

INTA 3221 / 8803 Syllabus Fall 2024**Post-Soviet Politics, 3 credits****Tuesday and Thursday, 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM, Molecular Science & Engineering Building 1224****Instructor Information****Instructor**

Dr. Evgeny Tikhonravov

Email

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Drop-in Hours & LocationHabersham 150, by appointment
T&R 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM**This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.**

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

General Information**Description**

This course provides an introduction to the government and politics of Russia, other post-Soviet states, and those communist states of Central and Eastern Europe that were within the Soviet-influence space. Throughout the course, we will explore intriguing questions, including: Why do certain former Soviet republics rank at the top in terms of democratic quality, while others remain at the bottom? How has the Soviet past been manipulated and exploited to serve dubious purposes, including justifying armed conflicts and suppressing opposition? Why do countries' approaches towards Soviet and communist symbols vary from prohibition to indifference? What are the reasons behind the swift integration into NATO and the European Union for some countries, while others struggle to join these international organizations?

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the governmental structures and political systems of post-Soviet countries.

- Develop awareness of the political processes influenced by cultural, historical, and social factors in post-Soviet states.
- Analyze fictional portrayals of actual institutions, roles, and people within the context of post-Soviet politics.

Course Requirements & Grading

Undergraduate students

| Assignment | Date | Weight |
|--------------|-------------------------|--------|
| Presentation | Throughout the semester | 15% |
| Midterm 1 | 10.03 | 28% |
| Midterm 2 | 11.21 | 27% |
| Final exam | 12.05 | 30% |

Graduate students

| Assignment | Date | Weight |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------|
| Midterm 1 | 10.03 | 13% |
| Midterm 2 | 11.21 | 12% |
| Research Paper Presentation | 11.26 | 20% |
| Research Paper | 12.01 | 55% |

Extra Credit Opportunities

No extra credit will be offered in this course.

Description of Graded Components

Presentation (undergraduate students)

Select one of the countries listed in the table below and deliver a 12- to 15-minute analysis of a significant event, moment, or action that occurred in that country's domestic or foreign politics within the past 35 years.

Your presentation should highlight the significance of the chosen event and its impact on the country's political landscape. Additionally, provide an analysis of the reasons behind the event and its consequences. Each presentation will be followed by a brief class discussion.

Please inform me of your chosen topic at least three weeks before the scheduled presentation. Upload your presentation file to Canvas by 11:59 PM two days before your presentation. The presentation should be created using PowerPoint or similar software.

Please note that each country can only be selected once. If a country has already been chosen by another student, it will no longer be available.

| Day | Number of presentations | Country |
|------------|--------------------------------|---|
| 09.26 | 2 | Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan |
| 10.08 | 1 | Azerbaijan, Belarus |
| 10.17 | 2 | Armenia, Georgia, Moldova |
| 10.22 | 1 | Ukraine |
| 10.29 | 2 | Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania |
| 11.05 | 1 | The new states of Germany (the five re-established states of the former German Democratic Republic) |
| 11.07 | 1 | Hungary |
| 11.12 | 1 | Poland |

Midterm (undergraduate and graduate students)

The midterm exams will be closed-book and will consist of various question types, including short answer, multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, multiple answer, and matching questions. Midterm 1 will cover material from the first part of class, and midterm 2 will cover material from the second part of the class. Practice tests will be provided for each midterm to help students prepare. This assignment will require the use of Respondus LockDown Browser.

Final exam (undergraduate students)

The final exam will be closed-book. Students will select one question from a list provided by the instructor and answer it in the form of a short essay. The questions will cover material discussed in class. The final instructional class will be held prior to the exam to help students prepare. This assignment will require the use of Respondus LockDown Browser.

The short essays will be evaluated based on the following criteria: the essay is well-organized and logically structured, with a clear introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion; ideas are presented in a cohesive manner, with smooth transitions between paragraphs; the essay exhibits critical thinking skills and supports arguments with relevant evidence and examples; the essay does not exceed 600 words.

Research paper and research paper presentation (graduate students)

The objective of the research paper is to examine a political, economic, or societal problem within one of the countries studied in the course, directly stemming from the Soviet past of that particular country. You are expected to analyze the implications of the identified problem for the country under study and propose potential solutions.

