Course Instructor: Mikhail Zherebtsov  
Office: River Bldg. RB 3314  
Phone extension: TBA  
E-mail: Mikhail.Zherebtsov@carleton.ca

Office hours, January-April, Tuesday, 12:30-14:15, or by appointment

Course Description:

Almost twenty years have gone since the breakup of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Fifteen independent states emerged on its territory. Their post-soviet development revealed very different transition paths: from a considerably successful adoption of the rules and principles of democratic states to return to various forms of authoritarian and even totalitarian regimes. The collapse of the Soviet Union exposed many latent problems that existed in these transition states. Economic turmoil, humanitarian and civil crises uncovered inconsistencies of social, economic and political development in these countries. At the same time a very high pace of political processes as well as radicalism of some reformatory efforts in these countries showed that the post-soviet space has been among the most intensively developing regions in the world.

As the former communist system collapsed, social scientists began to consider new approaches to the study of the region, often with particular attention to the process of democratization. Specialists who study the former Soviet Union provide differing assessments of post-Soviet politics. Some analysts point to resurgent authoritarianism and widening economic disparities; others insist that slow progress has been made in creating institutions of governance, resolving conflicts, and recognizing the participation of social movements. Regional and local politics have become a prominent focus of politics throughout the former Soviet Union, as have the dynamics of ethnic and group identities. Meanwhile, unexpected events, such as Georgia’s “Rose Revolution”, Ukraine’s “Orange Revolution” and Kirgiz “Tulip Revolution”, demonstrate that politics in this region continue to be unpredictable.

This course is aimed at investigating new patterns of academic perceptions about the region as well as pointing at the most remarkable events in the history of the former soviet states. The course will adopt a comparative approach, aiming to explore political, economic and social patterns of development in the southern, eastern and western post-Soviet states as well as in the Russian Federation. The focus of the course will be on a few grouping topics rather than on examining specific regions. These topics are:
1) Transformations of political systems and types of political regimes;
2) Patterns of economic development;
3) Civil society and social development;
4) Ethnic conflicts and humanitarian catastrophes;
5) Coloured revolutions;
6) Recent events in Ukraine and Russia’s strive for dominance in the region.

The course concentrates on a few major countries. As the largest and arguably most dynamic state in the region, Russia will receive special attention. In some other countries (Georgia, Ukraine and Kirgizstan) relationships between the state and society have been quite spectacular. Political and social processes in these countries will also be discussed in seminars with great attention. This is a seminar course, and group discussions will constitute the bulk of each class. Students are expected to prepare the assigned readings in advance of each class, and to take an active role in class discussion. As part of class participation, students will prepare in-class presentations on the outlined issues or about countries they are interested most. Students will be required to develop an independent research project on an approved topic (to be explored in depth in the post-Soviet country/countries of their choice) and complete a final research paper on their topic.

**Readings:** The readings assigned for the course are divided on compulsory and supplementary (marked with *). Students are expected to come to each class having preparing the assigned readings in advance. There is no textbook for the course. All course readings are available online through your Carleton University library account. Hard copies of the majority of articles are available in MacOdrum Library.

**Course Requirements:**
Each of the following will comprise a portion of the final grade, as indicated in percentages.

- ✔ Class participation, including regular attendance and participation in discussions of assigned readings: 20%. In discussion sessions students must show their knowledge of the assigned readings.
- ✔ (!!!) **Undergraduate students only.** Research paper proposal: 15%. The proposal should be up to 4 pages long. It should refer to the topic of student’s primary interest in the course. The proposal includes the following: 1) a clearly formulated research problem/question; 2) a brief description of the problem and its context; 3) a hypothesis that explains the problem and the theoretical and methodological background; 4) a discussion on how the problem will be examined.
- ✔ One in-class presentation on a particular topic from the syllabus: 30%. Additional research on the topics is highly welcomed. Selection and assignment of the topics will take place during the first seminar of the course. **Graduate students** are expected to have their presentations problem oriented (e.g. address particular issues, related to the topic of study, such as Russia’s unsuccessful economic reform etc.). **Undergraduate students** may choose to focus primarily on the analysis of the readings, assigned for the topic.
- ✔ Final research paper due **April 7:**
Graduate students: 50% The paper should be approximately 15-20 pages in length and should incorporate some research from primary sources, as well as critically address current theoretical accounts of the researched problem.

Undergraduate students: 35%. The paper should be 12-15 pages long and is expected to show original analysis, sustaining an argument which will be supported with evidence. The final assignment is a research paper and should demonstrate that you have considered a range of scholarly sources: a minimum of eight published books or articles. The paper should demonstrate careful and critical consideration of a broad range of carefully chosen, quality research sources (including peer-reviewed scholarly publications).

