



School of Public & International Affairs UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

INTL 4340 POST-COMMUNIST POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Term: Spring 2023
9 January – 4 May 2023
Tue, Thu 8:00AM – 9:15AM
Sanford Hall 313

Professor: B. Bryan Barber, Ph.D.
Email: bryan.barber@uga.edu

Office: Candler Hall 304
Office Hours: Tue, Thu 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Course Description

When one-party, communist political systems with centrally planned economies were established in the twentieth century, no one anticipated that, one day, they would become “post”-communist states. How to account for this unexpected transition? Why did it happen? What are the characteristics in states today which have undergone this difficult transition? Decades later, what factors are shared among the diverse political trajectories? This course explores in depth a state and its society’s experience of creating and enacting a communist system, then the subsequent challenges of democratization, economic reform, political reform, international institutional pressures on domestic politics, and nationalism and ethnic conflict. The primary objective of this course is that students grasp the challenges that continue to confront post-communist states. The course begins by focusing on communism in theory and in practice, why it collapsed, and the political, economic, and social outcomes. While emphasis is placed on the former Soviet Union, the course analyzes the post-communist experience inclusive of states in Europe, Asia, and Africa. It will also explore the existence of post-communist “survivors”: the handful of states which are, officially, still controlled by a Communist party, and how they function in a “post-communist world”...or, is it?

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students should be able to:

1. understand and discuss the policies and policy orientations of post-communist states
2. assess the role of historical patterns of political, economic, and societal developments in post-communist states
3. evaluate to what degree the descriptor, “post-communist,” is still an important determinant of politics in states which have experienced communism
4. comprehend and discuss the different ways institutions structure power and influence representation
5. apply the theoretical and analytical tools learned to examine the politics of any state.

Required Course Materials

This is a **no cost course**, meaning students are not required to purchase any books or other instructional materials. All readings will be presented in weekly packets and shared as a Google docs. Students are strongly encouraged to download all reading packets so they can keep these digital files for future reference.

Course Structure

The course will focus on providing an atmosphere for active engagement. Generally, classes will be divided among interactive lectures, group discussions, and structured simulations. In this class, the student will play a more active role by contributing their thoughts, analysis, and questions.

Communication

I reply to student emails when I receive them to confirm that they got through. If I do not reply to your email within 48 hours, that means I did not receive it.

Always ensure your question is not already addressed in this syllabus before emailing me.

If an email was sent to me during class by a student present, I will not respond, as this is an inappropriate use of class time and a prohibited use of electronic devices (see below). Instead, please talk with me in person before or after class.

No appointment is needed if you come to my office during my office hours. If you would like to meet at another time, contact me and I will see what I can arrange.

Prohibition of Electronic Devices

The use of laptops and tablets must be limited to notetaking during lectures. Students using electronic devices for any other purpose will be asked to leave, and marked absent for the class session. One thing I consider highly disrespectful is someone wearing earbuds or earphones (wired or wireless) during this class. Any student using earbuds or earphones will promptly be asked to leave, and marked absent for the class session. Note that in either of these cases, however, it is possible the student will be marked absent for the class sessions without being asked to leave due to the awkward disruption it causes to ask a student to leave during busy class time.

Assessment

Simulation Policy Briefs (20%)

There are three simulations throughout the course whereby students will work, usually in pairs, and prepare policy briefs for the actor they are roleplaying in the simulation. Students: (1) draft a Policy Proposal together with their groupmate(s); (2) participate in the simulation in class; then, finally, (3) write their Policy Briefs, individually, with the purpose of crafting sound recommendations for real-world actors concerning the issues these actors are facing. Students must take into consideration what worked and did not work from their Policy Proposal's stated objectives. Also, they must take into consideration the reaction of other groups to their ideas, and the tenor of the simulation when crafting their Policy Brief. The content of these briefs should take into account all that was planned and negotiated (i.e., in lectures, in preparation for the simulation, during the simulation, and in the debrief session). The format for these briefs will be discussed before the first one is due (see schedule below for more details). Policy Briefs will be graded using a consistent rubric available on eLC and covered in class in-depth. These briefs are graded on quality, applicability, and contextual awareness for the recommendations made.

Students are strongly recommended to reconfirm that they submitted the correct document prior to the deadline. Submitting the wrong document, or an incomplete version, without doublechecking does not give you permission to submit your assignment late. Late submissions are not accepted unless approved documentation outlined below (under "Attendance") indicates the student could not complete and upload the work for a period spanning from when the submission dropbox was made available, until the deadline (typically one week). Without said documentation, please do not contact the instructor with any requests for late submissions. As a result, it is advised that you work well ahead of these deadlines.

