



**School of Public &  
International Affairs**  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

**INTL 4336**  
**CENTRAL ASIAN POLITICS**

Term: Spring 2026  
12 January – 4 May 2026  
MWF 2:55pm – 3:50pm  
Sanford Hall 312  
Course Reference Number 73537

General Information			
<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. B. Bryan Barber <a href="mailto:bryan.barber@uga.edu">bryan.barber@uga.edu</a>	<b>Instructor's Student Hours</b>	Wed & Fri 11:00am – noon Candler Hall 217 Use <a href="#">Calendly</a> to make appointment
<b>Peer Learning Assistants (PLAs)</b>	<p>The PLA program is a university-wide initiative that provides selected courses with quality students who have previously completed the course to serve as leaders and mentors throughout the semester. PLAs improve student learning and content understanding, allowing instructors to expand and adopt active learning approaches in undergraduate courses. Please see <a href="#">this recent article</a> to learn more.</p> <p>For this course, our PLAs are <a href="#">Tessa Cianfaglione</a> and <a href="#">William Wolgemuth</a>. Tessa and William are top-notch students in International Affairs who have completed this course with distinction. Please get to know them throughout the semester!</p>		

**Course Description**

In the early decades of the twentieth century, geopolitical theorist Sir Halford Mackinder argued there exists on the Eurasian continent a “geographical pivot of history.” Mackinder’s summed up his “Heartland Thesis” with the famed quote: “who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the world.” Ever since then – but especially in the wake of the Soviet collapse – political analysts, strategists, and policymakers in Washington, Moscow, Beijing, and beyond, have shown that Mackinder’s claim is a crucial foundation to their global strategies, and his so-called “Heartland” today lies in Central Asia. Yet, very little is understood about the societies which make up this space at the center of the “World-Island.”

In the narrowest sense, Central Asia is a region made up exclusively of the five post-Soviet republics, or “the -Stans”: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. In reality, however, Central Asia is much more extensive, and areas all around “the -Stans” somehow have functional ties to the societies within these five republics politically, economically, and culturally. In this course, we examine the politics of this fascinating region at the center of twenty-first century great power competitions, yet scarcely understood.

## Prerequisite Requirements

Successful completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, one departmental gateway course, either INTL 3200 Introduction to International Relations or INTL 3300 Introduction to Comparative Politics, is required for enrollment in this course. As a 4000-level, upper-division advanced course, it must be considered more challenging than 1000- and 2000-level introductory courses, and 3000-level gateway courses. Knowledge of political science and international affairs at more than a basic level is necessary to succeed in this course.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Every aspect of this course is designed by me to help you successfully achieve the learning outcomes. Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand and discuss the policies and policy orientations of the five post-Soviet states in Central Asia;
2. Assess the role of historical and geographical factors on patterns of political, economic, and societal developments in Central Asian states;
3. Comprehend and discuss the different ways institutions structure power and influence representations in Central Asian states;
4. Apply the theoretical and analytical tools learned to examine the politics of states in other regions of the world.

## Course Materials

This is a **no cost course**, meaning you are not required to purchase any books or other instructional materials. Instead, we use eLC for required reading materials as well as announcements, the course calendar, and presentations. You will also use eLC to submit assignments and to take assessments. It is essential that you monitor its content regularly.

## Active Learning Statement

I seek to make this a course which is not only informative and enjoyable for you, but also serves as the basis for your further studies in International Affairs and related courses, and, lastly, provides you with distinct tools and knowledge applicable in your future careers. I aim for you to discover not only that Central Asia is a fascinating and relevant part of the world, but that, in fact, you enjoy it, and find learning about Central Asian politics applicable in all your studies! Moreover, I want to provide you with the chance in this course to establish a network with others which will last well beyond your time at UGA and could result in professional opportunities in your future. I aim to do all of these through active learning. In this class, you play a more active role, with more engagement, greater responsibility, and frequent collaboration so that you can attain these objectives. I hope to make this course an enjoyable experience for you, but in return, I need you to commit to providing your active participation throughout the course.

## Analog Classroom

In this course, we take a break from the distractions of the digital life. This is an analog classroom course, meaning that **all electronic devices are prohibited**. By “digital,” I mean any tool that is primarily constructed by software code, uses electronic hardware, and/or uses the internet. By “analog,” I mean anything we can do without digital.