Late Papers

Papers are expected to be submitted on time, to facilitate prompt marking for your fellow students. Extensions for written assignments will be considered only for family emergencies and for documented medical reasons. Marks will be deducted for lateness. Submission of assignments after the deadline indicated in this course outline will result in a deduction of one letter grade per every day past after the deadline. Please submit papers according to the instructions specified for that assignment. Once term assignments are graded, students may collect their completed papers during the instructor’s scheduled office hours, or by providing a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the assignment may be returned by mail.

Schedule and Topics

Week 1. (January 6).

Introduction. The collapse of the Soviet Union and patterns of post-Soviet politics.

Selected readings:


Week 2. (January 13).

Political regimes after communism: from democracy to authoritarianism

The session is focused on a discussion of various strategies, implemented by different post-soviet states while building their political systems. It will include the analysis of democratization attempts in these countries. Success of the Baltic states, compromise in Georgia, “Managed or (sovereign) democracy” in Russia, ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ authoritarian regimes in Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Central Asian states are the topics of this debate.

Tentative topics for presentations:
Transformations of the political regime in Russia under Yeltsin and Putin/Medvedev.
Selected cases: Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Baltic States
The failed transition? Regime change in a comparative perspective.

Selected readings:
*Wheatley, Jonathan (2005), Georgia from National Awakening to Rose Revolution: Delayed Transition in the Former Soviet Union (Ashgate), pp. 103-142
Week 3. (January 20).

Patterns of economic development

The seminar addresses different patterns of economic reforms in the post-soviet countries. Due to various opportunities post-soviet countries implemented various strategies of economic reforms. With the major focus on the troubled rapid economic liberalization in Russia and its later return to the resource-based economy, the discussion later proceeds to similar processes in some other countries and assess the role of foreign monetary institutions such as IMF and the World Bank in economic development of these countries.

Tentative topics for presentations:

- Economies in transition: the process of reforms and their alternatives.
- Russia’s “Dutch disease” and attempts to overcome it.
- The 2008-2010 World Economic Crisis and its effect on the post-Soviet regimes.
- Economic alliances: the Customs Union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

Selected readings:


Those interested in making a presentation and/or writing the research paper on the topic may find useful the following issue of the journal: Comparative Economic Studies, Vol. 53, Issue 1, March 2011. It contains works for the symposium: “Eurasia: Natural Resources and Economies.”
Week 4. (January 27).

Civil Society

This discussion session is devoted to the problems of formation of civil societies in post-soviet states. Civil societies are the important driver for democratization and liberalization of political systems.

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:

- The (under-) development of civil society in Russia.
- Protest movements in the 1990s and 2000s.
- From communism to traditionalism: civil society in Central Asia.
- Armenia and Azerbaijan: cultural diversities of civic engagement.

Selected readings:


Week 5. (February 3).

Public choice, elections and democracy: do they matter in post-Soviet states?

This week’s discussion focuses on the nature of elections in selected former Soviet Union countries. Elections in Russia are of a particular interest as they establish the unique pattern of manipulation and fraud.

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:
1996 Presidential elections in Russia: the triumph of manipulative electoral technologies.
Parliamentary elections, do they matter in the context of Russian politics?
Which electoral system suits Russia better?
The 2011/2012 electoral cycle in Russia: protest movements, public discontent and the official reaction of the Kremlin.
Non-competitive elections in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan.

Selected readings:
*McFaul, Michael (1997), The Russia’s Presidential Election of 1996: The End of Polarized Politics (Stanford University Press);

Week 6. (February 10).

Political Parties in the Post-Soviet States

This week’s discussion is dedicated to the role and differences in partisan systems of post-soviet countries. The issue of importance of political parties is the top question of the in-class debate. Another question is: whether parties in post-soviet states are genuine vehicle of democratic representation or they are just elite cliques?

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:
• Political parties in Russia: do they matter?
The strive for the “party of power” in Russia.
Is opposition relevant in Russia?

Selected readings:


*Bader, Max. Party politics in Georgia and Ukraine and the failure of Western assistance // Democratization, 17:6, 1085-1107


Week 7. (February 17).
No class. Winter break

Week 8. (February 24).
Humanitarian and ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet space

This week’s discussion will concentrate on several remarkable issues that plagued social and political development on the post-soviet landscape. Among those are long-term ethnic conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh oblast, Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Uzbekistan and Chechnya.

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:

- Ethnic conflicts in the post-Soviet states: the Soviet legacy and path dependency.
- Nagorno Karabakh: religious discrepancy and the stability in the Caucasian region
- The frozen conflict of Transnistria: can it be resolved?
- Russia’s domestic fight against separatism: the story of two Chechen wars

Selected readings:
Week 9. (March 3).