Reading Discussions (20%)

As a way for the whole class to engage together with the readings, online Reading Discussions will be completed weekly. Students are ordinarily tasked to write at least three critical statements or questions about the readings, and at least two responses to your colleagues' statements/questions, for a total of at least five comments in total. The following are some examples of critical responses you could write: questioning the author's analysis or research, adding a personal experience that would (in your opinion) make the statement more complete or applicable to the class, pointing out how it relates to other academic material, agreeing or disagreeing with a colleague and why you are doing so, and/or critiquing arguments. I want to see evidence students have thought deeply about the author's arguments. Reading Discussion will close on Wednesdays at 11:59pm, with at least 2 posts due 24 hours prior to the deadline. Late comments do not receive a grade.

Exams (40% = 2 @ 20% ea.)

The two exams cover material in both lectures and readings, and include short essay questions. Exams are taken in class, without access to course materials. Early and Make-up exams will not be considered, except with appropriate documentation (it must clearly indicate the student will be/was unable to sit the exam specifically at the scheduled time). Please see below under "Absences" for details on what qualified and does not qualify for excusals.

Class Contribution (20%)

Contribution = attendance ($\frac{1}{2}$) + participation ($\frac{1}{2}$).

Attendance (10%)

Attendance is taken at each class meeting, and assessed in a binary: absent = 0, present = 1. In order to be counted present, students must:

1. join the class on time, and remain in class until dismissed.
2. avoid all use of electronic devices throughout the entirety of the class, except in the case of notetaking.

Note that if a student is recorded present for less than 60 percent of class meetings throughout the semester, the attendance grade is an automatic zero.

Out of respect to students who are habitually punctual, and to prepare everyone for the "real world," **I make every effort to start class precisely on time.** For this course, budget extra preparation time in order to be present by the start time.

Participation (10%)

On most Thursdays, we will have discussion classes. In discussion classes, students ask critical questions, and respond to questions throughout the class based upon that week's lectures and readings. The participation grade is assessed on a scale from 10 to 0 based upon the quality and quantity of student engagement in the discussion classes. A student who attends, but does not ask or respond to questions in the class meeting will earn a 0 of 10 for participation.

Absences can be excused only under the following circumstances, and with official documentation:

1. A university-sanctioned event (proper UGA letterhead will be needed as documentation)
2. Personal illness, when attendance in class would endanger the health of the student or the health of others (student must provide medical documentation [a doctor's note] specifically indicating the student could not attend classes on said date)
3. There is a serious illness in the student's *immediate family* (defined as parents, siblings, spouse, or children) which would reasonably necessitate absence from class (student must provide medical documentation [a doctor's note] specifically indicating the student could not attend classes on said date)
4. A mandated court order by a governmental agency (with legal documentation clearly indicating the student's summon on the date conflicting with class)
5. Special and recognized religious holidays of the student's faith

6. The wedding or funeral of a *close relative* (defined as abovementioned *immediate family*, plus grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings-in-law, half-siblings, and first cousins) (requires documentation clearly indicating the student cannot attend on said date).

Excusal requests for absences will not be accepted any later than one week (seven days) from when the absence took place.

Do not ask about having an absence excused without any of the aforementioned documentation which must include the students full name and the absence date. If the student needs support with the certification of the legitimacy of an absence, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs can produce a letter on behalf of the student if the reason is determined legitimate. Note that the documentation, itself, does not excuse an absence; only the instructor has the authority to excuse students from class. In the case of an excused absence, the student is not marked present for the missed class session; rather, the attendance grade for the missed class session is cancelled out of the total attendance average.

Student Care and Outreach (SCO) verifies when students are experiencing extenuating circumstances that may impact their abilities to engage with classes, and notifies instructors about these circumstances, but SCO is clear that their notification to faculty does not excuse absences. Official documentation, as outlined above, is still necessary for excusal.

The following are some circumstances (not exhaustive) which happen in life, some misfortunate, but are not grounds for an excused absence:

- Having a flat tire or any other transport complications on the way to class
- Missing your bus, or your bus not arriving on time, on the way to class
- Needing to work during class time
- Volunteering for a charity organization
- Personal illness, but without visiting a doctor and obtaining medical documentation
- Taking care of a sick relative not in your *immediate family* (defined above), or a sick pet
- Going to vote or registering to vote (if not registered in Athens, vote absentee!)
- Adverse weather conditions, such as snow or ice (absent of a university-wide cancellation of classes)
- Early travels for holidays.