There is no predefined list of questions for the research paper assignment. Students are encouraged to formulate their own inquiries based on their interests. Upon selecting a paper topic, please inform me via email.

The paper's length should not exceed 4,000 words, excluding the title page, footnotes, and literature list. All papers should follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Direct quotations are preferred over paraphrasing.

The research papers will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- **Organization and Structure:** The paper should demonstrate a well-organized and logically structured approach. It should include a table of contents, a brief abstract, a clear introduction providing an overview of the paper's structure, well-defined sections, coherent body paragraphs, and a concise conclusion. Transitions between sections and paragraphs should be smooth, enhancing the flow of the paper.
- **Depth of Analysis:** The paper should delve into the topic with sufficient depth, providing a comprehensive analysis within the given word limit. It should showcase a strong grasp of the academic literature by incorporating relevant citations. I will appreciate it if you refer to academic literature not only in the English language but also in other relevant languages.

Please note that a research paper is not expected to meet the same level of originality as a submission to an academic journal. The emphasis should be on demonstrating research and analytical skills, critical thinking, and engagement with the topic.

Students are expected to prepare a 20- to 30-minute presentation showcasing their research paper results. Research paper presentations should be prepared using PowerPoint or a similar software and uploaded to Canvas by November 22, 2024.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

| | |
|---|-----------|
| A | 90-100% |
| B | 80-89.99% |
| C | 70-79.99% |
| D | 60-69.99% |
| F | 0-59.99% |

Course Materials

Course Text¹

Csergő, Z., Eglitis, D. S., Pickering P. M. (Eds.). (2022). *Central and East European Politics: Changes and Challenges* (5th ed.). Rowman & Littlefield (hereafter "Central and East European Politics").

Selected chapters will be available on Canvas.

Treisman, D. (Ed.). (2018). *The New Autocracy: Information, Politics, and Policy in Putin's Russia*. Brookings Institution Press (hereafter "The New Autocracy"). Available [online](#).

Treisman, D. (2011). *The Return: Russia's Journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev*. Free Press (hereafter "The Return"). Available [from Amazon](#) for 16\$.

¹ I will provide guidance on how to use the course texts during the course introduction on August 20.

In the extended course schedule (pp. 8–13 of this syllabus), some readings are hyperlinked. Clicking these links will direct you to the websites where the readings are hosted. Please note that access to some materials may require your GaTech credentials and VPN. For readings not hyperlinked, you can access them on Canvas in the “Files” section. Additionally, I have included links to ten-minute BBC Witness History podcasts, which I believe will be a valuable resource for your studies.

Course Website and Communications Policy

The Canvas site will host essential course information, including the syllabus, reading materials, and course announcements. Ensure that you have enabled notifications for all course-related communications on Canvas.

Academic Integrity and Collaboration

Cheating, plagiarism, and all forms of academic dishonesty are expressly forbidden in this class, and by the university’s Honor Code (<http://honor.gatech.edu/content/2/thehonor-code>). Any form of cheating will immediately earn you a failing grade for the entire course, and I will pursue further disciplinary actions according to Georgia Tech’s policies and procedures (see <http://honor.gatech.edu/plugins/faq/> for more information on this).

Here are the things you need to know to ensure that you are working within the constraints of both the university’s policy, and my expectations for this course:

1. Research paper

Your research paper should be crafted and written on your own. You may talk with others about your ideas, but you should be working by yourself on the actual outline and content. If you need further assistance with your paper please consider joining me during my office hours, or making an appointment with the Communication Center (<http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu/>). In addition, you are required to cite all sources you use in your paper. This includes both direct quotations and cases where you use someone else’s ideas. “Sources” include papers, journals, anything found on the internet, and so on. Basically, if the thought did not originate with you, you should provide a source.

2. Campus resources

You are permitted (and even encouraged) to make use of the academic support services offered by The Center for Academic Success (<http://www.success.gatech.edu/>) and the Communication Center (<http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu/>).

Accommodations for Learning Needs

If you have learning needs that require some adaptations for you to succeed in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Services on campus (<http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>). I am happy to arrange to accommodate your learning needs based on their recommendations.

Class Presence, Participation, and Make-up Exams

While participation in class is encouraged, it is not mandatory and will not be graded. There are no penalties for unexcused absences, and you are not required to provide an explanation for missing class. However, attendance will be taken at each class session.

