

CET Syllabus of Record



Program: CET Prague

Course Title: Political and Cultural History of East Central Europe in the 20th Century

Course Code: PR/CEST 250

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Central European Studies / History, Political Science, Global Studies

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: none

Description

This is a required course for the Central European Studies concentration. The course covers the geographic area comprising former Czechoslovakia (or the Czech and Slovak Republics), Hungary and Poland, and provides an understanding of the important political, social and cultural developments of the region during the 20th century. Students explore the establishment of independent nation states during the interwar period, the Nazi occupation, resistance and collaboration, the Holocaust and the expulsion of the Germans, the nature of the communist system, its final collapse and the post-communist transformation. Throughout the course, emphasis is given to examination of the relationship between the Judeo-Christian tradition and the secular world and how this relationship manifests in the politics and cultural dynamics of the region.

Objectives

During this course, students:

- Develop their knowledge of East Central European history post-1918 to the present day
- Achieve an overall understanding of the important political events that occurred in east central Europe during the 20th century, as well as their causes and effects
- Examine important political, economic, social, cultural and diplomatic issues in the region
- Learn about the formation of the independent nation states of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland after World War I, World War II, Communism, and the post-Communist eras

Course Requirements

Participation and Attendance

Course readings average 50 pages per session and should be completed before class. Students are expected to participate actively in class, raising thoughtful questions from the assigned readings.

Students are expected to abide by CET's Attendance Policy.

Book Review

Students submit a written book review that they then present in class. Students select a book from the instructor's list. Each book provides a different account (journalistic or literary) of specific historical circumstances reviewed in class. The book review and accompanying presentation should be polished and

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thorough, and include a complete summary of the text as well as an analysis of its interpretation of historical events.

Exams

Students take comprehensive midterm and final exams that ensure they have kept up on and digested material covered during the course.

Traveling Seminar

CET Prague's Traveling Seminar is a required, credit-bearing, field-based component of the course. Students are expected to complete required reading and written assignments related to the Seminar, which are factored into the final grade as outlined below.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

Participation	15%
Traveling Seminar assignments	10%
Book review and class presentation	25%
Midterm examination	25%
Final examination	25%

Primary Texts

Crampton, R.J., *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century - and After*. (London: Routledge, 1997)

Rothschild, Joseph and Wingfield, Nancy M., *Return to Diversity. A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

Wandycz, Piotr S., *The Price of Freedom. A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present*. (London: Routledge, 1992)

For the Traveling Seminar:

Padriac Kenney, "The Gender of Resistance in Communist Poland" pp. 399-425, course reader 199 – 225.

Alison Stenning, "Place (Post-)Socialism: The Making and Remaking of Nowa Huta, Poland," pp. 99-118, course reader 226 – 245.

Katherine Lebow, "Private Lives: Youth Brigades in Nowa Huta in the 1950s," pp. 199-219, course reader 246 – 267.

Supplementary Texts

Gross, Jan T. *The Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland*. (New York: Penguin, 2002)

Andrzejewski, Jerzy. *Ashes and Diamonds*. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1997)

Fischer, Tibor. *Under the Frog*. (New York: Picador, 2001)

Kundera, Milan. *The Joke*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1993)

Garton, Timothy Ash. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* (New York: Vintage, 1993)

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Don, Yehuda and Karady, Victor (ed.), *A Social & Economic History of Central European Jewry*. (New Brunswick/London: Transaction Publishing, 1990)

Naimark, Norman M. *Fires of Hatred. Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth Century Europe*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001)

Wasserstein, Bernard. *Vanishing Diaspora. The Jews in Europe Since 1945*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996)

Outline of Course Content

Note: Fall/Spring students cover approximately 1 topic every 2 weeks.

Topic 1 - World War I and the Establishment of New States

- Pre-war survey: history, population, social structure, nationalist movements
- Peace and post-War Europe
- National and international relations
- Emergence of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland
- Government formation and political parties
- Domestic and international conflicts

Topic 2 – East Central Europe during the Interwar Years

- Political systems and governments
- Multi-ethnic composition
- Minorities
- Economies
- Cultures
- National and international relations
- Collapse of the interwar system

Topic 3 – East Central Europe during World War II

- Nazi occupation and collaboration
- Munich Pact
- Resistance at home and abroad
- Domestic uprisings
- The War front
- The Holocaust
- Liberation by the West and the Red Army
- Expulsion of Germans

Topic 4 - Communization of East Central Europe

- The background
- Provisional governments
- Nationalization

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- Coup d'état or election
Political parties, nationalism, propaganda, workers and intellectuals

Topic 5 – The Nature of the Communist System

- Ideology and the Soviet example
- One party system
- Repression and resistance
- Show trials
- Sovietization: Central Economy, censorship,
- Soviet International system: Warsaw Pact, Comecon

Topic 6 - Crisis of 1956

- Party Reform after 1953 (death of Stalin and Gottwald)
- Social dissatisfaction (riots and reform)
- 1956 CPSU Congress and Khrushchev speech
- Party factions
- Polish October
- Invasion of Hungary

Topic 7 - Crises of 1968 and 1980

- Poland: reformers, radicals, repression, anti-Semitic campaign, purges
- Czechoslovakia: Prague Spring, reformers, student movements, Warsaw pact invasion
- Normalization
- Character of communism in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia

Topic 8 – Traveling Seminar

- The Polish Welfare State. Polish-Jewish Relations and Responses to Neighbors. Model of a Communist City: Nowa Huta. Red Vienna.

Topic 9 - Collapse of Communism in East Central Europe

- Opposition movements, Western sanctions, strikes, roundtable talks, elections
- Berlin Wall
- Solidarity
- Velvet Revolution

Topic 10 - Post-Communist Transformation

- Velvet Divorce
- Political systems and the emergency of political parties
- Economy
- International Relations
- NATO

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- European Union