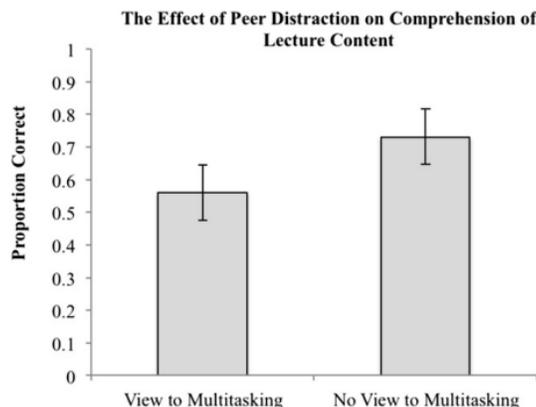
### Laptops

Laptops are **not** welcome in class unless I instruct you to use one. Your laptop should stay off your desk. Now, allow me to explain why. A [2016 study](#) at West Point found that classes where laptops were banned performed *significantly* better than the same classes where they were permitted.<sup>1</sup> The same study also concluded that

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<sup>1</sup> Carter, S.P., Greenberg, K., and Walker, M.S. 2017. “Should Professors Ban Laptops? How Classroom Computer Use Affects Student Learning.” *Education Next*, 17(4), p. 73. Access: [https://www.educationnext.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ednext\\_xvii\\_4\\_carter\\_etal.pdf](https://www.educationnext.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ednext_xvii_4_carter_etal.pdf)

students with high grade point averages at the beginning of their college careers are the most susceptible to their grades declining due to the use of devices!<sup>2</sup> Other studies, such as a [2014 Princeton study](#), have demonstrated that laptop notetaking is less effective than longhand notetaking for learning.<sup>3</sup> Further research also suggests that a multitasking laptop user in class not only hinders his/her own academic performance, but also those with a direct view of his/her screen (see the graph below)!<sup>4</sup>



I am committed to your academic success throughout this course (and thereafter), so given the abundance of evidence in the abovementioned studies, **laptops are not welcome in class unless I instruct you to bring one**. This rule can be waived only under the following circumstances:

- (1) you provide proper documentation from UGA's office of Accessibility and Testing (formerly DRC), stating that the use of a laptop is required;
- (2) you come to my student hours and make a case for why you want to use a laptop during class. I may or may not approve.

It is important to me that you improve your interpersonal skills in this course, and any technology is a distraction from that. By not using laptops, the setting in this classroom allows for more engagement and participation. You will also retain more information.

### Phones

Similarly, the use of phones and other electronic communication devices is not permitted in this class, unless I give you specific permission to do so. Repeated unpermitted use of such devices will negatively affect your grade, and I may ask you to leave and you will forfeit your ability to earn Attendance or Participation credit for that day.

All phones and other devices which make noise must be turned off or put on silent/vibrate upon entering the classroom. Repeated unnecessary disruptions of class caused by such devices will negatively affect your grade. In such a case, I may ask you to leave and you will forfeit your ability to earn Attendance or Participation credit for that day.

### Earbuds and Earphones

One thing I consider highly disrespectful is someone wearing earbuds or earphones (wired or wireless) during class. If you use earbuds or earphones during class, then you will *definitely* be asked to leave, and forfeit your ability to earn Attendance or Participation credit for that day.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Mueller, P.A., and Oppenheimer, D.M. (2014). "The Pen is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand over Laptop Note Taking." *Psychological Science*, pp. 1-10.

<sup>4</sup> Sana, F., Weston, T., and Cepeda, N.J. (2013). "Laptop Multitasking Hinders Classroom Learning for Both Users and Nearby Peers." *Computers and Education* 62, p. 27.

# Communication

## Email

You are welcome to email me anytime about any issue you may be having in the class. I reply to your 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. Also, I am never offended by a follow-up email, so please do not hesitate!

I do have a few rules for email communication:

1. Please use proper email etiquette. Start your email “Dr. Barber,” “Dear Dr. Barber,” or “Dear Professor Barber” for initial contact. I will not answer emails that use an improper salutation.
2. Please include the course name and either the course meeting times or course reference number (CRN) in the email.
3. 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 above). Instead, please talk with me in person before or after class, or email outside of class time.
4. For questions about groupwork assignments, always CC all group members.
5. I prefer corresponding via @uga.edu email rather than eLC email.
6. **Always ensure your question is not already addressed in this syllabus before emailing me.**

## Student Hours

I do not keep “office hours”; rather, I keep “student hours,” because this time is dedicated to you! Please make a 15-minute appointment time here: <https://calendly.com/bryanbarber/student-hours>. If you believe you will need more than 15 minutes, feel free to reserve two slots (max.). If you would like to meet at a time outside of my Student Hours, contact me and I will work with you to arrange that.

