East Central Europe: Revolution and Reform
Pol 342

Fall 2010 T-Th
10-11:30
B 844 East Hall

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Course Description

East Central Europe is the site of enormous political transformations in Europe: World War II, over four decades of authoritarian communist rule, the spectacular collapse of these communist regimes in 1989, and what followed: the break-up of countries, bloody conflict, democratic consolidation and EU membership.

To explain and understand these developments, this course examines the history and politics of the region, which comprises Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, with references to Bulgaria, Romania, and the former Yugoslavia. We will first examine the era of state socialism—the communist ascendancy, Stalinist rule, and the conflicts that erupted as a result. We will then focus on the reasons behind the collapse of the communist regimes, and the processes of democratic transition, economic reform, and the major dilemmas they create.

Course Requirements

1. Class Participation (15%). All students are expected to keep up with the readings, attend lectures, and participate in discussions.
2. Mid-term (25%): the mid-term exam will cover the material from the first half of the course. It will consist of several identification questions, and a short essay.
3. Paper (25%): 5-8 pp. paper analyzing a particular puzzle of the region’s politics.
4. Final (35%): the final will cover material from the entire course. It will consist of several short identification questions, and essay questions.
Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at Shaman Drum:


*Starred readings are available via e-journals: http://www.lib.umich.edu/ejournals/
All remaining readings are CTOOLS

Lectures:

**Week 1: Introduction**
Sept 7: Course Themes and requirements
Sept 9: World War II and its Effects

Readings:

**Week 2: The Communist Takeover**

Sept 14: Communist Takeovers
Sept. 16: Stalinism

Readings:

**Week 3: The Aftermath of Stalinism**

Sept 21: The Thaw
Sept 23: Budapest 1956

Readings:

**Week 4: The Rebellious Society**

Sept 28: Prague Spring (1968)
Sept 30: Solidarity and its Repercussions
Readings:


**Week 5: The Regimes in Crisis**
Oct 5: The 1980s: Stagnation and Failure
Oct 7: The Round Tables

Readings:


**Week 6: The Regimes Collapse**
Oct 12: The Revolutions
Oct 14: 1989 and choosing a new regime

Readings:

G. Stokes, *The Walls Came Tumbling Down*: 131-167


**Week 7:**
Oct 19: Fall Break
Oct 21: Midterm

**Week 8: Economic Transformations**
Nov 2: Market Reforms
Nov 4: Privatization

Readings:


**Week 9: Political Parties and Electoral Surprises**  
Oct 26: Political Parties and the First Democratic Governments  
Nov 2: The Return of the Communists?

Readings:


**Week 10: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and their Political Uses?**  
Nov 9: Ethnic Mobilization and Nationalism  
Nov 11: The Breakup of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia

Readings:


**Week 11: War and Conflict**  
Nov 16: The Wars of Yugoslav Succession

Readings:


**NO CLASS NOV 18: We will hold a review session for the final exam instead, TBA.**

**Week 12: International Perspectives**  
Nov 23: The European Union and NATO  
(Nov 25: Thanksgiving Break)
Readings:


**Week 13: The Pathologies of Reform?**
Nov 30: Reforming the States
Dec 2: Informal Institutions and Corruption

Readings:

A. Grzymala-Busse, *Rebuilding Leviathan*: 1-28, 81-158.


**Week 14: Theoretical Perspectives and the Future of the Region**
Dec 7: The Legacies of Communism
Dec 9: Democracy with Adjectives?

Readings:

