Lead Lecturer: Boriana Nikolova, bnikolova@wisc.edu  
Office Hours: Friday 10:30-11:30, Microbial Sciences Building 4478  
Lecture Time and Location: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:30 – 3:45, Van Hise 104  
TA: Tamara Polyakova, tpolyakova@wisc.edu

Overview

The course provides an introduction to the political and economic systems of the countries of Eastern Europe during the Cold War, the 1989 revolutions, and in the post-communist period. As this is an interdisciplinary course, there will be a number of guest speakers from Anthropology, History, Sociology, Slavic, and Political Science. We will also watch documentaries and feature films from and about the region. Some of the questions we will address during the class will be the following.  What were the main characteristics of the political and economic systems of the countries of Eastern Europe during communism? How did they change over time and how did these changes affect the post-communist transformations of these societies? Why were some countries more successful than others in transitioning away from communism? What were some of the challenges that these transitions presented?

Course Requirements

Comments and discussion questions – 10%  
Film comments – 5%  
Preparation and participation in class and section discussion – 15%  
In class presentation – 20%  
Midterm – 25%  
Final – 25%

This is a large class but I intend to make class discussion a big part of it. This means that you must attend class regularly and be ready to take part in the discussion. Active participation requires coming to class prepared by having done the readings and having thought about the questions they raise. Since it won’t be possible for everyone to take part in the discussion during every class, this grading scheme for discussion participation applies to your overall class participation:

A = Attended and actively participated (e.g. raised hand, and seemed in command of readings and material) B = Attended and spoke, but without evidence of preparation  
C = Attended for the full period but did not speak F = Did not attend.
Grading scheme for section participation:

A = Attended and actively participated (e.g. raised hand, and seemed in command of readings and material)  
B = Attended and spoke at least once, but without evidence of preparation, and turned in required assignments  
C = Attended but did not speak or turn in required assignments  
F = Did not attend

Brief Comment and Discussion Questions
In order to facilitate discussion, prior to each class, you should post a brief comment on the day’s readings in the dropbox available on the course website at the Learn@UW site. In your comments you should highlight a positive or a negative aspect of the assigned readings or point to an argument, which you find particularly compelling or faulty. You should also provide two questions, which you believe we should address during the class discussion. To receive credit, comments must be around 200 words long, not counting the two discussion questions. Your comments are due by 9am each Tuesday and Thursday. The comments themselves are not graded – you get 10% of your grade just for writing them. Your grade will depend on the number of comments you sent. In addition to posting them online you should also bring your comments and questions to class and to your discussion section.

Film Comments
There are seven films that you will watch for the class through digital streaming. They will be marked with L@UW on the syllabus. You should watch the films before coming to class on the day they were assigned and post your comments by 4 pm on Friday. To receive credit, comments must be around 100 words long and should highlight what struck you most about the film. The film comments themselves will not be graded – you get 5% of your grade just for writing them.

In-class Group Presentations Connecting Countries and Concepts to a Current Event:
During the last five classes students will work in groups of approximately 3 to prepare a 10-15 minutes slide presentation on a country of their choice connecting a central concept from the readings to a current event article.

• Groups will be set in the first week of class. Each student will participate in one presentation.  
• Groups should meet during the week before their presentation to select an article.  
• Students should discuss the article with the TA or email the TA a link to the article with a short description of how it connects to the topic(s) covered in the readings.  
• The current events article used in the presentation should be posted by the day before at noon on Learn@UW under the "communications"/"discussion" tabs.  
• All students should read the current events article before class.
Slides:
There should be at least 4 slides (but groups may add one additional slide):
1. Title and names of all students in the group;
2. Discussion points from the course readings in which the main arguments in the readings should be highlighted;
3. Discussion points from the article;
4. 2-3 discussion questions; these questions should be orally posed to the class at some point during the presentation, and can also be included at the end of the earlier slides.

• Slides are due at least one hour before class (by 1:30 pm), posted also on Learn@UW

Grading scheme for group presentations (group grade):
A = Current event discussion was well integrated with course material, and audience was engaged in discussion of the presentation material. B = Presentation demonstrated good command of course material and article, and all students in the group participated. C = Presentation included a current events article and topic from course material and consisted of 3-5 slides. F = Did not attend or participate in a presentation (can be given to specific individuals and can differ from the group grade).

• Presentations will be marked down one grade if the article is not posted by noon the day before class; 2 grades down if not posted before class.
• Presentations will be marked down one grade if the presentation slides are not posted by 1:30 pm on class day.
• Presentations with a significant number of grammatical or spelling errors will be marked down one grade. Make sure to proofread.

Midterm and Final
The midterm and final exams will take place in class. You will be given a number of essay questions to choose from and will have to answer two questions. In your answers you should refer to relevant readings and build your argument in response to the arguments made in the readings and lectures.