## eLC

**\*\*\*Please register for Announcement Notifications!\*\*\***

I will keep you updated about the course and any changes to the syllabus through the “ANNOUNCEMENTS” board on the course eLC page. To sign up for Announcement Notifications: click your name on your eLC home page → click “Notifications” → look under “Instant Notifications” and check “Announcements - new announcement available” → click “Save.” **Not seeing an announcement I shared with the class does not excuse incompleion or misunderstandings of course assignments.**

# Assessment

## Research Paper (30%)

The research paper is the summative product from your study in this course. Your research papers can be: (1) a comparative study of a political issue in two or more Central Asian states; (2) relations between two or more Central Asian states; or (3) relations between one or more Central Asian states and an outside power (China, Russia, etc.) or region. The research paper is designed to give you an opportunity to study one issue in depth and on your own initiative, then come up with a unique, well-considered, and convincing argument. The research paper is graded on synthezation of class information, clarity, and critical thinking. Further details are forthcoming. The Research Paper grade includes preliminary submissions, and is assessed with the following point distribution:

Proposal Abstract	5pts
Outline	5pts
Peer Review Draft	10pts
Final Research Paper	80pts

Due dates for the Research Paper roughly correlate with due dates for the SPIA Undergraduate Research Colloquium *and* CURO Symposium. This is because I want to encourage all of you to submit your abstracts to one or both of these events. Both events are excellent ways to practice developing your research and presentation skills, and something you can add to your résumé!

### **Policy Briefs (20%)**

There are three simulations throughout the course whereby you work in groups or pairs and prepare policy briefs for the actor you are roleplaying in the simulation. You must: (1) draft a Policy Proposal together with your groupmate(s); (2) participate in the simulation in class; then, finally, (3) write your Policy Briefs, individually, with the purpose of crafting sound recommendations for real-world actors concerning the issues these actors are facing. You must take into consideration what worked and did not work from your Policy Proposal's stated objectives. Also, you must take into consideration the reaction of other groups to your ideas and the tenor of the simulation when crafting your 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 are assessed using a consistent rubric available on eLC and covered in class. These briefs are graded on quality, applicability, and contextual awareness for the recommendations made.

You are strongly recommended to reconfirm that you submitted the correct document prior to the deadline. Submitting the wrong document, or an incomplete version, without double-checking does not give you permission to submit an assignment late. If you missed the submission deadline, I am not interested in seeing a timestamp of your latest edit on the document as proof it was completed by the submission deadline. It is a *submission* deadline, not *completion* deadline. Late submissions are not accepted unless approved documentation outlined below (under "Attendance") indicates you 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 me with any requests for late submissions. As a result, it is advised that you work well ahead of these deadlines.

### **Reading Annotations (20%)**

To equip you with the necessary information to engage in class with the reading material, Reading Annotations are assigned using Perusall. For each week's readings, you must write at least three critical statements or questions about the reading content, and at least two responses to your peers' statements/questions, for a total of at least five comments in total. The following are some examples of critical responses you could write: (a) questioning the author's analysis or research; (b) adding a personal experience that would (in your opinion) make the statement more complete or applicable to the class; (c) connecting it to other material in this course or other courses; or (d) agreeing or disagreeing with the authors or a peer and justifying why you are doing so. If the annotation is simply adding details to the material, no credit is earned. **All annotations need to be personal and reflective.** Moreover, all annotations must be your own thoughts! I want to see evidence you have thought deeply about the author's arguments and your peers' comments. If I suspect one or more annotations are not your own thoughts, I will request you discuss it/them with me individually to determine whether credit can be earned.

Reading annotations are due when class begins. Late attempts of reading annotations are not accepted unless approved documentation outlined below (under "Attendance") indicates you could not contribute to the reading annotations for the entire availability period (and not just the final day, for example). Without said documentation, please do not contact me with a request for late comments. It is advised that you work well ahead of these deadlines. Contributions to the reading annotations must be completed on your own time. Reading annotations made during class, as recorded in Perusall, are an automatic zero, as this is an inappropriate use of class time.

