

POLI 4072: Politics of East Central Europe
M/W/F: 1:30pm-2:20pm
Location: Allen 0023

Professor: Austin S. Matthews
Office: Stubbs 320

Office Hours: Monday 2:30-3:30 or by appt.
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Overview

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the states of Eastern Europe have developed into a diverse system of regimes. Some have blossomed into textbook examples of liberal democracies, while others have stagnated under controlled dominant party systems or even outright authoritarianism. This course will survey the region to develop a better understanding of the history, institutions, party systems, and political futures of these states. Utilizing historical analysis, government documents, and cutting-edge academic research, we will explore the challenges facing Eastern Europe as a geo-political region and develop our expectations of their future as the vital region between the EU and Russia.

Required Readings

It is expected that you will have thoroughly and critically read the assigned manuscripts by Friday of each week, when they will be discussed. If you are having any difficulties understanding the theoretical or empirical points of these manuscripts, I encourage you to speak to me. If there are any issues accessing the articles, I need to be told BEFORE Friday. **Assigned readings by large should be available through Google Scholar, a Google search, the LSU library search engine, or by using the LSU library login for JSTOR.**

Graded Course Requirements

Quizzes: 20%

Unannounced quizzes will be distributed throughout the semester at either the beginning or end of class.

Research Paper: 20%

Students will be assigned a modern or historical autocratic regime to study. They will be expected to compose a well-researched and rigorous paper analyzing various aspects of your assigned dictatorship. This assignment and its requirements will be detailed later in the semester.

Mid-term examination: 30%:

This will be a timed, multiple-choice examination testing you on subject matter from the first half of the course.

Final examination: 30%

This will be a timed, multiple-choice examination testing you on subject matter from the second half of the course. It is non-cumulative.

Grading Scale:

Final grades will be determined in accordance with the current plus/minus system of alphabetical grading utilized by LSU. Below are the possible grades and their numerical range.

Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Grade	Score
97-100	A+	94-96	A	90-93	A-
87-89	B+	84-86	B	80-83	B-
77-79	C+	74-76	C	70-73	C-
67-69	D+	64-66	D	60-63	D-
		<60	F		

Course Policies:

LSU Learning Competency Statement for the Social Sciences:

LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic force, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.

Participation:

This course is designed to be a mix of instructor-guided lecturing and student discussion. Considering my generous policy on reading assignments, I expect all students to come to class ready to critique the week's assigned reading and core concepts. This is a small class, so attendance and participation will be noted.

Special Accommodations:

Please speak with Disability Services and the instructor as early as possible in the semester if you have a documented need for accommodation. I will of course keep this information in confidence and do everything I can to facilitate the course's learning objectives for you. Disability Services is located in 115 Johnson Hall and can be contacted at 225-578-5919.

General Statement on Academic Integrity:

Louisiana State University adopted the Commitment to Community in 1995 to set forth guidelines for student behavior both inside and outside of the classroom. The Commitment to Community charges students to maintain high standards of academic and personal integrity. All students are expected to read and be familiar with the LSU Code of Student Conduct and Commitment to Community, found online at www.lsu.edu/saa. It is your responsibility as a student at LSU to know and understand the academic standards for our community.

Students who are suspected of violating the Code of Conduct will be referred to the office of Student Advocacy & Accountability. For undergraduate students, a first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

Plagiarism:

As a student at LSU, it is your responsibility to refrain from plagiarizing the academic property of another and to utilize appropriate citation method for all coursework. In this class, it is recommended that you use the APSA citation style. Ignorance of the citation method is not an

excuse for academic misconduct. Remember there is a difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to properly cite each respectively.

One tool available to assist you in correct citations is the “References” function in Microsoft Word. This program automatically formats the information you input according to the citation method you select for the document. This program also has the ability to generate a reference or works cited page for your document. The version of Microsoft Word with the “References” function is available in most University computer labs. A demonstration of how to use this tool is available online at www.lsu.edu/saa.

Late Work:

I will not accept any late work unless under extraordinary circumstances. This includes deaths in the immediate family and dire illness. To qualify for an extension, you must inform me of the situation and provide some proof of the issue (doctor’s note, etc.) within a day of the due date. Otherwise, your work will be considered late and not accepted for credit. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date.

