

Political Science 3524

Post-Communist Politics

Fall 2013

Course Info

Instructor: Steven Wilson

Place: Smyth 232

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:45AM

Office: 506 Major Williams Hall

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 12:30-2:00PM

Objectives: This course covers the post-communist experience in Eastern Europe and Asia. We will begin with analysis of why communism failed and the Soviet Union fell, and then discuss the various experiences of transition during the 1990s, in social, political, and economic terms. We will also cover the stabilization of the post-communist states over the last decade, and discuss the long term possibilities for the region.

Textbooks

The course has two required text books, which will be supplemented by a selection of journal articles and individual book chapters. These additional selections will be available electronically throughout the semester. The two required texts are:

Sakwa, Richard. 2008. *Russian Politics and Society*. 4th ed. Routledge.

Politkovskaya, Anna. 2007. *Putins Russia: Life in a Failing Democracy*. Holt Paperbacks.

Sakwa's text will serve as a backbone text, with readings assigned for most weeks.

Assignments & Grading

Reading will be assigned for each class. Students should come to class having read the assigned material and being ready to discuss it. Lectures will be designed to supplement the material covered in the readings, and both will be reflected on the exams. Please come to office hours (or schedule a meeting with me if you have a conflict) if you have any trouble understanding the material, or if you have any questions about the course at all as the semester progresses.

The course will have two exams, a research paper, and occasional smaller assignments or quizzes (and material covered on exams and assignments will always be cumulative). Each of those four sections are equally weighted at 25% of the overall grade:

Midterm Exam (15%)
Final Exam (20%)
Research Paper (25%)
Map Quiz (6%)
Presentation (10%)
Three Short Papers (24%)

The exams will be composed of short answer and essay questions.

The research paper must be a minimum of 3000 words, and cover some aspect of the post-communist experience, and will be due the second to last week of the semester. Presentations will take place throughout the semester on individuals topics to be determined. The three short papers will be a minimum of 1000 words each.

Course Schedule

The schedule and reading assignments for the semester are listed below. In addition to the listed readings, selected readings from Sakwa will be assigned for most class meetings as well.

Week 1: Introduction

Tue, Aug 27 (Course Introduction)

Readings: None

Thu, Aug 29

Readings: (Bassin 1991)

Week 2: The Fall of Communism

Tue, Sep 3

Readings: (Verdery 1996) (pages 19-38), Sakwa (Ch 1, 2)

Thu, Sep 5

Readings: (Bunce 1999) (pages 1-19)

Week 3: Historical Legacies

Tue, Sep 10

Readings: (Darden & Grzymala-Busse 2006)

Thu, Sep 12

Readings: (Pop-Eleches 2007)

Week 4: Ethnicity

Tue, Sep 17

Readings: (Beissinger 2002) (pages 1-46), Sakwa (Ch 10, 11)

Thu, Sep 19

Readings: (Woodward 1995) (pages 1-20)

Week 5: Economic Transition

Tue, Sep 24

Readings: (Herrera 2001)

Thu, Sep 26

Readings: (Shleifer & Treisman 2001)

Week 6: Political Transition

Tue, Oct 1

Readings: (Elster, Offe & Preuss 1998) (pages 109-155), Sakwa (Ch 3, 19, 20)

Thu, Oct 3

Readings: (Treisman 2011) (pages 240-261)

Week 7: Elections, Parties

Tue, Oct 8

Readings: (Wilson 2005) (pages 1-32, 73-88), Sakwa (Ch 7, 8)

Thu, Oct 10

Readings: (Tucker 2006) (pages 1-26)

Week 8: Midterm

Tue, Oct 15 (Review, Discussion of Final Papers, Brief Film)

Readings: None

Thu, Oct 17 (Midterm Exam)

MIDTERM EXAM

Readings: None

Week 9: Rule of Law

Tue, Oct 22

Readings: Politkovskaya (*Putin's Russia*) pages 1-158, Sakwa (Ch 5)

Thu, Oct 24

Readings: Politkovskaya (*Putin's Russia*) pages 159-256

Week 10: Civil Society

Tue, Oct 29

Readings: (Howard 2002), Sakwa (Ch 14)