### **Quizzes (5%)**

We have two in-classes quizzes on essential information about Central Asia early in the semester in which clear mastery is needed prior to proceeding with in-depth study. The first quiz is on geography and the second on a "who's who" of Central Asian politics. For each quiz, I will offer a retake opportunity at a set time outside of class for any student who attempted the quiz on time, and whose grade was less than 80%, with the maximum possible score on the retake being 80%. Further details are forthcoming.

### Participation (15%)

Being an active-learning course, active participation from all students is essential. You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings and prepared to discuss and ask questions about the readings and lectures. On Mondays, there are student presentations on the readings and one-by-one reflections on the readings. On Fridays, we will have discussion classes, where students lead the discussion. You are expected to ask critical questions and respond to questions throughout the class based upon that week's lectures and readings.

Each of you will prepare a 25-to-30 minute presentation on the readings for Monday as well as lead Friday group discussions one or more times throughout the semester. As discussion leaders, you will need to prepare a brief five-minute summary of the main themes from the readings and lectures, then have some critical questions prepared for the group discussion. Each time served as discussion leader is equivalent to one 10-point week's participation grade.

### Attendance (10%)

Attendance is recorded in a binary 0 for absent and 1 for present, and recorded in all class meetings. Students not fully engaging in classroom activities, or not present for the complete 55 minutes of the class session, cannot earn a "present" attendance grade. If you arrive late or leave class early, you cannot earn "present" for the attendance grade. If you receive an absence for a class meeting which you believe you earned "present," notify me within 24 hours of the grade posting in eLC, else it cannot be disputed. To put this attendance grade in context, for each marked absence throughout semester, this is a loss of approximately 0.225 percent of your final grade. However, bear in mind that the Participation grade is also affected by each absence. Attendance grades are distributed according to the following table.

Attendance Grading Scale	
Percent of Classes Attended	Attendance Grade (out of 10%)
80% or more	Proportionate to classes attended
79.99 – 60.00%	5%
59.99 – 0%	0%

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 to be present by the start time.

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

1. a university-sanctioned event (proper UGA letterhead is needed as documentation);
2. personal illness, when attendance in class would endanger your health or the health of others (you must provide medical documentation [a doctor's note] specifically indicating you could not attend classes on said date);
3. there is a serious illness in your *immediate family* (defined as parents, siblings, spouse, or children) which would reasonably necessitate absence from class (you must provide medical documentation [a doctor's note] specifically indicating you could not attend classes on said date);
4. a mandated court order by a governmental agency (with legal documentation clearly indicating your summon on the date conflicting with class);
5. special and recognized holidays of your religion (in which case, in accordance with [UGA's Religious Holidays Attendance Policy](#), approval of such absences can only be granted if I receive written notice from you at least one week [seven days] *in advance* of the religious holiday);
6. the wedding or funeral of a *close relative* (defined as the abovementioned *immediate family*, plus grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings-in-law, half-siblings, and first cousins) (requires documentation clearly indicating you cannot attend on said date).

**Excusal requests for absences are not accepted any later than one week (seven days) from when the absence took place (#5 is an exception which must be made at least one week beforehand). When possible, I greatly appreciate receiving any excusal requests prior to the date in question.**

Do not ask about having an absence excused without any of the aforementioned documentation which must include: (a) your first and last name and (b) the absence date(s). If you need support with the certification of the legitimacy of an absence, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs can produce a letter on your behalf if the reason is determined legitimate. Note that the documentation, itself, does not excuse an absence; only the instructor has the authority to excuse you from class. In the case of an excused absence, you are 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.

Many live without health insurance, and many who have it still cannot afford a doctor’s visit for routine illnesses. Know that if you are a full-time student at UGA, then you are paying a \$211 health fee which allows you to use the University Health Center with no out-of-pocket costs for appointments to see a doctor. Also, know that many uninsured students qualify for the new Georgia Pathways to Coverage program. Georgia Pathways offers no-cost Medicaid coverage to eligible Georgians who meet the qualifying activities threshold. *Enrollment in higher education is one of these qualifying activities.* If you do not currently have health insurance, please visit here to learn more: <https://dch.georgia.gov/georgiapathways>.

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 charitable organization;
- Joining in a peaceful protest;
- Personal illness, but without visiting a physician 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 (**including Spring Break and the final class meeting before Summer Break**).