Please ensure you are familiar with the course schedule well in advance and plan accordingly, including any travel arrangements, to avoid scheduling conflicts with the course schedule. Make-up

exams will be given only for documented reasons of illness, family emergency, or participation in approved Institute activities (see <http://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/12/> for more information).

Re-grading and Re-submission

Requests for regrading may be submitted in writing within two days of the day you received the grade. You must justify in writing the technical basis for the regrade. If the request is accepted, your assignment may be regarded.

Student-Faculty Expectations

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to continually strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgment, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22.php> for an articulation of some basic expectations – that you can have of me, and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. In other words, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech, while in this class.

Use of Mobile Devices, Laptops, etc. During Class

As research on learning shows, unexpected noises and movement automatically divert and capture people's attention, which means you are affecting everyone's learning experience if your cell phone, laptop, etc. makes noise or is visually distracting during class. That said, many students find it useful to have a mobile device on hand to access course materials. With this in mind, I allow you to take notes on your laptop, but request that you turn the sound off so that you do not disrupt other students' learning. In addition, if you are doing anything other than taking notes or looking at course materials on your laptop, please sit in the back row so that other students are not distracted by your screen.

Food and Drink

Please feel free to bring your food and drink with you to class. However, please be mindful of your setting: avoid strong smells, food that is likely to make a mess, and food that makes it difficult to engage with class discussion and/or taking notes. In addition, please be sure to clear your garbage when you leave, and wipe your desktop for the next student sitting in your seat.

Recording Classroom Activities

Recording of our classes is not allowed. This policy can be waived for students with accommodations upon explicit recommendation from the Office of Disability Services. You are welcome to take notes and photos of the board.

Statement on Inclusion

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Final Caveat

This syllabus is to be considered a living document and therefore subject to change. Any major changes will be discussed with the class and posted to Canvas. If you have any questions about what you see on the syllabus, please email me to discuss.

Course Schedule (short overview)

| Date | Topics |
|-------------|--|
| 08.20 (T) | Course Introduction |
| 08.22 (R) | The Dissolution of the Soviet Union 1 |
| 08.27 (T) | The Dissolution of the Soviet Union 2 |
| 08.29 (R) | Boris Yeltsin and the 1990s 1 |
| 09.03 (T) | Boris Yeltsin and the 1990s 2 |
| 09.05 (R) | Putin's Consolidation of Power |
| 09.10 (T) | The Opposition and Civil Society in Russia |
| 09.12 (R) | Russia's Periphery |
| 09.17 (T) | The Russian Foreign Policy Decision-Making System |
| 09.19 (R) | Tracing the Soviet Footprint in Modern Russia |
| 09.24 (T) | Central Asian States 1 |
| 09.26 (R) | Central Asian States 2 |
| 10.01 (T) | Practice test for midterm 1 |
| 10.03 (R) | Midterm 1 |
| 10.08 (T) | Azerbaijan, Belarus |
| 10.10 (R) | Armenia, Georgia, Moldova 1 |
| 10.15 (T) | No class |
| 10.17 (R) | Armenia, Georgia, Moldova 2 |
| 10.22 (T) | Ukraine |
| 10.24 (R) | Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania 1 |
| 10.29 (T) | Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania 2 |
| 10.31 (R) | Central and East European Countries |
| 11.05 (T) | East Germany |
| 11.07 (R) | Hungary |
| 11.12 (T) | Poland |
| 11.14 (R) | The Impact of the War in Ukraine on the Post-Soviet Sphere |
| 11.19 (T) | Practice test for midterm 2 |
| 11.21 (R) | Midterm 2 |
| 11.26 (T) | Research Paper Presentation (graduate students) |
| 11.28 (R) | No class |
| 12.03 (T) | Final Instructional Class |
| 12.05 (R) | Final Exam (6:00 PM – 8:50 PM) |

Course Schedule (extended overview)

Week 01, 08/19 – 08/23

Tuesday: Course Introduction

Thursday: The Dissolution of the Soviet Union 1

Readings

The Return, Ch. 5.

BBC Witness History, "[Mikhail Gorbachev: Perestroika](#)"; "[The first democratic elections in the USSR](#)"

Week 02, 08/26 – 08/30

Tuesday: The Dissolution of the Soviet Union 2

Readings

The Return, Ch. 5.