Technology:

Laptop use for notes-taking and research purposes is contingently permitted. Cell phone use is not allowed under any circumstance. Any technology privileges may be collectively or individually revoked during the semester at the discretion of the professor. Continued abuse of technology privileges may result in punitive adjustments to a student’s grade.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit may be offered collectively at the instructor’s discretion. I will not allow individual students to earn extra credit that is not available to the entire class.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments:

Week 1, Aug. 21-25: Regional studies and defining Eastern Europe
Read the syllabus.

Week 2, Aug. 28-Sept. 1: Modern history – 19th & early 20th Cent.
Roshwald, Aviel. 2001. *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, the Middle East and Russia, 1914-23*. Read “Chapter 2: Ethnicity and Empire” only.
Available through LSU Library’s access to Ebscohost.

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY: Monday, Sept. 4

NO CLASS: Wednesday, Sept. 6

Week 3, Sept. 8: Modern history – communist consolidation era
Rubeinstein, Alvin Z. 1955. “The Sovietization of Eastern Europe.” *Social Science* 30 (2): 99-104. Available through the LSU Library’s access to JSTOR.

Week 4, Sept. 11-15: Modern history – communist era
Spechler, Dina Rome, and Martin C. Spechler. 2009. “A Reassessment of the Burden of Eastern Europe on the USSR.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 61 (9): 1645-1657. Available through LSU Library search engine.

Week 5, Sept. 18-22: Modern history – post-communist era

Watch “ABC – 1990 News reports on the collapse of communism.” Available at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBZ2i2m3ai0>

Week 6, Sept. 25-29: Institutions and party systems – East-Central Europe

Toole, James. 2007. “The Historical Foundations of Party Politics in Post-Communist East Central Europe.” *Europe-Asia Studies* 59 (4): 541-566. Available through the LSU Library search engine.

Week 7: Oct. 2-6: Contemporary issues – East-Central Europe

Seleny, 2007. “Communism’s Many Legacies in East-Central Europe.” *Journal of Democracy* 18 (3): 156-170. Available through the LSU Library search engine.

OPTIONAL REVIEW DAY: Monday, Oct. 9

MIDTERM EXAM: Wednesday, Oct. 11

NO CLASS: Friday, Oct. 13

Week 8, Oct. 16-18: Institutions and party systems – Eastern Balkans

Spirova, Maria. 2005. “Political Parties in Bulgaria.” *Party Politics* 11 (5): 601-622. Available through a Google Scholar search.

FALL BREAK: Friday, Oct. 20

Week 9, Oct. 23-27: Contemporary issues – Eastern Balkans

Ciprian-Calin, Alionescu. 2004. “Parliamentary Representation of Minorities in Romania.” *Southeast European Politics* 5 (1): 60-75. Available through a Google Scholar search.

Week 10, Oct. 30-Nov. 3: Institutions and party systems – Former Yugoslavia

Kasapović, Mirjana. 2000. “Electoral Politics in Croatia 1990-2000.” *Politička misao* 37 (5): 3-20. Available through Google Scholar search.

Week 11, Nov. 6-10: Contemporary issues: Former Yugoslavia

Hodson, Randy, Duško Sekulić, and Garth Massey. 1994. “National Tolerance in the Former Yugoslavia.” *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (6): 1534-1538. Available through Google Scholar search.

Week 12, Nov. 13-17: Future Issues – Between Russia and the EU

Watch “The Kremlin Playbook: Understanding Russian Influence in Central and Eastern Europe.” Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTEhGK-05hE>

Week 13, Nov. 20: Future Issues – Authoritarian backslide

Read the report from Human Rights Watch “Wrong Direction on Rights: Assessing the Impact of Hungary’s New Constitution and Laws.” Available at:
<https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/05/16/wrong-direction-rights/assessing-impact-hungarys-new-constitution-and-laws>

THANKSGIVING BREAK: Nov. 22 & 24

Week 14, Nov. 27-Dec. 1: Future Issues – Violence and Ethno-Nationalism

Bakić-Hayden, Milica. 1995. "Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia."
Slavic Review 54 (4): 917-931. Available through Google Scholar search.

FINAL EXAM: Saturday, Dec. 9, 3:00-5:00pm, meet in our usual classroom