Assessment	Graded Points	Percent of Final Grade
Simulation Policy Briefs (3)	100, ea.	20%
Reading Discussions (weekly)	10, ea.	20%
Midterm Exam	100	20%
Final Exam	100	20%
Class Contribution (attendance and participation)	10, ea.	20%
Total		100%

Grading Scale		
Grades	Percentage	Performance
Grade = A	100 - 93.0%	Excellent
Grade = A-	92.9 - 90.0%	Excellent
Grade = B+	89.9 - 87.0%	Good
Grade = B	86.9 - 83.0%	Good
Grade = B-	82.9 - 80.0%	Good

Grading Scale (cont.)		
Grades	Percentage	Performance
Grade = C+	79.9 - 77.0%	Satisfactory
Grade = C	76.9 - 73.0%	Satisfactory
Grade = C-	72.9 - 70.0%	Satisfactory
Grade = D	69.9 - 60.0%	Poor
Grade = F	59.9 - 0%	Fail

There is no rounding of grades beyond the **basis point** (1/100th of 1%, or 0.01%).

Grade Appeals

Students who believe they have received an inaccurate grade should prepare a formally appeal. The appeal should consist of a typed email that identifies the problem and presents concrete reasoning to substantiate why the exam or assignment should be re-evaluated. Note that a request for re-evaluation means that the instructor examines your entire work for a second time and *may* lower your grade upon closer review. **Grade appeals will not be accepted any later than one week (seven days) from when the grade was returned to the student(s).**

Extra Credit

I will not offer extra credit at any point in this course, including the end of the course after grades have been averaged. Requests for extra credit opportunities will be denied. Do your best on each assigned task.

Note on Final Grades

Your final grade is **NOT** subject to negotiation. Simply “needing” a better grade in no way entitles you to one. If you plan to graduate this soon, or if you need an exceptionally good grade from this course for whatever reason, the only possible way of receiving this is to work hard. The grade you *earn* is the grade you will receive. **The sole factor that matters in determining your grade is your performance in the course.** Awarding a student a better grade than the student deserves based on his or her official course performance is a violation of my professional ethics. Moreover, it is a crime deceiving your government and tax-paying fellow citizens.

Academic Honesty

Students must commit to the UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at www.uga.edu/ovpi.

The minimum penalty for any type of plagiarism or cheating will be an “F” on the assignment. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off one’s own ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for plagiarism destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. Please review what the UGA Academic Honesty Policy says about plagiarism below:

Plagiarism is using another’s work as your own without correct citations. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- i. Directly quoting another’s written or spoken words without quotation marks.*
- ii. Paraphrasing without attribution.*
- iii. Presenting someone else’s original idea or theory as your own original work without attribution.*
- iv. Using statistics, images, or data without recognizing who compiled them.*
- v. Turning in work that another wrote as your own work.*
- vi. Self-Plagiarism: Submitting an assignment for credit that has already been submitted, unless the current instructor authorizes its use prior to submission.*

The bottom line:

- If it’s not your writing, thought, creation, or composition, cite it.*
- If it is your previous work, make sure you are allowed to use it.*
- If you had someone create or do this work on your behalf (paid or not), then it’s contract cheating.*

Additionally, while generative artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, have recently made huge strides in producing written work replicable of students’ efforts, overall the quality remains subpar, and is stuffed with “filler” content. Nevertheless, discussions about these technologies are crucial, yet have not sufficiently take

place among technologists, liberal arts scholars, and university administrators, not just at UGA, but universities the world over. For the time being, any use of artificial intelligence software or word mixing software to write your paper or disguise plagiarized work is also strictly categorized as a form of plagiarism

As an instructor dedicated to academic integrity, I pledge that I always pursue the maximum penalty within the bounds of the university's code of disciplinary measures regarding students who engage in academic dishonesty with no exceptions.

Copyright on Course Materials

All handouts used in this course, inclusive of digital materials, are copyrighted. By "handouts," I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, exams, and in-class materials. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

Prohibition on Recording Lectures

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

Respectful Participation

We will all work to be great citizens in this course. Here are just a few ways in which this will be achieved (and more may be added as we evolve in our expectations of each other:

- We will be respectful in our language and active engagement with each other and the ideas presented by others. Both personally and professionally, I value open discourses across the political spectrum. If at any time, you feel that myself or others are not encouraging you to express your well-informed political opinions, please feel free to approach me so we can make sure to allow for this.
- We will all work to ensure that our contributions to the class discussion work to improve (rather than detract from) the quality of the course. Active engagement is prized, but we will not tolerate discourse that means to quiet, rather than encourage, others to contribute as well.

