

**PSCI 5106W
Selected Problems in the Politics of Soviet Successor States
Thursdays 8:35 am – 11:25 am, 408 Southam Hall**

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Office hours, winter 2007: Monday, 10:30-11:30; Thursday, 11:30-2:30, or by appointment

Course Description:

The fifteen successor states of the Soviet Union have now been independent for sixteen years. 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. However, post-Soviet societies have faced serious challenges, including economic crises, interethnic disputes and declining welfare states. 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 Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" of 2004, demonstrate that politics in this region continue to be unpredictable – and Russia's politics will be interesting to watch in light of planned presidential elections for 2008.

The course will adopt a comparative approach, aiming to explore issues relevant to the southern, western and Baltic post-Soviet states as well as the Russian Federation. The focus however will be on debating themes rather than examining specific regions. As the largest and arguably most dynamic state in the region, Russia will receive special attention. This is a seminar course, and group discussions will constitute the bulk of each class. Students are expected to prepare the assigned reading in advance of each class, and to take an active role in class discussion. As part of class participation, students will work in groups to prepare questions or other assignments given during class time. 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); they will present their research to the class in structured group work at the end of the term, and each student will complete a final research paper on their topic.

Readings: All readings assigned for the course are compulsory. 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 have been placed on reserve at 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, participation in group work and contribution to regular weekly discussion of assigned readings: **20%**. Students will be asked to work in groups on questions related to the readings during class time.
- Short proposal of final research paper, 5 pages, *due February 7*. **20%** The paper must include: a brief statement of the research question and preliminary argument to be addressed; a discussion of the importance of the topic for current debate on political change in the former Soviet Union; a discussion of the parameters of the topic to be addressed in the final paper; and a mention of the sources and methodology to be used, including a brief bibliography.
- Group work and presentation during final three weeks of course, **20%**. This component of the course mark will include the following: a) participation in group work, during class time, in which students working on related topics for their final papers discuss their ideas, b) Each student will make a short (5 minute) presentation to the class on his/her research paper, c) Each student will fill out and submit a worksheet on the results of the group work during the final class, April 3.
- Final research paper, **40%** due **April 7, 2008**. The paper should be approximately 16-25 pages in length and should incorporate some research from primary sources.

All course requirements must be completed in order to receive a passing grade. Papers should be organized so as to develop a clear argument systematically, and should be analytical rather than descriptive. The final research paper in particular should explore a comprehensive survey of literature and secondary sources: a minimum of fifteen items should be consulted. Students should be able to incorporate research from primary sources, whether in the original language or in English translation. All papers should use footnotes or endnotes as appropriate whenever referring to an author's idea, citing empirical facts or drawing on research from published sources. Parenthetical referencing may be used if the student prefers, but citations and bibliography must be correct and complete. Any direct quotations from a source should be clearly indicated in quotation marks. As a general rule, however, direct quotations should be kept to a minimum and should not exceed fifty words from any one source. A complete bibliography of sources consulted should be included at the end of the paper. Papers must be handed in personally to the instructor on or before the due date. One grade point will be deducted per two days of lateness to a maximum of three grade points / six days.

Extensions will be granted only for illness (with a doctor's certificate) or for a family emergency.

Office hours and e-mail: *Students with questions for the professor may reach her by coming to her office hours (no appointment needed), by arranging a personal meeting outside of office hours, by phone, or by e-mail. Following university policy, the instructor will communicate by e-mail with students using university "Connect" e-mail addresses. Normally, the instructor expects to reply to e-mail or voicemail queries within 1-2 days during the working week. The instructor generally does not answer e-mail inquiries or voicemail messages on evenings or weekends. Students who wish to communicate with the instructor are encouraged to meet personally during her office hours, at another convenient time by appointment, or at the end of class.*

Week 1. INTRODUCTION (January 10)

Week 2. HISTORY AND TRANSITIONAL POLITICS (January 17)

Francine Hirsch, "Toward an Empire of Nations: Border-Making and the Formation of Soviet National Identities." *Russian Review*, vol. 59 (April 2000), pp. 201-26.

Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict*. New York: Norton, 2000, pp. 15-43, 189-204, 220-61.

Joachim Zweynert, "Economic Ideas and Institutional Change: Evidence from Soviet Economic Debates 1987-1991." *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 58, no. 2, March 2006, pp. 169-192.

Timothy Frye, "A Politics of Institutional Choice: Post-Communist Presidencies." *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 30, no. 5, October 1997, pp. 423-552.

Week 3. POLITICAL ECONOMY (January 24)

Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, *Resisting the State: Reform and Retrenchment in Post-Soviet Russia*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Chapter 2, 19-43; ch.5, 98-110.

M. Steven Fish and Omar Choudhry, "Democratization and Economic Liberalism in the Postcommunist World," *Comparative Political Studies*, 40, 3, March 2007, 254-83.

Timothy Frye, "Original Sin, Good Works and Property Rights in Russia," *World Politics*, 58, 4, July 2006.