Assessment	Graded Points	Percent of Final Grade
Research Paper (1)	100	30%
Simulation Policy Briefs (3)	50, ea.	20%
Reading Annotations (12)	10, ea.	20%
Participation (biweekly)	varies	15%
Attendance (daily)	1, ea.	10%
Quizzes (2)	20, ea.	5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

Grading Scale		
Grades	Percentage	Performance
Grade = A	100 - 93.00%	Excellent
Grade = A-	92.99 - 90.00%	Excellent
Grade = B+	89.99 - 87.00%	Good
Grade = B	86.99 - 83.00%	Good
Grade = B-	82.99 - 80.00%	Good

Grading Scale (cont.)		
Grades	Percentage	Performance
Grade = C+	79.99 - 77.00%	Satisfactory
Grade = C	76.99 - 73.00%	Satisfactory
Grade = C-	72.99 - 70.00%	Satisfactory
Grade = D	69.99 - 60.00%	Poor
Grade = F	59.99 – 0.00%	Fail

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

The above grading scheme is available so that you can keep track of your own standing in the course. If ever you want to find out, “What is my current grade in the course?” or “How much do I need to score on x in order to earn y in the course?” refer to these tables and the grades you receive in the eLC gradebook to calculate an answer for yourself.

### Grade Appeals

Bottom line: faculty are human, too, and if I made a mistake in my grading, I want to make it right. If you believe you have received an inaccurate grade, please prepare a formal appeal. The appeal should consist of a typed email that identifies the problem and presents concrete reasoning to substantiate why the assignment should be re-evaluated. If the grade was for a group assignment, all group members must be CCed to the email, and individually indicate in writing their approval of the grade appeal. Note that a request for re-evaluation means that I examine your entire work for a second time and *may* lower your grade upon closer review. **Grade appeals are not accepted any later than one week (seven days) from when the grade was returned to you.**

### Mercy Day

Sometimes things happen which prevent you from completing an assignment on time or attaining the quality of work you expect of yourself. Therefore, **27 April is Mercy Day for this course.** You are permitted to submit one assignment late *or* resubmit it if not performed to the standards you expect of yourself, and I will accept and (re)assess it with no questions asked. Mercy Day submissions are limited to one Policy Report, *or* your Research Paper. Again, you are allowed **only one** late submission or resubmission among these items, and it must be submitted by Mercy Day, 27 April, 11:59PM. Preliminary submissions such as the Policy Proposals for your Policy Briefs, or the Proposal, Outline, and Draft for your Research Paper, are not accepted for Mercy Day (re)submissions, and considered as separate graded items.

### Extra Credit

Extra credit is not offered 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

It is both highly unprofessional and unacceptable to negotiate grades with your professors. In the past, after submitting final grades at the end of the semester, I have experienced receiving emails from students wanting their final grades changed to reflect what is “needed” for one objective or another, and not what was actually earned. This practice of “grade-grubbing” is unfortunately increasing across universities nationwide. Know that I do not negotiate grades. I spend a great deal of time grading student work and find it extremely disrespectful when students approach me with such an unethical proposition. If you have an issue with a specific grade earned, please see “Grade Appeals” above for how to address this. But, simply “needing” a better final grade in no way entitles you to one. If you plan to graduate soon, or if you need an exceptional grade from this course for whatever reason, the only possible way of receiving this is to work hard and perform extraordinarily well. The grade you *earn* is the grade you will receive, meaning **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 the State of Georgia and your taxpaying 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](http://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.*

**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.**

### AI Policy

To ensure you develop and master the foundational knowledge and skills in this course, the use of generative AI (GAI) tools is strictly prohibited. This includes all stages of your work process, even the preliminary ones. This prohibition extends to AI writing tools like Grammarly and Wordtune, as well as GAI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Writesonic, Rytr, and Rtutor. If you are uncertain about using a particular tool to support your work, please consult with me before using it. This prohibition also extends to word mixing tools to attempt disguising AI writing.

The use of GAI to help with style, content, organization, or references is strictly forbidden. Since AI is already built into word processing programs, I cannot forbid the use of AI for catching typos or grammatical errors. However, any suspected substantive use of AI will be directly reported to the Office of Academic Honesty, and I will pursue the maximum penalty of no less than a failing grade for the course and a permanent note on your student record. I already have the unpleasant experience of reporting students who have plagiarized by using AI to pass as their original work on assignments, and seeing this do damage to their academic careers (to which I take no joy whatsoever!).

