

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Sam Nunn School of International Affairs

**Post Soviet Politics - INTA 3221
Fall 2017**

Eliza Markley, PhD

Class Meetings: T, R 3.00 – 4.15 pm, Bunger-Henri 380

Office Hours: T, R 1.30-2.30 pm, Habersham 141

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Course Description

This course looks at the political, social and economic changes set off by the fall of communism in countries of former Soviet and Soviet-influence space. It analyzes comparatively countries' efforts to transition from an authoritative regime to liberal democracy and assesses transition outcomes based on thematic cross-national analyses and in-depth country case studies.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- Be able to describe the historical process that led to the formation and disintegration of Soviet Union and Soviet influence space.
- Be able to describe the basic structure of governments of Central and Eastern European countries.
- Develop an awareness of the political process as a result of cultural, historical, and social factors in Central and Eastern European countries.
- Demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior in countries of Central and Eastern Europe.
- Be able to describe the role of diverse interests and groups in shaping the history, politics, society, or institutions of Central and Eastern European countries.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between Central and Eastern European countries and Russia, on the one hand, and international organizations, on the other.

Required Textbooks

Sharon L. Wolchik and Jane L. Curry eds, Central and East European Politics, From

Communism to Democracy, Rowman and Littlefield, 2015. 3rd edition (hereby referred as W&C)

Additional required readings will be posted on T-square.

Recommended journals:

PONARS Eurasia
Europe-Asia Studies
East European Politics
Problems of Post Communism
Foreign Policies of EU member States

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation – 10%

Students will be expected to attend all classes, complete all assigned readings (before class), and participate in classroom discussions on the subjects addressed in the readings and lectures. Lectures during the course may not cover the readings entirely and will often present new ideas and information. You are responsible for the information contained in the reading, whether it is covered or not in lectures, as well as for the information in the lectures.

Participation grade is based on active and constructive contribution to class discussions, as well as on attendance.

2. Quizzes – 20%

There will be occasional, announced (Sep 12, 28) and unannounced quizzes on the readings and/or material provided during the lecture. **There will be no make up quizzes.** If you miss a quiz and have an approved excuse or you took the quiz but no grade has been posted, you must make that known to the **instructor within a week of the date of the quiz.** If you fail to do so, you will not be given credit for an excused absence. If you have an excused absence, your overall quiz grade will be the average of the quizzes you took. Quizzes count for **20%** of your final grade.

3. Essay and Discussion Lead – 35%

You will work as a team of 2-3 students. Each team will select one country/region from the former Soviet and Soviet-influence space – a list of countries/regions will be distributed in class. Your assignments for the selected country/region are:

- a. Individually, write a 1,500-word essay on a policy or issue of your choice (party politics, gender, social or ethnic issues, economy, climate, etc) and analyze it in the context of this country's transition from pre to post-1989 regime. Discuss the selection of your essay topic with your team members to avoid duplicate efforts. Use at least two more sources other than the assigned textbook. Your essay should describe and critically examine the claims made

in the selected readings, provide a comparative analysis of the arguments and evidence presented, and propose take-aways for sparking classroom discussion. This essay will be due on **the day when we cover your selected country** – see course outline below and follow in-class announcements for adjustments! The essay counts for **25%** of your final grade.

- b. As a group, present this country/region's evolution regarding policies and issues (social, economic and political) pre 1989 (since WWI) and post 1989 to present. You may use your research resources as well as textbook information! The length of the presentation should be maximum 10 minutes per student (PowerPoint is expected).
- c. As a group, prepare at least five **discussion questions** and facilitate a 10-minute (per student) classroom discussion. Discussion lead counts for **10%** of your final grade. If your selected country is not covered by the textbook, submit the two articles/readings used as essay resources to your instructor via email (eliza.markley@inta.gatech.edu) a week before your essay due date. They will become mandatory reading for all students in class. Presenters will submit their slides and written analysis on T-square by midnight prior to class.

4. Final Exam – 35%

This is a take-home exam.

Grading and Assessment

A = 89.5-100; B = 79.5-89.4; C = 69.5-79.4; D = 59.5-69.5; F = below 59.5

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| ○ Participation | 10% |
| ○ Quizzes (announced) | 10% |
| ○ Quizzes (unannounced) | 10% |
| ○ Essay | 25% |
| ○ Discussion lead | 10% |
| ○ Final Exam | 35% |

Late Paper Policy

Late papers will receive 5 points deduction for each calendar day (this includes weekends) they are late.

