

INTL 4340: Post-communist political system

University of Georgia – Fall 2019

MWF 1:25-2:15

Classroom: MLC 267

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description and Objectives:

The course will offer a general overview of the political systems in post-communist European countries; however, the main question of the course is what exactly does “post-communism” mean and how the communist past influences and continues to influence political institutions and public political attitudes in countries of the former Soviet Bloc.

In the first part of the course, you will become familiar with political institutions of various post-communist countries and discuss how the communist experience shaped or did not shape these institutions. Simultaneously, we will also go over some of the most important concepts in comparative politics and analyze some of the main challenges which the new post-communist democracies face, such as corruption and democratic backsliding. In the second part, we will then discuss the effects of communist legacies on the society in post-communist countries, with special emphasis on intergenerational differences.

At the end of the course, the students should not only have acquired wider knowledge of politics in different post-communist countries but should also be able to evaluate if the term “post-communist” relates solely to a specific geographical region or if it has a deeper meaning and is still an important determinant of politics in countries which have experienced the communist rule.

Course Requirements:

Readings

You are expected to complete the readings listed on the syllabus **prior** to coming to class. Failure to do so will be evident in your lack of participation during class discussions.

There are 2 **required** texts:

- Stephen White et al., ed. (2013). *Developments in Central and East European Politics 5*. Duke University Press. (referred as “SW”)
- Grigore Pop-Eleches and Joshua A. Tucker (2017). *Communism’s Shadow: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Political Attitudes*. Princeton University Press. (referred as “PT”)

All other readings and materials can be found on eLC unless otherwise noted.

Classroom Attendance and Activity

This class meets three times a week and attendance is **mandatory**. You can miss a maximum of **three** classes (no excuses or notes are necessary, although a heads-up will be appreciated). All further documented absences will lead to a lower class participation grade (**10 points** per missed class).

Course Evaluation:

Participation (15%)

This course will require a great deal of discussion and active listening. **Simply showing up to class does not constitute participation.** Your participation grade will be evaluated based on your ability to draw upon insights from the readings, the depth of the thoughtfulness of your questions/comments, and your activeness in class.

Short Paper (20%)

For a short paper, you should select a country or a group of countries (if the latter, ideally you would have the most similar or most different cases—see Przeworski and Teune 1970: http://online.sfsu.edu/sguo/Renmin/June1_logic/The%20Logic%202_Prezworski.pdf) and write a short essay (**1000-3000 words**) on how communist experience had (or had not) shaped, or continues to shape, its political institutions (i.e. parties, elections). Alternatively, you can analyze the impact of the communist past on some of the contemporary problems (i.e. corruption) of many post-communist countries. Generally, you are required to use enough reliable sources and **cite** them properly. **Later submission will be penalized** (1% of your overall grade for each day late). **DUE 9/13 (by 5 pm)**

Midterm Exam (30%)

Midterm Exam will address the topics which have been covered throughout the **first part of the course** (i.e. post-communist institutions, challenges derived from the communist past, and differences between post-communist countries). **IN CLASS 10/4**

Final Essay (35%)

In the final essay (**5000-7000 words**) you will be expected to **respond** to the **key questions** of the course: What is post-communism and does the post-communist system truly exist? Is “post-communist” today used as an empty term to merely delineate a particular region and countries or does it have a deeper meaning and significance? In particular, drawing on what have you learned throughout the course, you should **evaluate if—and if so, then how—communism continues to affect political institutions and political attitudes of the public in post-communist countries.** In the paper, you are expected to provide enough **evidence** that supports or dismisses your initial assumptions. To do that you should use the cases with which you have become familiar throughout the course, as well as other cases which you believe are relevant. Generally, you are required to use enough reliable sources and **cite** them properly. **Later submission will be penalized** (1% of your overall grade for each day late). **DUE 12/8**

Course Policies:

Technology

Laptops are **not** welcome in class, unless I instruct you to bring one. Should you need to use a laptop please provide proper documentation from UGA's DRC.