**Geopolitics, and International alliances in the Post-Soviet Space**

International community applauded the collapse of the communism, the end of the Cold War and beginning of transition to democracy in many post-communist regimes. It developed specific programs and issued financial assistance aimed at helping these countries in their development. This week’s discussion is dedicated to analysis of effectiveness of these efforts.

**Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:**

- Russia between Europe and Asia: The Eurasian Economic Union and other diplomatic alliances.
- Russia and China strategic partnership in Eurasia: The Shanghai Cooperation Agreement.

**Selected readings:**


---


*Arbatova, Nadezhda. “Frozen Conflicts and European Security”. *Security Index* No. 3 (92), Vol.16


Week 10. (March 10).

**Coloured revolutions (Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan).**

The first public discontent concerning fraudulent elections emerged in Georgia in 2003. It ended up with failure of then ruling political elite. The situation later repeated Ukraine a year later and in Kirgizstan in the spring of 2005. But after 5 years from these events the outcomes were different. If new Georgian leader M. Saakashvilli is still in power, leaders of other ‘revolutions’ – V.Yuschenko and K.Bakiev lost popular support in their countries. In-class discussion will incorporate analysis of major aspects of these cornerstone events in modern history of these countries, variety in outcomes of these ‘revolution’, search for similarities and peculiarities among these events.

**Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:**

- Georgia’s ‘Rose revolution’: roots, background and the aftermath. Did it achieve the results?
- Ukraine’s ‘Orange revolution’ reconsidered: was the revolution really the struggle of millionaires against billionaires?
- ‘Tulip revolution’ in Kyrgyzstan: was it democratic at all?

**Selected readings:**


Week 11. (March 17).

**Special focus: Politics and Economic Development in the Central Asia and Caucasus**

The Central Asian region is usually hidden in the shadows of more dramatic development of other former Soviet Union countries; predominantly Russia and Ukraine. Yet it forms an interesting case of reactionary transition and return to traditional societies. The discussion will focus on particular issues of state and nation building in selected polities.

**Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:**

- The core of Eurasia: Kazakhstan between Russia, China and Europe.
- Traditional states of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan
- ‘Tulip revolution’ in Kyrgyzstan: was it democratic at all?
- Politics of nation building in Azerbaijan.

**Selected readings:**


Week 12. (March 24).

Special focus: reforms and politics in Ukraine, Georgia.

Both Ukraine and Georgia showed definite aspirations for integration into the Euro-Atlantic community. An engagement with various policy initiatives, proposed by the European Union and NATO enhanced tensions between these two countries, on the one hand, and the Russian Federation, on the other. Moreover, both countries’ political strategies resulted in violent confrontations on their sovereign territories and Russia take part in both conflicts. This week’s discussion session reasserts the reforms undertaken in Ukraine and Georgia in an attempt to put them in critical perspective.

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:

- Victor Yanukovich from failure to victory to failure again. A decade of reforms in Ukraine.
- Ukraine’s ‘Orange revolution’: Yanukovich from failure to victory. Was the revolution really the struggle of millionaires against billionaires?
- Mikheil Saakashvili’s attempt to reform Georgia.

Selected readings:


Week 13. (March 31).


This week’s discussion is dedicated to one of the most dramatic and the most significant inter-state event in post-soviet history of the former USSR countries: the military conflict between Russia and Georgia in August 2008.

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:

- The August 2008 war from the perspective of ethnic conflicts in Georgia (Abkhazia and S.Ossetia).
- De-facto independence and recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russia and the consequences of the war for security and stability in the region.

Selected readings:


Week 14. (April 7).

Critical moments in history of post-communism II: current situation in Ukraine; EuroMaidan, annexation of Crimea and civil war in the Eastern Ukraine.

Tentative topics for presentations and discussion:

- The demise of Yanukovich: civil protests against poverty and corruption.
- Annexation of Crimea: conflicting rhetoric, conflicting actions
- Civil war in the Eastern Ukraine
- Worldwide reaction on the Russian actions against Ukraine: would sanctions work?

Selected readings:
For this section please refer to the special section “Maidan and Beyond” in the Journal of Democracy, Vol. 25 No.3.


---

### Academic Accommodations

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**Plagiarism:** The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
• using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
• using another’s data or research findings;
• failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
• handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at 4 p.m., stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Grading: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>12-point scale</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>12-point scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57-59</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53-56</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50-52</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Carleton E-mail Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or cuLearn. As important course and
University information is distributed this way, it is the student’s responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

**Carleton Political Science Society:** The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit [https://www.facebook.com/groups/politicalsciencesociety/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/politicalsciencesociety/) or come to our office in Loeb D688.

**Official Course Outline:** The course outline posted to the Political Science and EURUS websites is the official course outline.