Readings

Book chapters and articles that are available for electronic download on the Learn@UW course website are marked with (&).

There are also three books, which should be purchased. These books will also be on reserve at the library. When chapters of these books are assigned they are marked with (#).


**Streaming Digital Films**

The films for the class can be accessed at the Digital Language Lab. Streaming works at the following campus facilities: Van Hise Info Lab (rm. 464), Van Hise Learning Lab (rm. 259), Memorial Library InfoLab, Student Activity Center, College Library 3rd floor Infolab, and Steenbock Library. In the campus infolabs, use Safari or Chrome as the browser, use Firefox on the Mac side. If you choose to use your own newer Mac laptop please note that streaming will not work with Quicktime Pro X. You can either download and install an older version of Quicktime or use the campus Infolab computers.

Here’s how you can watch the films:
1. Go to Learning Support Services digital language lab webpage: http://lss.wisc.edu/node/966
2. You will be prompted for a login: ps254 password: udek87

**Class Schedule and Readings**

**Jan 23: State and Economy under Communism I**


Recommended: Joseph Rothschild, *Return to Diversity*, pp. 3-76.

**Jan 28: State and Economy under Communism II**


Jan 30: The Return of Civil Society

In class movie: “Oratorio for Prague” (Czechoslovakia, 1968), dir. Jan Nemec

Feb 4: Guest Lecture by David Danaher on Havel’s “The Power of the Powerless.”

Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless."

Feb 6: Guest Lecture by Kathryn Ciancia: "Solidarity...and Beyond: Challenging Communism in 1980s Poland"

Film: “Man of Iron” (Poland, 1981), dir. Andrzej Wajda

Feb 11: Guest Lecture by Tomislav Longinovic on Life in Communist Yugoslavia

# Slavenka Drakulic, *How We Survived Communism and Even Laughed.*

Feb 13: The 1989 Revolutions I: Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany

Film: “Goodbye Lenin” (Germany, 2003), dir. Wolfgang Becker

Feb 18: The 1989 Revolutions II: Romania and Bulgaria

In class film: “Videograms of a Revolution” (Germany, 1992), dir. Harun Farocki
Film: "12:08 East of Bucharest" (Romania, 2006), dir. Corneliu Porumboiu
Feb 20: Guest Lecture by Catalina Munteanu on Land Use History in the Carpathians


**February 25: Why Communism Failed**


**Feb 27: Guest Lecture by Marina Zaloznaya on Petty Corruption in Ukraine**

Readings: TBA

**March 4: Transitions and Regime Diversity**


**March 6: Guest Lecture by Nina Bandelj: “Democracy, Inequality, and Foreign Investment in Eastern Europe: Does the EU Matter”**

Readings: TBA

**March 11: In class exam**

**March 13: Guest Lecture by Scott Gehlbach on Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe**


Film: “Women’s Day” (Poland, 2012) dir. Maria Sadowska L@UW

**Spring Break: March 15-23**
March 25: Electoral Revolutions


In class film: “Bringing Down a Dictator” (USA, 2001), dir. Steve York
Film: “Orange Revolution” (USA, 2007), dir. Steve York L@UW

March 27: Guest Lecture by Elizabeth Peacock on the Student Protests in Ukraine


April 1 Transitional Justice

Tina Rosenberg, Haunted Land, Part I: Czechoslovakia, pp. 3-125.
Film: “The Lives of Others” (Germany, 2006), dir. Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck L@UW
Recommended: Tina Rosenberg: Haunted Land, Part II Poland, Part III Germany.

April 3: Developing the Rule of Law and its Challenges

& Ase Grodeland, Tatyana Koshechkina, and William Miller, “Foolish to give and yet foolish not to take,” Europe-Asia Studies, 50, no. 4, June 1998, pp. 651-78.

Film: “The Closed Circuit” (Poland, 2013), dir. Ryszard Bugajski L@UW

April 8: Party Politics


April 10: Guest Lecture by Henry Sapoznik: "Giving Voice to History: The Recording of East European Yiddish Music 1895-1939."

April 15: Democratization and Nationalism


April 17: EU Accession


April 22: Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary

Konstanty Gebert, “Poland since 1989” in Sabrina Ramet eds. Central and Southeastern European Politics since 1989, pp. 139-162.

Carol Leff, “Building Democratic Values in the Czech Republic since 1989” in Sabrina Ramet eds. pp. 162 -182


April 24: Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria


April 29: The Baltic states, Ukraine, Moldova


May 1: Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia


May 6: Bosnia, Macedonia, Albania
Florian Bieber, “Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1989” in Sabrina Ramet eds., pp. 311-328

May 8: In-class exam