BBC Witness History, "[The Moscow Coup](#)"; "[The demise of the Soviet Union](#)"

Thursday: Boris Yeltsin and the 1990s 1

Readings

The Return, Ch. 2.

BBC Witness History, "[Russia' bitter taste of capitalism](#)"; "[Grozny siege](#)"

Week 03, 09/02 – 09/06

Tuesday: Boris Yeltsin and the 1990s 2

Readings

The Return, Ch. 2.

BBC Witness History, "[Irina Ratushinskaya](#)"; "[Putin's war in Chechnya](#)"

Thursday: Putin's Consolidation of Power

Readings

Åslund, A. (2019). Russia's Crony Capitalism: The Path from Market Economy to Kleptocracy. Yale University Press. Ch. 2.

BBC Witness History, "[When Russia's Richest Man Was Jailed](#)"; "[The Takeover of NTV in Russia](#)"

Week 04, 09/09 – 09/13

Tuesday: The Opposition and Civil Society in Russia

Readings

Mersianova, I. (2018). Russian Civil Society. In I. Studin (Ed.), *Russia: Strategy, Policy and Administration* (pp. 113–119). Palgrave Macmillan.
The New Autocracy, Ch. 10.

BBC Witness History, "[The 'Snow Revolution' against Vladimir Putin](#)"; "[Pussy Riot's cathedral protest](#)"

Thursday: Russia's Periphery

Readings

Busygina, I. (2018). Russian Federalism. In I. Studin (Ed.), *Russia: Strategy, Policy and Administration* (pp. 57–64). Palgrave Macmillan. (In Canvas).

The New Autocracy, Ch. 5.

Week 05, 09/16 – 09/20

Tuesday: Guest Lecture Prof. Alexander Sergunin, Saint Petersburg State University, "The Russian Foreign Policy Decision-Making System"

Readings

TBA

Thursday: Tracing the Soviet Footprint in Modern Russia

Readings

Drezner, D. W. (2022, May 3). The re-Sovietization of Russia. *The Washington Post*.

Юркова, О. (2022). Putin's nasty Soviet nostalgia. Ukraine: Newstex.

Юркова, О. (2021). Pro-kremlin media uses 30th anniversary of USSR collapse to ignite nostalgia towards the Soviet era. Ukraine: Newstex.

BBC Witness History, "[Battling Soviet psychiatric punishment](#)"; "[The museum of banned Russian Art](#)"

Week 06, 09/23 – 09/27

Tuesday: Central Asian States 1

Readings

Blackmon, P. (2021). After Karimov and Nazarbayev: Change in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan? *Central Asian Survey*, 40(2), 179–196.

Gallo, E. (2021). Globalisation, Authoritarianism and the Post-Soviet State in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. *Europe-Asia Studies*, 73(2), 340–363.

Thursday: Central Asian States 2

Readings

Horák, S. (2022). Turkmenistan's 2022 Leadership Change through the Personalist Paradigm. *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization*, 30(1), 463–472.

Sullivan, C. J. (2021). Battle at the border: An analysis of the 2021 Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan conflict. *Asian Affairs*, 52(3), 529–535.

BBC Witness History, "[Jaslyk – Uzbekistan's infamous prison](#)"; "[The oilfield that changed Kazakhstan](#)"

Week 07, 09/30 – 10/04**Tuesday:** Practice test for midterm 1**Thursday:** Midterm 1**Week 08, 10/07 – 10/11****Tuesday:** Azerbaijan, Belarus

Readings

Hall, S. (2023). The End of Adaptive Authoritarianism in Belarus? *Europe-Asia Studies*, 75(1), 1-27.

Alieva, L., Pikulik A. (2022). Rent Distribution Modes in Azerbaijan and Belarus: Implications for the Opposition. *Europe-Asia Studies*.

Souleimanov, E. (2013). *Understanding Ethnopolitical Conflict: Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia – Wars Reconsidered.* Palgrave Macmillan (pp. 52–61). (In Canvas).

BBC Witness History, "[Changing the alphabet in Azerbaijan](#)"; "[Resisting 'Europe's Last dictator in Belarus](#)"

Thursday: Armenia, Georgia, Moldova 1

Readings

Souleimanov, E. (2013). *Understanding Ethnopolitical Conflict: Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia – Wars Reconsidered.* Palgrave Macmillan (pp. 61–77). (In Canvas).

