

East European Politics
(CPO 3614/ Section 7241 & EUS 3930/ Section 4826)
Fall 2011

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Course Meetings

M W F Period 5 (11.45-12.35)

2333 Turlington

Course description

This course aims to provide the students with a survey of communist regimes and post-communist evolutions in Eastern Europe, from WWII up to the present day. Since the region transformed itself a lot in the past twenty years, for instance it changed from 9 nation-states before 1989 to 27 today, we will not cover the entire range of cases in this course. Instead, we will focus in detail on a few cases, East Central Europe, the Balkans, and 3 post-Soviet republics—Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova, and will address the broader themes specific to comparative politics.

The course is divided into 3 sections.

- We will delve first into the core characteristics and differences of communist regimes--this way, for instance, you will understand why I, as a Romanian, have a rather negative perspective on what Communism meant, while someone from former Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Hungary might (?) spend a moment trying to assess the regime with a positive eye. In addition, we will consider the 1989 *events*, where various terms such as 'transitions from below', 'transitions from above', 'revolutions', 'transformation' will be used to distinguish between various regime changes in the region.
- The second part will cover in detail a couple of regional patters that we notice across the region. Here we will examine the political and economic developments in particular cases, with the goal of assessing differences within the post-communist region. We will notice that, despite the unique communist legacies, the region differs greatly in terms of successful economic, political, and social transformations.
- The last part is focused on thematic issues across the regions that are important to comparative politics more broadly. Major themes covered in the last part will consist of EU accession, democratization and political participation, economic development, institutional design and parties, and fringe politics.

Course materials

There are 2 textbooks required for this class. The books are available through the UF Bookstore.

- Stephen White, Judy Batt, and Paul G. Lewis(eds.), *Developments in Central and East European Politics 4* (Raleigh: Duke University Press, 2007)
- Gale Stokes. 1993. *The Walls came tumbling down. The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe* (Oxford University press)
- The rest of the readings will be available through 'e-Learning in Sakai'

STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MATERIALS COVERED IN LECTURES AND READINGS AS WELL AS HANDOUTS OR POSTINGS ON THE COURSE WEBSITE.

E-Learning in Sakai You should become familiar with 'e-Learning in Sakai'. All electronic materials assigned as readings (articles and book chapters) will be posted here, as well as power point slides for the class. In addition, ALL GRADES will be posted here too.

Course requirements

- 2 in-class tests (40% of the final grade—20% each)
- 3 movie reviews worth 15% of the final grade (5% each)
- 1 research paper of 8-10 pages (worth 25% of the final grade) –more details will be offered along the semester
- Class attendance and participation (**20%** of the final grade).

Tests 40%: There will be **2 in-class tests**, each worth 20% of the final grade. Tests will consist of short answer, multiple choice, identification, true/false and fill-in the blank questions, in addition to 1-2 short essay questions.

3 Movie reviews 15%: The reviews should be about 2 pages long, first summarizing the intrigue and second presenting your impressions on the movies. The films I consider including are:

1. *The Lives of Others* (2006). (German, Directed by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck). Available on Course Reserves (ARES) and on YouTube : <http://www.youtube.com/user/iuploadstuff#p/u/12/ZaGQvhQvjIo>
2. *Goodbye, Lenin!*, (2003) (German, Directed by Wolfgang Becker). Available on Course Reserves.
3. 12:08 East from Bucharest (2006) (Romania, Directed by Corneliu Porumboiu). Available on Course Reserves.

Research paper 25% Each student is required to produce a research paper on a topic relevant to the issues covered in the class and will be due on **November 18th** in class. Papers should be around 2500 words long (8-10 pages). There are several deadlines that you need to follow to receive all points for this assignment.

1. Students are expected to come up with a topic for their paper on **September 16th** and have it approved by the instructor. (5% of 25% for this assignment)
2. Bibliographies and paper outlines (1 page) are due on **October 19th**. (5% of 25% for this assignment)
3. Final paper due on **November 18th** (15% of the total assignment).

Failure to submit topic, bibliography and outline will lead to deductions from the final paper grade. To prevent plagiarism, I will check the papers using Turnitin.com. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day. More instructions on this assignment will be posted later in the semester.

Class attendance and participation 20%

1. Come to class-- Attendance will be taken on a daily basis. Students with more than three unexcused absences will lose attendance points.
2. Read the assigned materials for the week-- The success of this course depends upon your active participation in class. Therefore, having read all the material before each class and having thought about the readings is crucial to having a meaningful conversation.
3. **Bi weekly:** Post 1 question related to the readings by **Thursday 5pm**. The postings should be done on SAKAI. We will discuss these questions on Friday.
4. Choose a country from the list below and build up a news country folder with **biweekly news** on your country. The news should be posted on SAKAI as well.