Alexandra Vacroux, "Regulation and Corruption in Transition: the Case of the Russian Pharmaceutical Markets," in Janos Kornai and Susan Rose-Ackerman, eds. *Building a Trustworthy State in Post-socialist Transition*, New York and Houndmills, Palgrave, 2004, pp. 133-50.

Week 4. INTERETHNIC AND REGIONAL CONFLICT (January 31)

Ohannes Geukjian, "The Politicization of the Environmental Issue in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh's Nationalist Movement in the South Caucasus 1985-1991," *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 35, no. 2, May 2007, pp. 233-65.

Shahram Akbarzadeh, "Why did Nationalism fail in Tajikistan?" *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 48, no. 7, 1996, pp. 1105-1129.

Charles King, "The Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia's Unrecognized States," *World Politics*, vol. 53, no. 4, July 2001, pp. 524-52.

Jason M.K. Lyall, "Pocket Protests: Rhetorical Coercion and the Micropolitics of Collective Action in Semiauthoritarian Regimes," *World Politics*, 58, 3, April 2006, pp. 378-412.

Week 5. REGIMES (February 7)

Paul Theroux, "The Golden Man," *New Yorker*, May 28, 2007, pp. 54-65.

Vitalii Silitski, "Belarus: Learning from Defeat," *Journal of Democracy*, 17, 4, October 2006, 138-52,

Edward Schatz, "Access by Accident: Legitimacy Claims and Democracy Promotion in Authoritarian Central Asia," *International Pol. Sci Review*, 27, 3, July 2006, 263-84.

Timothy J. Colton and Cindy Skach, "The Russian Predicament," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 16, no. 3, July 2005, pp. 113-26.

Week 6. FOCUS ON RUSSIAN POLITICS (February 14)

Joachim Zweynert, "Conflicting Patterns of Thought in the Russian Debate on Transition: 1992-2002." *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 59, no. 1, January 2007, Vol. 59 Issue 1, pp. 47-69.

Olga Shevchenko, "Bread and Circuses: Shifting Frames and Changing References in Ordinary Muscovites' Political Talk." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 34, no. 1, (2001), pp. 77-90.

Sarah Mendelson and Theodore P. Gerber, "Failing the Stalin Test," *Foreign Affairs*, 85, 1, January-February 2006, pp. 2-8.

J. Paul Goode, "The puzzle of Putin's gubernatorial appointments," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 59, 3, May 2007, 365-99.

READING WEEK FEBRUARY 18-22 NO CLASS

Week 7. FRAGMENTED SOCIETY OR CIVIL SOCIETY? (February 28)

Pamela Abbott, "Cultural Trauma and Social Quality in Post-Soviet Moldova and Belarus," *East European Politics and Societies*, 21, 2, May 2007, 219-58.

Luhiste, Kadri. "Explaining Trust in Political Institutions: Some Illustrations from the Baltic States." *Communist and Post-communist Studies*, 39, 4, Dec. 2006, 475-96.

Olya Nikolayenko, "The Revolt of the Post-Soviet Generation: Youth Movements in Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine," *Comparative Politics*, vol. 39, no. 2, January 2007, pp. 169-88.

Brian Grodsky, "Looking for Solidarnosc in Central Asia: the Role of Human Rights Organizations in Political Change." *Slavic Review*, vol. 66, no. 3, fall 2007, 442-62.

Week 8. UNOFFICIAL SOCIETY (March 6)

Alena V. Ledenova, *Russia's Economy of Favours: Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Chapter 1 (pp. 11-38), and Chapter 6 (175-214).

Margaret Paxson, *Solovyovo: The Story of Memory in a Russian Village*, Washington, DC and Bloomington, IN: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 1-9, 88-118

Melissa L. Caldwell. *Not by Bread Alone: Social Support in the New Russia* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004, pp. 100-126.

Week 9. FOREIGN RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCES (March 13)

Eva-Clarita Onken, "The Baltic States and Moscow's May 9 commemoration: analyzing memory politics in Europe," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 59, 1, Jan 2007, 47-69.

Lucan Way and Stephen Livitsky, "Linkage, Leverage and the Post-Soviet Divide," *EEPS*, 21, 1, winter 2007, 48-66.

Henry E. Hale, "Democracy or Autocracy on the March? The Coloured Revolutions as Normal Dynamics of Patronal Presidentialism," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 39, 3, September 2006, pp. 305-29.

Luke March and Graeme P. Herd, "Moldova between Europe and Russia: Inoculation against the Coloured Contagion?" *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 22, 4, October-December 2006, pp. 349-79.

Weeks 10, 11 and 12. GROUP WORK AND PRESENTATIONS (March 20, March 27, April 3)

Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first in-class test or CUTV midterm exam**. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadline for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: **March 14th, 2008** for April examinations.

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 Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work. Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor 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. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

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.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See <http://connect.carleton.ca> for instructions on how to set up your account.