All **cell phones**/Blackberries, etc. should be **shut off or set to silent** – NOT VIBRATE – before arriving to class. The use or interruption of these devices during regular class time will result in a reduction of your participation grade.

Communication and Email

I will keep you updated about the course and any changes to the syllabus through the **e-mail or the course's ELC page** – PLEASE REGISTER FOR NOTIFICATIONS! You are required to frequently **check both**.

When emailing me please **use your UGA email account** and include your course number in the subject line. In most cases I will respond to emails within 24 hours. Importantly, **before** you email me please **check the syllabus and the news page of the ELC** site to be sure that your question has not been previously addressed. A note on etiquette: please use appropriate salutations, including my name in the opening and your name in the closing.

Academic Dishonesty

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <http://www.uga.edu/honesty> . Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be referred to Judicial Affairs, as required by university policy. The most common issue of academic dishonesty I have come across is plagiarism. To be clear, plagiarism is copying from any source material (direct or paraphrasing of ideas), published or unpublished (this includes wikipedia!), without giving proper credit. I will post a link to the Chicago Manual of Style citation format on ELC.

Students with Disabilities

UGA is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and university-administered activities and reasonable modifications to students with disabilities. Students in need of special accommodations need to request such services from the Disability Resource Center located at 114 Clark Howell Hall (for more information visit www.drc.uga.edu) and should make an appointment to see me with their appropriate paperwork from DRC within the first two weeks of classes.

Privacy and Intellectual Property

UGA's code of conduct protects student privacy and intellectual property and thus prohibits recording and digital release of classroom lectures and conversations unless a student has an accommodation from the DRC. If this is your situation, please let me know and we will devise an accommodation that protects your right to privacy, that of your classmates, and everyone's intellectual property.

This syllabus is subject to changes throughout the semester.

Class Schedule & Readings:

WEEK 1. DEFINING THE REGION

Wed., 8/14 (class 1) – Introduction

Video: “Why Did the Communist Regimes Fail in Eastern Europe?”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TsfLFIA_BrU

Fri., 8/16

SW Chapter 1

PART I. INSTITUTIONS

WEEK 2. STATE BUILDING; THE CZECH REPUBLIC, HUNGARY AND POLAND

Mon., 8/19

Anna Grzymala-Busse and Pauline Jones Luong (2002). “Reconceptualizing the State: Lessons from Post-Communism”. *Politics & Society* 30 (4), 529-554.

Wed., 8/21

SW Chapter 2

Video: “Poland’s post-Berlin Wall generation: life 25 years after communism”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ei2UjQWZgcU>

Fri., 8/23

Sean Hanley and Milada Vachudova (2018) Understanding the illiberal turn: democratic backsliding in the Czech Republic. *East European Politics* 34(3), 276-296

Zsuzsanna Szelényi (2019) “I was once Orbán’s ally. I despair at what he has done to Hungary”. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jun/26/viktor-orban-ally-hungary-courageous-democrat>

Podcast (in class): “Hungary, populism and my Orbán-voting father”

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/audio/2019/feb/04/hungary-populism-and-a-road-trip-with-my-orban-voting-father-podcast>

WEEK 3. OTHER CEE COUNTRIES AND CHALLENGES OF POST-COMUNISM

Mon., 8/26

SW Chapter 3

Wed., 8/28

Rasma Karklins (2015). *The System Made Me Do it: Corruption in Post-communist Societies*, Routledge, New York. Chapter 2: “The Typology of Post-Communist Corruption”

Fri., 8/30

Popova, Maria (2012). "Why Doesn't the Bulgarian Judiciary Prosecute Corruption?". *Problems of Post Communism* 59, 5: 35-49.