For 1&2 –10%

For 3 & 4: 10% Start with one of these 2 items such that if in one week you post a question, the next week you'll focus on a news item. **NO SUBMISSIONS ON WEEKS 2, 11, 12, 14. We don't have a class on those Fridays.**

The country list: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, East Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

Note: I expect you to have completed the relevant assigned readings prior to class and to be ready to discuss them. To facilitate this process I assigned a relative **low number of pages** to be read for each meeting. 😊

Policies

1. **Assignments:** All assignments must be submitted on line by the deadline, and handed in to the instructor, at the beginning of the class (for movie reviews and research papers). Extensions will be granted at my discretion and, if granted, they will require proper documentation. Make sure you ask for an extension only **PRIOR** (at least 24 hours) to the deadline date.
2. **Cheating/plagiarism:** Any student caught violating the honor code will fail the class. For more information, read the Code of Student Conduct <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcode.php>
3. **Courtesy:** Don't come late and turn off your cell-phones. Any disruptive behavior (reading newspapers or materials related to other courses, talking outside of class discussions) will not be tolerated and you will be asked to leave the class.
4. **Special Needs:** If you have a disability that requires special arrangements (e.g. note- and/or test-taking), please register with UF's Office of Students with Disabilities and contact me **within the first week** of class. Every effort will be made to accommodate those with registered disabilities.

Grading scale: (<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>):

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
93-100	90-92.9	87-89.9	83-86.9	80-82.9	77-79.9	73-76.9	70-72.9	67-69.9	63-66.9	60-62.9	< 59.9

Course Schedule

Part I: EVOLUTIONS PRE-1989

Week 1: August 22-26

Course introduction

- White et al. Chapter 1
- Stokes, pp3-11.
- White (2001) What was communism and its establishment (on SAKAI)

Week 2: August 29-August 31

Communism (I) — characteristics

- White (2001) Ch 3,4,5 (on SAKAI)
- Stokes (1993): 12-45; 46-48; 65-68.

- Friday, Sept 2: No CLASS. The instructor will be out of town for the APSA conference. Watch *The Lives of Others* and prepare the movie review (due Wednesday Sept 7)

Week 3: Sept 7-9

The Fall of Communism

- Monday, Sept 5-NO CLASS, Labor DAY
- ‘*Lives of Others*’ –film review due on Wednesday, Sept. 7
- White et al. Chapter 2
- Stokes. pp 68-77; 102-130.

Week 4: Sept12-16

Transitions from communism (I)

- Stokes—read the following pages:
 - Hungary: pp78-101; 132-136
 - East Germany: 136-141
 - Czechoslovakia: 148-157
 - Topics for research paper due on Friday, September 16.

Week 5: Sept 19-23

Transitions from communism (II)

- 12:08 of Bucharest. Film review due on Monday, Sept 19.
- Stokes—read the following pages:
 - Bulgaria: 49-52; 141-148
 - Romania: 55-59; 158-167
- Michnik, Adam. 2000. “Reflections on the Collapse of Communism”. *Journal of Democracy*. 11(1): 119-126 (on SAKAI)

Part II: REGIONAL PATTERNS

Week 6: Sept 26-30:

Wednesday, Sept 28- Exam 1

Overview of the EU

- White et al. Chapter 7

Week 7: October 3-7

The Visegrad Four

- White et al. Chapter 3
- *Goodbye, Lenin!* Film review due on Wednesday, October 5.

Week 8: October 10-14

The Balkans—Bulgaria and Romania

- White et al. Chapter 4
- Read the short excerpt from *I'm a communist biddy!* Available @ <http://www.romanianwriters.ro/book.php?id=1> (I will post this on SAKAI as well)

Week 9: October 17-21

The former Yugoslavia

- White et al. Chapter 5
- Carol Skalnik Leff. 1999. “Democratization and Disintegration in Multinational States: The Breakup of the Communist Federations”, *World Politics* 51(2): 205-235 (e-Learning)

- Paper outline due on Wednesday, October 19.

Week 10: October 24-28

Former Soviet Republics

- White et al. Chapter 6
- Way, Lucan.2002. "Pluralism by Default in Moldova". *Journal of Democracy* 13(4): 127-141.

Part III: ISSUES ACROSS THE REGION

Week 11: October 31-November 2

Monday, October 31: Exam 2

Comparing Institutions

- White et al. Chapters 8 & 9
- Friday, Nov 4 – NO CLASS (Homecoming)

Week 12: November 7-9

Electoral behavior

- White et al. Chapters 10 & 11
- Friday, Nov 11-NO CLASS (Veterans Day)

Week 13: November 14-18

Social and economic issues

- White et al. Chapters 13 & 15
- Final research papers due on Friday, November 18.

Week 14: November 21-23

Still On the Economy

- Joel Hellman, "Winners Take All: The Politics of Partial Reform in Postcommunist Transitions," *World Politics* 50(1998): 203-234 (SAKAI)
- K. Darden, 2008. "The integrity of Corrupt States: graft as an Informal State institution", *Politics and Society*, v. 36(1). (SAKAI)
- Friday, Nov 25 - NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)

Week 15: November 28- December 2

Fringe politics—women, minority rights, and environmental concerns

- Zoltan Barany, 2000. "Politics and the Roma in state –socialist Eastern Europe," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 33: 421-437 (SAKAI)
- Conor O'Dwyer and Katrina Schwartz, "Minority Rights After EU Enlargement: A Comparison of Antigay Politics in Poland and Latvia," *Comparative European Politics* 8:2 (2010): 220-243 (SAKAI)

Week 16: December 5-7

Comparing progress towards democracy

- White et al. Chapter 16
- Wednesday: wrap-up