You must do all your drafting in Google docs and keep the version that has your revision history. Everyone is required to share your accessible Google doc link for all written assignments.

## 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, PowerPoint slides, 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 Accessibility and Testing, you may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. If you have a recording accommodation, you agree in writing that you:

- 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, and also that you 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 you to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject you to liability under copyright laws.

In the last decade a certain powerful foreign government has enacted a law which puts at risk anyone whose recorded words or actions may be construed as criticism by said government, regardless of where you are located. This law violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as your academic freedom, but, alas, we live in a new age! Recording our class exposes to legal jeopardy me and all your classmates who may be recorded speaking negatively of said government. To protect myself and others in the class from such jeopardy is yet another reason why audio and video recordings are prohibited in our class. For this reason I have not specified which foreign government has done this, but if you are curious please feel free to ask me in person and I'll be glad to discuss it verbally.

## Note on Central Asian Nomenclature

It is widely accepted among scholars of Central Asian studies that linguistic conventions are a nightmare. The languages of Central Asia have been written in multiple versions of the Perso-Arabic, Latin, and Cyrillic alphabets. More than three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan each use mixed, and still evolving, Latin and Cyrillic alphabets while Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan use different Cyrillic alphabets. In class, any spelling that is recognizably “in the ballpark” will do. I attempt to use the Library of Congress system for transliterating from Russian. For Central Asian languages I attempt to use the American standard or most accessible spelling available, rather than the most historically accurate. Hence “Kazakh” as the standard rendering of “Qozoq”; “Kyrgyz” for what could be written as “Kirghiz,” “Kргыз,” or “Qyrgyz”; and “Kokand” for the city that is spelling “Khoqand” in pre-Soviet manuscripts and “Qo‘qon” in Uzbekistan’s current Latin alphabet.

Not just spellings, but names, have also frequently changed. Until 1925, Russians called the Kazakhs “Kirgiz,” and the Kyrgyz “Kara-Kirgiz” (Black Kirgiz). Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, is in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for the most name changes. Originally Akmoly, it was Russified into Akmolinsk in 1832, until 1961 when it became Tselinograd. In 1991 it was renamed Akmola, and in 1998 it became Astana. In 2019, it was renamed Nur-Sultan, but in 2022, changed back to Astana. Hang in there, because many Central Asian cities, regions, and geographical features have gone through multiple name changes, and may even have multiple names today based on which language is being spoken or written.

Lastly, keep straight the terminology for ethno-nations and state citizens. Kazakhs are people who identify with the ethno-nation, while Kazakhstanis are citizens of Kazakhstan (nearly a third of whom are *not* Kazakhs). Uzbeks are people who identify with the ethno-nation, while Uzbekistanis are citizens of Uzbekistan. Tajiks are an ethno-nation; Tajikistanis are citizens of Tajikistan. In English, the distinction is less often made for Turkmen/Turkmenistani and Kyrgyz/Kyrgyzstani, but this can be a sensitive topic for some, so let's practice using the proper address.

## Respectful Participation

We will all work to be great citizens in this course. Here are just a few ways in which this is 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 others or I are not encouraging you to express your 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.

There may be uncomfortable moments in this course as we face mistakes and hold each other and ourselves accountable. I encourage you to "call in" when mistakes (intentional or not) occur, rather than "call out" or "cancel" so that we may learn from each other.

## Commitment to Diversity

This course welcomes individuals from any racial, ethnic, religious, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, disability, and nationality, and those who hold unpopular political views. 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 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 me with your legal names. 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, register **within the first two weeks of class** with Accessibility and Testing, *then* make an appointment with me to discuss the accommodation. According to Accessibility and Testing, "accommodations **are not** applied retroactively" for lapsed course work, so act promptly. Accessibility and Testing can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <https://accessibility.uga.edu/>.

## Letters of Recommendation Policy

It is very important to me that students who work hard and develop intellectually 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 their initial request for the letter at least two weeks prior to the deadline.

Do not use any AI tools to make your letter request to me sound more “professional” or “formal.” They are starting to all sound the same, and “sameness” is the last way you want to project yourself when preparing applications! Likewise, I can promise I will never use any AI tools in crafting a unique letter for you. 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.

