revolutions." *Journal of Democracy* 19(3): 55–69.

April 6. Color Revolutions-2

Dmitry Gorenburg, "Countering Color Revolutions: Russia's New Security Strategy and its Implications for U.S. Policy," *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* 342, September 2014.

Week 13

April 11. Civil Society

Howard, Marc M. 2003. *The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe*. Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 2-4)

April 13. Civil Society

Julie Hemment. 2012. "Nashi, Youth Voluntarism, and Potemkin NGOs: Making Sense of Civil Society in Post-soviet Russia". *Slavic Review* 71 (2). Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies: 234–60.

Week 14

April 18. Refugee crisis and Eastern Europe

Horn, Heather. 2015. "Is Eastern Europe Any More Xenophobic Than Western Europe?" *The Atlantic*, Oct. 16.
Lyman, Rick. 2015. "Eastern Bloc's Resistance to Refugees Highlights Europe's Cultural and Political Divisions." *The New York Times*, September 12.

April 20. Decommunization in Ukraine.

Readings TBD

Research Papers due. Upload an electronic version of the paper to Dropbox.

Week 15

April 25. Readings TBD

May 4, 12:00pm-3:00pm. Final exam

Annotated Bibliography Template

1	Citation	
2	Topic	
3	Research question	
4	Countries	
5	Findings (brief description)	

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 New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal etc) or magazines (Newsweek, the Economist, the Atlantic)
 - 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) Full bibliographic reference using “CofC Sociology Guide to Citation and Referencing.” See the online guide <http://polisci.cofc.edu/documents/12policitationguide.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) Use just two or three words. Examples: “immigration,” “European identity,” “European integration,” “minorities and discrimination,” “citizenship,” etc.
- 5) State briefly the central research question of the book chapter/article
- 6) List the countries studied. Examples: “Germany,” “Russia,” “Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary” “Slovakia and the Czech Republic.”
- 7) Write a short (3-5 sentences) summary of the most important findings of the research. What was learned from this study?