



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course title:	Central European Politics
Course code:	POLI 3006 PRAG
Programs offering course:	Business, Arts and Sciences, Central European Studies, Communication, New Media, and Journalism
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. semester credits:	3.00
Contact hours:	45.00
Term:	Fall 2023

Course Description

This course is designed to enhance students' knowledge of Central European developments during and after the democratic revolutions of 1989. The course examines the democratic revolutions in 1989, the institutional and international framework of the transition process, and specific problems of democratization in Central Europe. It discusses the main turning points of modern political history of the respective countries of the Central European geopolitical space and presents similarities and differences of such developments. In addition, the course explores the constitutional systems of the Central European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Austria, and Hungary), the effects of the enlargement of the European Union towards Central European countries after May 2004 and the results of the elections into the European Parliament in Central Europe in May 2014. Special attention is paid to the current dramatic events on the European continent including the migration crisis, the British referendum (Brexit) in June 2016, and others.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Outline and assess the main developments of Central European politics after the changes of 1989 and the effects of the EU integration process on this geopolitical region;
- Research, describe and critically evaluate the contemporary political developments in one of the Central European countries (based on students' interests);
- Compare some political trends in the whole geopolitical region (political systems, economic transition, cultural identity, etc.).

Course Prerequisites

General interest in European politics and in integration studies is expected.

Methods of Instruction

The teaching methods include: lecture and respective debate and discussion on readings. The students are divided into small groups (2-3 students) and every group covers the political developments in one of the Central European countries and informs the others at the start of every lesson. The professor helps students plan their trips through the Central European space. Both CIEE optional trips to Berlin and Vienna are strongly recommended to these students. Great attention is paid to the analysis of the political press (printed and online).

The weekly assigned readings will provide the students with opportunities to discuss and interpret political literature concerning this area. During the class discussions, students will also gain appreciation of the importance to study Central European languages. Students will develop the basic research skills in the respective field. The teacher will help the students choose and work on their final papers paying respect to their major and minor studies.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Central-European country reports and portfolio	20%
2. Midterm Test	20%
3. Final Written Test	20%

4. Final paper including presentation	20%
5. Class Participation	20%
TOTAL	100%

Course Requirements

Central-European country reports and portfolio

Throughout the course, students will carry out research about one Central European country of their choice, based on requirements specified by the instructor on a weekly basis. Findings will be shared in class on a regular basis and the Country Portfolio will be submitted to the instructor during Week 11.

Midterm Test

The **midterm test** will be written in the classroom in the sixth week of the program. The midterm test will test basic acquaintance with the issues discussed in the first five weeks.

Final Written Test

The **final written exam** in the classroom will test basic acquaintance with the issues discussed in the second half of the course, during Week 12

Final paper including presentation

The **final paper** (2000-2500 words) will be handed over for evaluation in the last week of the program. The selection of the topic will start in the middle of the semester, the professor will help with sources or interview persons. In addition, students are required to present on the subject of their research in class during the final week of classes (8-10-minute long individual presentations).

Class Participation

Class participation is assessed regularly and partial participation grades are distributed four times per semester. Active participation includes activity in class (answering instructor's questions, working on tasks as assigned, demonstrating home preparation for class, including required readings, etc.). The instructor reserves the right to give **short quizzes** on the reading or past lecture content, which will be included in the Class Participation grade for details on CIEE Prague Participation Policy, see the section below.

CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as **meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom**, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

Attendance

To encourage engaged learning, regular class attendance is required throughout the program. This includes any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as internship, service-learning, or other required field

placement.

An excused absence in a CIEE course will only be considered if approved by a CIEE Center Director/Academic Director (not the Instructor), and:

- it is a self-certified absence for illness (only once per course, requires formal request before or within 24 hours, cannot miss assessment worth more than 5% of final course grade)
- a doctor's note from a local medical professional is provided
- evidence of a family emergency is provided
- it is a pre-approved observance of religious holiday

Unexcused absences include personal travel and/or travel delays, as well as missing more than 25% of a single class period (including tardiness and early departure). Assessments missed due to unexcused absences will be marked as zero. Students with over 10% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff. Students with over 20% unexcused absences will be contacted by CIEE staff, receive a formal warning letter (shared with their home institution) and lose 10% of the final course point total (e.g., a final A grade of 93% will be lowered to a B grade of 83%).

For more detail, please consult your CIEE Academic Manual.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to a positive and inclusive teaching and learning environment. All students are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness, respect, and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in grade penalties or disciplinary action. See the CIEE Student Academic Manual for further information on academic integrity.

N.B. Course schedule and co-curriculars are subject to change. The final duration and distribution of content and assignments will be determined and presented to students at the onset of the course.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Class: 1.0 .