<b>CLASS SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>Module I: History &amp; Geography</b>	
<b>Week 1</b>	
<b>Jan 12, 14, 16</b>	<p><b>Geography &amp; Geopolitics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> carefully read through your syllabus</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> turn eLC notifications on for course</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cummings, Ch2</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The Land of “Stans”: Geography of Central Asia <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCuttMQZrGY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCuttMQZrGY</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Kazakhstan - Largest country in Central Asia   Travel Documentary <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8t5ZkVdXjrE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8t5ZkVdXjrE</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Uzbekistan - Future Power of Central Asia? <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWtMu_KEGlw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWtMu_KEGlw</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Kyrgyzstan - The Last Soviet Corner in Central Asia <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHZF8S6Gqeo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHZF8S6Gqeo</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Turkmenistan – The North Korea of Central Asia <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4sEEektV2E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4sEEektV2E</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tajiks – Iranians of the East <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eN9NiBWOWWs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eN9NiBWOWWs</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tajikistan: Everything You Need to Know <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTlwzW6ZHQY&amp;t=16s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTlwzW6ZHQY&amp;t=16s</a></li> </ul> <p><b>W1 Reading Annotations due Friday class time</b></p>
<b>Week 2</b>	
<b>Jan 19</b>	<b>***MLK Day – No Class***</b>
<b>Jan 21 &amp; 23</b>	<p><b>Silk Roads &amp; Empires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Khalid, Ch1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Buranelli</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Modu Chanyu and the Xiongnu Empire <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cubsSWp3RYY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cubsSWp3RYY</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Legend of Tomiris</i> (2019) – Kazakhstani historical epic film <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Abmmo5gHxvU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Abmmo5gHxvU</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Myn Bala</i> (2011) – Kazakhstani historical epic film <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJIYHdsteDA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJIYHdsteDA</a></li> </ul> <p><b>W2 Reading Annotations due Wed class time</b> <b>Map Quiz Friday</b></p>
<b>Week 3</b>	
<b>Jan 26, 28, 30</b>	<b>Russian Expansion &amp; “the Great Game”</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Khalid, Chs. 5-6</li> <li>□ Hamm</li> <li>□ The Great Game: Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Central Asia by Major JGH Corrigan MBE <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HvYJaZ27pE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9HvYJaZ27pE</a></li> <li>□ The Russian Conquest of Central Asia and the Myth of the "Great Game" <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3XN42x_rc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3XN42x_rc</a></li> </ul> <p><b>W3 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b> <b>Research Paper Proposal Abstract due Fri class time</b></p>
<b>Week 4</b>	
<b>Feb 2, 4, 6</b>	<p><b>Bolshevism &amp; USSR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Cummings, Ch3</li> <li>□ Shayakhmetov, Ch21</li> <li>□ McMann, Ch15</li> <li>□ Guzeva (Photo Essay)</li> <li>□ Russian Civil War in Central Asia (Documentary) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FYEgAmPW5E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FYEgAmPW5E</a></li> <li>□ Khrushchev's Virgin Lands Campaign &amp; Food Security in the USSR <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mtt5YgLwUS4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mtt5YgLwUS4</a></li> </ul> <p><b>W4 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b></p>
<b>Week 5</b>	
<b>Feb 9, 11, 13</b>	<p><b>Soviet Collapse &amp; Independence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Jelen, pp. 139-154</li> <li>□ Khalid, Ch21</li> <li>□ Laruelle, Conc.</li> <li>□ Why Central Asia Is Reckoning with the Collapse of the USSR (Documentary) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6GEtUvQFLO">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6GEtUvQFLO</a></li> </ul> <p><b>W5 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b></p>
<b>Week 6</b>	
<b>Feb 16, 18, 20</b>	<p><b>Simulation I: Karakalpakstan's Future</b> <b>Who's Who Quiz Monday</b></p>
<b>Module II: Contemporary Issues</b>	
<b>Week 7</b>	
<b>Feb 23, 25, 27</b>	<p><b>Authoritarianism &amp; Corruption</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Jelen, pp. 279-86 &amp; pp. 314-21</li> <li>□ Cooley, Ch2</li> <li>□ Cooley &amp; Heathershaw, Ch1</li> <li>□ Rathbone</li> <li>□ Constructors (2013) – Kazakhstani film on poverty and corruption affecting three young siblings <a href="https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/99NNMJo4J">https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/99NNMJo4J</a></li> <li>□ "Exploring Central Asia's Present &amp; Future," <i>Majlis</i> Podcast (6 Aug 2023) <a href="https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/majlis/id1086142112?i=1000623574058">https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/majlis/id1086142112?i=1000623574058</a></li> <li>□ Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, <i>Last Week Tonight with John Oliver</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9QYu8LtH2E&amp;t=15s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9QYu8LtH2E&amp;t=15s</a></li> </ul> <p><b>W7 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b> <b>Research Paper Outline due Friday class time</b></p>

