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

All the reading material is 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 (20%).
4) Paper proposal + annotated bibliography (5%). Due on March 12 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 16 in class. The paper should also be uploaded to Dropbox through OAKS.
6) Midterm exam (20%).
7) Final exam (20%). May 5, 12pm-3pm.
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 every few weeks students will give a 5-7
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 a recent event or phenomena rather than just a reporting a headline, so 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.

3) Reading quizzes
Reading quizzes will be offered periodically throughout the semester.

4) Research paper
You need to pick a topic of interest and examine a particular issue in a country of Eastern Europe in a
6-8-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 the paper guidelines
in OAKS under Content.

5) Paper proposal + annotated bibliography
A 1-page description of the research topic must be submitted by March 12 in class and uploaded to
Dropbox via OAKS. 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. An annotated bibliography. See an example in OAKS under Content.

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](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.”

**Laptop and digital device policy**

I request that students not use laptops or other digital devices in class, unless I ask students to bring a laptop. If you absolutely have to take notes using your laptop, talk to me after class.

**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.

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Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1

January 13. Introduction, structure of the course

January 15. Cold War 2.0 and the Revival of Spheres of Influence


**Recommended**


Week 2

January 20. Eastern European Democracies 20 years after Communism


January 22. History and background


**Recommended:**


Week 3

January 27. World War II and its effects


Watch film on OAKS: Comrades 1917-1945 (from CNN Cold War series)
January 29. Communists in Power: The Two Camps and Spheres of Influence
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)
Berman "The Case for Stalinism" in Stokes (44-50)
Watch film on OAKS: Iron Curtain (1945-47)

Week 4

February 3. Communists in Power-2
Film: Eastern Europe & Marshall Plan - watch the first 30 minutes

February 5. State Against Society: Early Revolutions
Demands of the Hungarian Students in 1956. From *Report of the Special Committee on the Problem of Hungary, UN General Assembly*
Brezhnev "The Brezhnev Doctrine" in Stokes (131-134)
Watch film on OAKS: Hungarian Revolution and Prague Spring

Week 5

February 10. Polish *Solidarity*
Readings TBD
Watch film on OAKS: A Force More Powerful Series. Poland: "We've Caught God by the Arm"

February 12. The Communist Collapse: Revolutions of 1989
Gorbachev "A Common European Home" in Stokes (265-267)
Watch film on OAKS: The Wall Comes Down (1989)

Week 6

Film: Commanding Heights: The Agony of Reform

Recommended
Week 7

February 24. Midterm exam

February 26. Working with library resources
Bring your laptop computers.

March 1-8 Spring Break

Week 8

March 10. Disintegration of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union

March 12.

**Recommended:**

March 12: 1-page research proposals+ annotated bibliographies are due. Bring hard copies of proposals to class on March 13 and upload an electronic version to Dropbox.

Week 9

March 17. Ethnicity and Nationalism

March 19. The Politics of Gender

**Recommended:**
Week 10
March 24. Incomplete Democratization and Problems with Transitions

**Recommended**

March 26. Derailed Democracy or Successful Competitive Authoritarianism in Russia

Week 11
March 31-April 2. Color Revolutions

Week 12
April 7-9. Georgia, Euromaidan, Crimea, and Ukraine-Russia conflict

**Recommended**

Week 13
April 14. Civil Society


**April 16. Research Papers due. Bring hard copies of papers to class and upload an electronic version of the paper to Dropbox.**
Week 14

April 21-23. Integration with the West: NATO and EU memberships

May 5, 12 pm-3pm. Final exam

Annotated Bibliography Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Citation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Research question</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Findings (brief description)</td>
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</tbody>
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Notes:
1. Full bibliographic reference using a standard style such as APSA, APA, MLA, etc.
2. Use just two or three words. Examples: “transition from authoritarianism,” “economic liberalization,” “political economy,” “political parties,” etc.
3. State briefly the central research question of the book chapter/article
4. List the countries studied. Examples: “Russia,” “Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary” “Slovakia and the Czech Republic.”
5. Write a short (3-5 sentences) summary of the most important findings of the research. What was learned from this study?