Stefes, C. H., Paturyan, Y. J. (2021). After the Revolution: State, Civil Society, and Democratization in Armenia and Georgia. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 3.

O'Loughlin J., Toal, G., Chamberlain-Creangă, R. (2013). Divided space, divided attitudes? Comparing the Republics of Moldova and Pridnestrovia (Transnistria) using simultaneous surveys. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 54(2), 227–258.

BBC Witness History, "[Georgia's political crisis](#)"

Week 09, 10/14 – 10/18

Tuesday: No class

Thursday: Armenia, Georgia, Moldova 2

Readings

Souleimanov, E. (2013). *Understanding Ethnopolitical Conflict: Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia – Wars Reconsidered*. Palgrave Macmillan (pp. 61–77). (In Canvas).

Stefes, C. H., Paturyan, Y. J. (2021). After the Revolution: State, Civil Society, and Democratization in Armenia and Georgia. *Frontiers in Political Science*, 3.

O'Loughlin J., Toal, G., Chamberlain-Creangă, R. (2013). Divided space, divided attitudes? Comparing the Republics of Moldova and Pridnestrovia (Transnistria) using simultaneous surveys. *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 54(2), 227–258.

BBC Witness History, "[The war in Transnistria](#)"; "[Russia's war in Georgia in 2008](#)"

Week 10, 10/21 – 10/25

Tuesday: Ukraine

Readings

Central and East European Politics. Ch. 19. (In Canvas).

BBC Witness History, "[Ukraine's 'Maidan Revolution'](#)"; "[Ukraine's 'museum of corruption'](#)"

Thursday: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania 1

Readings

Central and East European Politics. Ch. 14. (In Canvas).

BBC Witness History, "[The 'Barricades' of Latvia](#)"; "[The Baltic chain protest](#)"

Week 11, 10/28 – 11/01

Tuesday: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania 2

Readings

Fijalkowski, A. (2018). Historical Politics and Court Redress in the Baltic States. In C. M. Horne, L. Stan (Eds.), *Transitional Justice and the Former Soviet Union: Reviewing the Past, Looking toward the Future* (pp. 216–240). Cambridge University Press. (In Canvas).

Milašiūtė, V. (2021). Transitional Justice Cases Against Lithuania at the European Court of Human Rights. In: G. Švedas, D. Murauskas (Eds.): *Legal Developments During 30 Years of Lithuanian Independence* (pp. 3–18). Springer, Cham. (In Canvas).

Thursday: Central and East European Countries: Soviet Legacy and the First Decades of Independence

Readings

Central and East European Politics, ch. 3.

BBC Witness History, “[Uprising in East Germany](#)”; “[The end of the 1956 Hungarian uprising](#)”; “[Prague Spring](#)”

Week 12, 11/04 – 11/08

Tuesday: East Germany

Readings

Heydemann, G., Vodicka, K. (Eds.). (2017). *From Eastern Bloc to European Union: Comparative Processes of Transformation since 1990*. Berghah. Ch. 4. (In Canvas).

Thursday: Hungary

Readings

Central and East European Politics, ch. 13.

BBC Witness History: “[The Rise of Viktor Orban](#)”

Week 13, 11/11 – 11/15

Tuesday: Poland

Readings

Central and East European Politics, ch. 11.

BBC Witness History, “[The legalisation of Solidarity](#)”; “[Poland's strict abortion law](#)”

Thursday: The Impact of the War in Ukraine on Russia's Role in the Post-Soviet Sphere

Readings

Petrovich-Belkin, O., Bokeriya, S., Eremin, A. (2019). The Problem of Russia's Declining Influence in the Former Soviet Union: Why Are the CIS Countries Drifting Toward Multilateralism? *International Organisations Research Journal*, 14(1), 94–112.

Week 14, 11/18 – 11/22

Tuesday: Practice test for midterm 2

Thursday: Midterm 2

Week 15, 11/25 – 11/29

Tuesday: Research Paper Presentation

Thursday: No class

Week 16, 12/02 – 12/06

Tuesday: Final Instructional Class

Thursday: Final Exam (6:00 PM – 8:50 PM)