Week 8	
Mar 2, 4, 6	<b>Islam, Identity, &amp; Security</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Mesbahi <input type="checkbox"/> Hanks, Ch2 <input type="checkbox"/> Thibault, Ch8 <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Economist</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Laruelle, Ch5 (optional) <b>W8 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b>
Spring Break	
Mar 9 – 13	***No Class***
Week 9	
Mar 16, 18, 20	<b>Borders &amp; Ethnic Conflict</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Baizakova <input type="checkbox"/> Smith, Ch11 <input type="checkbox"/> Terzyan <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Economist</i> <input type="checkbox"/> The Central Asian Region Where People Can't Stop Fighting – Places <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dL88Vb9W3ek">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dL88Vb9W3ek</a> <b>W9 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b>
Week 10	
Mar 23, 25, 27	<b>Simulation II: Caspian Sea (or Lake?)</b>
Week 11	
Ma 30, Ap 1, 3	<b>Environmental Politics</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Penati, Ch4 <input type="checkbox"/> Boyle, Ch16 <input type="checkbox"/> Wæhler & Dietrichs <input type="checkbox"/> O'Donnell <input type="checkbox"/> Podguzov <input type="checkbox"/> Woman and the Glacier (2016) – documentary <a href="https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/83NNZ2rxj">https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/83NNZ2rxj</a> <input type="checkbox"/> The Polygon (2014) – documentary <a href="https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/16NNZ4Mn3">https://video.alexanderstreet.com/p/16NNZ4Mn3</a> <input type="checkbox"/> NASA: World of Change: Aral Sea <a href="https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/world-of-change/AralSea">https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/world-of-change/AralSea</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Aral Sea: The sea that dried up in 40 years - BBC News- Feb 28, 2015 <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5N-69cWyKo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5N-69cWyKo</a> <input type="checkbox"/> The Story of the Aral Sea's Disappearance <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsUYt9tIsos">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsUYt9tIsos</a> <b>W11 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b> <b>Research Paper Peer Review Draft due by class time</b>
Week 12	
Apr 6, 8, 10	<b>Petropolitics and Resource Development</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Piet, Ch8 <input type="checkbox"/> McLean, Ch7 <input type="checkbox"/> Gyene

	<input type="checkbox"/> “Kazakhstan’s Oil Export Routes” – <i>TVP World</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwLBAH4IWoe">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwLBAH4IWoe</a> <b>W12 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b> <b>Research Paper due Friday class time</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	
<b>Apr 13, 15, 17</b>	<b>A New Great Game: Relations with Russia &amp; China</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Usman, Ch3 & Ch5 <input type="checkbox"/> Koseoglu <input type="checkbox"/> “China’s Belt and Road in Central Asia: A Decade On” – <i>CNA Insider</i> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-m4JueFtg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-m4JueFtg</a> <b>W13 Reading Annotations due Mon class time</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	
<b>Apr 20, 22, 24</b>	<b>A New Great Game: Local &amp; Global Contexts</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Usman, Ch2 <input type="checkbox"/> Cooley Ch9 <input type="checkbox"/> Akchurina & Dolidze <input type="checkbox"/> Audio: Alexander Cooley, “Locating Central Asian Geopolitics” <a href="https://www.amerikaovozi.com/a/3009101.html">https://www.amerikaovozi.com/a/3009101.html</a> <b>W14 Reading Annotations due Mon/Wed class time</b>
<b>Week 15</b>	
<b>Apr 27 (M)</b>	<b>***MERCY DAY***</b>
<b>Finals Week</b>	
<b>May 4 (M)</b> 3:30 – 6:30	<b>Simulation III: CSTO Art. IV Invocation</b>

All dates and times in this syllabus and class schedule reflect the current time in Athens, Georgia (EST until 10 March, EDT 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.