Thu, Oct 31

Readings: (Gibson 2001)

Week 11: The International Picture

Tue, Nov 5

Readings: (Vachudova 2005) (pages 1-10, 63-80), Sakwa (Ch 16, 17)

Thu, Nov 7

Readings: (Way & Levitsky 2007)

Week 12: Institutions & the State

Tue, Nov 12

Readings: (Grzymala-Busse 2007) (pages 1-28), Sakwa (Ch 12)

Thu, Nov 14

Readings: (Gehlbach 2010) (pages 1-19)

Week 13: Colored Revolutions

Tue, Nov 19

Readings: (Beissinger 2007)

Thu, Nov 21

Readings: (Bunce & Wolchik 2010)

Week 14: Break

Tue, Nov 26 (No class, Thanksgiving Break)

Thu, Nov 28 (No class, Thanksgiving Break)

Week 15: The Future

Tue, Dec 3

Readings: (Guriev & Zhuravskaya 2009)

Thu, Dec 5

Readings: (Kornai 2006)

Week 16: Wrapping Up

Tue, Dec 10 (Final Class)

FINAL PAPER DUE AT START OF CLASS

Readings: None

Fri, Dec 19 (Final Exam)

FINAL EXAM: 10:05AM-12:05PM

References

- Bassin, Mark. 1991. "Russia between Europe and Asia: The Ideological Construction of Geographical Space." *Slavic Review* 50(1):1–17.
- Beissinger, Mark R. 2002. *Nationalist Mobilization and the Collapse of the Soviet State*. Cambridge University Press.
- Beissinger, Mark R. 2007. "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics* 5(02):259–276.
- Bunce, Valerie. 1999. *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bunce, Valerie J. & Sharon L. Wolchik. 2010. "Defeating Dictators: Electoral Change and Stability in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes." *World Politics* 62(01):43–86.
- Darden, Keith & Anna Grzymala-Busse. 2006. "The Great Divide: Literacy, Nationalism, and the Communist Collapse." *World Politics* 59(01):83–115.
- Elster, Jon, Claus Offe & Ulrich K. Preuss. 1998. *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies: Rebuilding the Ship at Sea*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gehlbach, Scott. 2010. *Representation through Taxation: Revenue, Politics, and Development in Postcommunist States*. 1 ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Gibson, James. 2001. "Social networks, Civil Society, and the Prospects for Consolidating Russia's Democratic Transition." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(1):51–66.
- Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2007. *Rebuilding Leviathan: Party Competition and State Exploitation in Post-Communist Democracies*. Cambridge University Press.
- Guriev, Sergei & Ekaterina Zhuravskaya. 2009. "(Un)happiness in Transition." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 23(2):143–68.
- Herrera, Yoshiko M. 2001. Russian Economic Reform, 1991-1998. In *Russian Politics: Challenges of Democratization*, ed. Zoltan Barany & Robert G. Moser. 1 ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Howard, Marc Morje. 2002. "The Weakness of Postcommunist Civil Society." *Journal of Democracy* 13(1):157–169.
- Kornai, Janos. 2006. "The great transformation of Central Eastern Europe." *Economics of Transition* 14(2):207–244.
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- Sakwa, Richard. 2008. *Russian Politics and Society*. 4th ed. Routledge.
- Shleifer, Andrei & Daniel Treisman. 2001. *Without a Map: Political Tactics and Economic Reform in Russia*. The MIT Press.
- Treisman, Daniel. 2011. *The Return: Russia's Journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev*. Free Press.
- Tucker, Joshua A. 2006. *Regional Economic Voting: Russia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, 1990-1999*. 1 ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Vachudova, Milada Anna. 2005. *Europe Undivided: Democracy, Leverage, and Integration after Communism*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Verdery, Katherine. 1996. *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton University Press.
- Way, Lucan A. & Steven Levitsky. 2007. "Linkage, Leverage, and the Post-Communist Divide." *East European Politics & Societies* 21(1):48–66.
- Wilson, Dr Andrew. 2005. *Virtual Politics: Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World*. Yale University Press.
- Woodward, Susan L. 1995. *Balkan Tragedy: Chaos and Dissolution after the Cold War*. Brookings Institution Press.