Commitment to Diversity

This course welcomes individuals from any racial, ethnic, religious, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and nationality. In the spirit of this vital commitment, in this course each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute to all discussions. Everyone is expected to respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by fellow students and the instructor, and will engage in reasoned discussion that refrains from derogatory comments about other people, culture, groups, or viewpoints.

Preferred Address

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I am eager to address you by your preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Accessibility Note

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center by the first week of class. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>.

Letters of Recommendation Policy

It is very important to me that students who work hard and develop in my classes succeed in future pursuits. Therefore, I am happy to write letters of recommendation for students who:

- Address me properly and interact respectfully
- Earned good grades (B or higher) in at least one of my courses
- Make initial request for the letter at least two weeks prior to the deadline.

If I accept your request for a letter, please tell me precisely for what you need the letter (e.g., an internship, a graduate program, a job application, etc.). The more information I have, the better I can tailor the letter to your needs. Give me a list of due dates, websites of programs or schools, etc. Supply a statement of purpose, your résumé or vita, and a copy of any of your best papers that you may have written. Lastly, if I am writing a letter of recommendation for you, let me know the outcome of your application(s). If you do not inform me, I will not continue to write letters for you.

CLASS SCHEDULE	
Date	Topic
Week 1: Jan 10 & 12	Introduction to the Course <input type="checkbox"/> carefully read through your syllabus! <input type="checkbox"/> Vachudova
Date	Topic
Week 2: Jan 17 & 19	Communism in Theory <input type="checkbox"/> Marx & Engels, <i>Communist Manifesto</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Holmes Ch.1 <input type="checkbox"/> Wheen <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Ch.6
Date	Topic
Week 3: Jan 24 & 26	Communism in Practice <input type="checkbox"/> White Chs.2-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Baciu (republished & translated) <input type="checkbox"/> Young <input type="checkbox"/> RFE <input type="checkbox"/> Davies

Date	Topic
Week 4: Ja 31 & Fe 2	The Collapse of Communism <input type="checkbox"/> Brown, Ch.24 & 29 <input type="checkbox"/> Gorbachev & Thatcher Conversation, 1989
Date	Topic
Week 5: Feb 7 & 9	Simulation I: Collapse of the People's Republic of Ruritania
Date	Topic
Week 6: Feb 14 & 16	Political Transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Magyar & Madlovics <input type="checkbox"/> Bunce & Wolchik, Ch.5
Date	Topic
Week 7: Feb 21 & 23	***MIDTERM EXAM*** February 23 (Thursday)
Date	Topic
Week 8: Fe 28 & Ma 2	Film: <i>Goodbye, Lenin!</i> (2003)
Date	Topic
Mar 6 - 10	***SPRING BREAK***
Date	Topic
Week 9: Mar 14 & 16	Economic Transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Myant & Drahokoupil, Chs.5 & 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Braguinsky
Date	Topic
Week 10: Mar 21 & 23	Societal Transitions <input type="checkbox"/> Ghodsee, Ch.8, & 3 Bulgarian Jokes <input type="checkbox"/> Barney <input type="checkbox"/> Myant & Drahokoupil, Ch.10
Date	Topic
Week 11: Mar 28 & 30	Simulation II: Applying for an IMF Development Loan
Date	Topic
Week 12: Apr 4 & 6	International Integration <input type="checkbox"/> Buzan & Wæver, Ch.13 <input type="checkbox"/> Šćepanović

Date	Topic
Week 13: Apr 11 & 13	Ethnic Conflicts <input type="checkbox"/> Fowkes, Chs.1&7 <input type="checkbox"/> Marsh <input type="checkbox"/> Kaufman, "The Seven Rules of Nationalism"
Date	Topic
Week 14: Apr 18 & 20	Simulation III: Nagorno-Karabakh Negotiations
Date	Topic
Week 15: Apr 25 & 27	Communist Political Systems Today <input type="checkbox"/> Pearson <input type="checkbox"/> Kagarlitsky <input type="checkbox"/> Socală <input type="checkbox"/> Gallagher & Hanson, Ch.7
Date	Topic
May 4 (R)	***FINAL EXAM*** 8:00am – 11:00am

All dates and times in this syllabus and class schedule reflect the current time in Athens, Georgia (EDT until November 6, EST thereafter). **Time-related misunderstandings are not valid justifications for absences or late submissions.**

NOTE: This course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.