Optional: SW Chapter 4

Videos: "Struggling Romanian city symbolises post-communist era"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nhOWTssq-4Y>

"How Communism Breeds Corruption" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SACXiPXf2Xw>

WEEK 4. EASTERN EUROPE, RUSSIA, AND CENTRAL ASIA

Mon., 9/2 NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)

Wed., 9/4

SW Chapter 5

Optional: Video "Russia After Communism" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_h4zZaJov0

Fri., 9/6

Kathleen Collins (2002). "Clans, Pacts, and Politics in Central Asia". *Journal of Democracy* 13 (3), 137-152

Videos: "Nobody Visits This Country...Find Out Why"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnDxHTaeNX0>

WEEK 5. ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND ELECTIONS

Mon., 9/9

Video (in class):

"The Sunday Show: Investigating High-Level Corruption in Eastern Europe"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSkT_BgKHxO

Parts of the movie "Beautiful Corruption" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDLrgpFXc4I>

Wed., 9/11

SW Chapter 9 and pp. 265-70 "Quality as representation: are citizens actually ruling?"

Video (TBA)

Fri., 9/13 (SHORT PAPER DUE)

Raymond M. Duch and Harvey D. Palmer (2002) "Strategic Voting in Post-Communist Democracy?". *British Journal of Political Science* 32, 63-91

WEEK 6. POLITICAL PARTIES

Mon., 9/16

SW Chapter 11

Fernando Casal Bértoa & Ingrid van Biezen (2014). “Party regulation and party politics in post-communist Europe”. *East European Politics* 30 (3), 295-314.

Wed., 9/18

Lenka Bustikova and Herbert Kitschelt (2009): “The radical right in post-communist Europe. Comparative perspectives on legacies and party competition” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 42, 459-483

Fri., 9/20

Lenka Bustikova and Petra Guasti (2019). “The State as a Firm: Understanding the Autocratic Roots of Technocratic Populism” *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* 33 (2), 302–330.

Máté Szabó (2011). “From a Suppressed Anti-Communist Dissident Movement to a Governing Party: The Transformations of FIDESZ in Hungary”. *Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 2, 47-66.

Video: Interview with Cas Mudde <https://video.aktualne.cz/dvtv/expert-babisovym-volicum-jeho-skandaly-nevadi-zkorumpovani-j/r~7448ffd69bd111e993a6ac1f6b220ee8/>

WEEK 7. ECONOMY AND WELFARE

Mon., 9/23

SW Chapter 13

Video: “Russian Capitalism after Communism”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ui8p3MEWW78>

Wed., 9/25

Stephen Crowley (2004) “Explaining Labor Weakness in Post-Communist Europe: Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspective”:

Fri., 9/27

Orenstein (2008) “Poverty, Inequality, and Democracy: Postcommunist Welfare States”

WEEK 8. THE EU/MIDTERM EXAM

Mon., 9/30

SW Chapter 6

Milada A. Vachudova and Liesbet Hooghe (2009). “Postcommunist politics in a magnetic field: How transition and EU accession structure party competition on European integration”. *Comparative European Politics* 7, 179–212

Wed., 10/2 – Midterm Exam Review

Fri., 10/4 – Midterm Exam

PART II: POST-COMMUNIST LEGACY AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES

WEEK 9. COMMUNIST LEGACIES

Mon., 10/7

Beissinger, Mark R., and Stephen Kotkin (2014). *Historical Legacies of Communism in Russia and Eastern Europe*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 11-20

PT pp. 1-22

Wed., 10/9

PT pp. 22-7

Pop-Eleches, G. (2015). “Pre-Communist and Communist Developmental Legacies”. *East European Politics and Societies*, 29(2), 391–408

Fri., 10/11

Mishler, W. and Rose, R. (2007). “Generation, Age, and Time: The Dynamics of Political Learning during Russia's Transformation”. *American Journal of Political Science* 51: 822-834

WEEK 10. LIVING THROUGH COMMUNISM

Mon., 10/14

PT pp. 33-48

Wed., 10/16

PT pp. 49-62

Fri., 10/18

Wayne Sandholtz & Rein Taagepera (2005). “Corruption, Culture, and Communism”. *International Review of Sociology* 15 (1), 109-131.