Other Class Policies

- Class discussions may lead, from time to time, to contentious political issues. I expect all students to be respectful of one another, even if they disagree about certain issues. High levels of civility should characterize our class debates.
- Laptop computers can be used in class **ONLY** when the instructor allows. **Abusing computer privileges will result in loss of participation points.** Moreover, students may be prohibited from using their computer for the rest of the semester!

- Cell phone should be put on silent. Disruptions from such devices will adversely affect your participation grade.
- For assignments that will be submitted through T-square, students need to ensure that assignments can be opened and are readable. To ensure this, students should attach all written assignments in either .doc or .pdf formats.
- The instructor will make any effort to return your graded assignments in a timely manner (usually within two weeks).
- The instructor will respond to all emails (sent M-F) within 48 hours. If you do not receive a response in 48 hours, I probably did not receive your message, and you should resend it.

Additional Information and Services

1. The Office of Disability Services – adaptsinfo@gatech.edu (404-894-0285)

2. Academic Honor Code

The Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code states: “Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. The immediate objective of an Academic Honor Code is to prevent any Students from gaining an unfair advantage over other Students through academic misconduct. Academic misconduct is any act that does or could improperly distort Student grades or other Student academic records.” Such acts include, for instance, plagiarism.

Plagiarism means using an author’s exact or paraphrased words without citation or acknowledging the source of information. Whether intentional or not, plagiarism is considered cheating and will not be tolerated. If you are unsure whether something should be cited, please ask.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

NOTE: COURSE OUTLINE IS TENTATIVE AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

| Date | Topics and Readings |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Part I Introduction | |
| Aug 22 | Course introduction |
| Aug 24 | Twenty five years ➤ Ch 1 W&C |
| Part II Policies and Issues | |
| Aug 29 | The Political Transition ➤ Ch 2 W&C |
| Aug 31 | Recreating the Market ➤ Ch 3 W&C |
| Sep 5 | Social Aspects of Transformation ➤ Ch 4 W&C |
| Sep 7 | Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Expansion of Democracy ➤ Ch 5 W&C |
| Sep 12 | Quiz Chapters 1-5 / Work in preparation of group presentations |

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| Sep 14 | Women's Participation in Postcommunist Politics ➤ Ch 6 W&C |
| Sep 19 | Transitional Justice in Central and Eastern Europe ➤ Ch7 W&C |
| Sep 21 | EU Accession and After ➤ Ch8 W&C |
| Sep 26 | Security Issues and Beyond ➤ Ch9 W&C |
| Sep 28 | Quiz chapters 6-9 / Work in preparation of group presentations |
| Part III Case Studies | |
| Oct 3 | Russia ➤ T-square readings ➤ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEmUIFF2uAk |
| Oct 5 | Russia ➤ T-square readings |
| Oct 10 | No Class |
| Oct 12 | Poland ➤ Ch 10 W&C |
| Oct 17 | The Czech and Slovak Republics ➤ Ch 11 W&C |
| Oct 19 | Hungary ➤ Ch 12 W&C |
| Oct 24 | The Baltic Countries ➤ Ch 13 W&C |
| Oct 26 | The Baltic Countries (+Belarus?) ➤ Ch 13 W&C |
| Oct 31 | Bulgaria ➤ Ch 14 W&C |
| Nov 2 | Romania ➤ Ch 15 W&C |
| Nov 7 | Albania ➤ Ch 16 W&C |
| Nov 9 | Former Yugoslavia ➤ Ch 17 W&C |
| Nov 14 | Ukraine ➤ Ch 18 W&C |
| Nov 16 | Ukraine ➤ Ch 18 W&C |
| Nov 21 | Central Asian Countries – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan ➤ T-square readings |
| Nov 28 | Caucasus Countries – Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia ➤ T-square readings |
| Nov 30 | Conflicts in former Soviet and Soviet-influence space |
| Dec 5 | Twenty-five years after 1989 – A Balance Sheet ➤ Ch 19 W&C |
| Dec 5 | Final Take-home Exam Due |