Video: “A look back at Eastern Germany” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeMulIcWVFU>

WEEK 11. CIVIL SOCIETY

Mon., 10/28

SW pp. 213-225

Howard, M. M. (2003). *The weakness of civil society in post-Communist Europe*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1

Wed., 10/30

Pop-Eleches, G., & Tucker, J. A. (2013). "Associated with the Past?: Communist Legacies and Civic Participation in Post-Communist Countries". *East European Politics and Societies* 27(1), 45–68.

Fri., 11/1 NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)

WEEK 12. DEMOCRACY

Mon., 10/21

MILLER, A., HESLI, V., & REISINGER, W. (1997). "Conceptions of Democracy Among Mass and Elite in Post-Soviet Societies". *British Journal of Political Science* 27(2), 157-190.

SW 225-7

Wed., 10/23

PT Chapter 4

Optional: SW Chapter 15

Fri., 10/25

Pridham, G. (2002). "EU Enlargement and Consolidating Democracy in Post-Communist States — Formality and Reality". *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* 40, 953-973.

Online article: "THE BIG QUESTION: WHAT IS THE ROOT CAUSE OF RISING ILLIBERALISM IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE?" <https://www.ned.org/the-big-question-what-is-the-root-cause-of-rising-illiberalism-in-central-and-eastern-europe/>

Video (in class): "Capitalism will eat democracy-unless we speak up"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB4s5b9NL3I>

WEEK 13. SOCIAL WELFARE AND GENDER EQUALITY

Mon., 11/4

PT Chapter 6

Wed., 11/6

PT Chapter 7

Fri., 11/8

Suzanne LaFont (2001). "One step forward, two steps back: women in the post-communist states". *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 34 (2). 203-220.

Video (TBA)

WEEK 14. RESILIENCE AND NOSTALGIA

Mon., 11/11
PT Chapter 7

Wed., 11/13
Movie (in class): “Good bye Lenin!”

Joakim Ekman & Jonas Linde (2005). “Communist nostalgia and the consolidation of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe”. *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 21 (3), 354-374. (WILL BE DISCUSSED ON FRIDAY)

Fri., 11/15
Velikonja, M. (2009). “Lost in Transition: Nostalgia for Socialism in Post-socialist Countries”. *East European Politics and Societies*, 23(4), 535–551.

Videos: “Germans miss the 'good old days' of the GDR”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbbWIRhJbgc>

“Many Russians feeling nostalgic for communist past”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BwsAk24N00>

Optional: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTG4RKcUix0>

WEEK 15. CONCLUSIONS: LEGACIES AND COMMUNISM, NEW GENERATION AND THE EU MEMBERSHIP

Mon., 11/18
PT Chapter 9

Wed., 11/20
Joshua A. Tucker, Alexander C. Pacek and Adam J. Berinsky (2002). “Transitional Winners and Losers: Attitudes toward EU Membership in Post-Communist Countries”. *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (3) 557-571

Video (in class): “Children of German reunification”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10WF06bayw>

Fri., 11/22
Rohrschneider, R., & Whitefield, S. (2006). “Political Parties, Public Opinion and European Integration in Post-Communist Countries: The State of the Art”. *European Union Politics*, 7(1), 141–160.

Video: “The EU's East-West Divide” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GF6U7fn8Ro>

WEEK 16.

Mon., 11/25 CLASS CANCELLED

Wed., 11/27 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING)

Fri., 11/29 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING)

WEEK 17. FINAL ESSAY

Mon., 12/2

Final Essay discussion (optional)

Wed., 12/4 CLASS CANCELLED

FINAL ESSAY DUE 12/8