Class 1 & 2

The introduction to the course is very much about terminological problems. From book to book and from article to article any student of the above-mentioned topics is confronted with inconsistent usage of geographic, political, and ideological terms and concepts: e.g. East and Central Europe, European integration, Czech and Bohemian, totalitarian, communist or socialist, Austrian, German or German-speaking etc. Each term has one or more connotations and should be used adequately.

Required readings:

European news servers as specified by the instructor

Homework assignment: Political maps of Central Europe: States, Nations, Regions, Populations

Week 2

Class: 2.1 The World War I and the collapse of Empires. The new states in Central Europe.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 1

Class: 2.2 The political history of Czechoslovakia 1918 - 1945.

Survey of literature published on the 100th anniversary of WM (prepared by the teacher)

Required reading:

Taylor (1990), 272-291.

Week 3

Class: 3.1 The political history of Czechoslovakia 1945 – 1989.

1948-1989: Communism in Czechoslovakia.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 2

Class: 3.2 Prague Spring 1968

Required reading:

Schoplin (1998), 57-74.

Week 4

Class: 4.1 The collapse of communist regimes in Central Europe in 1989.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 3

Class: 4.2 Round-table talks in Warsaw and Prague

Required reading:

Rupnik (1999), 231-243.

Week 5

Class: 5.1 The dissolution of Czechoslovakia.

The new states: Czech Republic and Slovak Republic.

Failed federalism and negotiated break-up in the context of complex political and economic transformation.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 4

Class: 5.2 NATO and EU membership.

Present political situation in both Czech and Slovak republics.

Required reading:

Stein (2000), 355-363.

Week 6

Class: 6.1 The political history of Poland 1918-1945.

The political history of Poland 1918-1945.

Required reading:

Mazower (2008), 78-101.

Class: 6.2 Midterm Exam Period

Selection of the topics for the final paper.

Midterm test.

Week 7

Class: 7.1 Poland: 1945-2015. The economic transformation in former communist countries.

Evaluation of the midterm test.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 5

Class: 7.2 .

Similarities and differences in political transformation of former communist countries in Central Europe.

Week 8

Class: 8.1 The political history of Austria.

Austrian neutrality based on the State Treaty 1955.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 6

Class: 8.2 Contemporary political situation in Austria.

Required reading:

Hyde-Price (1996), 223-243.

Week 9

Class: 9.1 The political history of Hungary.

The revolution of 1956.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

Class: 9.2 The economic reform in Hungary in 1968-1989.

Required reading:

The new constitution of Hungary 2011.

Week 10

Class: 10.1 .

The constitution as an expression of political philosophy of the respective country: the constitutions of the Czech and Slovak republics, Poland, Austria and Hungary.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Report 8

Class: 10.2 Topical issues in political life and parliamentary debate in the Czech republic.

Required reading:

Comparative approach: Preambles of the constitutions of Central European states.

Week 11

Class: 11.1 Eleven years of the membership of Central European states in the European Union.

Required reading:

Central European news servers and other websites relevant for the Country Report as specified by the instructor

Assignment:

CE Country Portfolio due

Class: 11.2 The elections into the European Parliament in May 2014.

Required reading:

The results of the elections into the European Parliament in May 2014.

Statistics.

Week 12

Class: 12.1 USA relations with central European countries: History after 1918.

Class: 12.2 Final test.

Week 13

Class: 13.1 Final Exam Week

Evaluation of the Final Test.

Final Paper due before Class 1

Class: 13.2 Final Exam Week

Presentation of Final Papers and discussion.

Course Materials

Readings

The students will be offered regularly English-speaking articles on fresh developments in the countries under review (EU information, newspapers, and academic journals).

- Ash, Timothy Garton: *The Magic Lantern*. New York, Random House, 1990.
- Bockmann, Johanna: *Markets in the Name of Socialism*. Stanford University Press, 2011
- Čornej, Petr-Pokorný, Jiří: *A Brief History of the Czech Lands*. Praha, 2003.
- Cornwall, M.-Evans, R.J.W.: *Czechoslovakia in a Nationalist and Fascist Europe*. Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Glenn, John K. III.: *Framing Democracy*. Stanford University Press, 2001.
- Ferrell, Robert: *Woodrow Wilson and WWI*. Harper/Row Publ., N.Y., 1985.
- Hauner, Milan: *Fall and Rise of a Nation*. Columbia University Press, 2004.
- Henderson, K.-Robinson, N.: *Post-Communist Politics*. London 1997.
- Hyde-Price, Adrian: *The International politics of East-Central Europe*. Manchester University Press, 1996.
- Ines, Abby: *Czechoslovakia*. Yale University Press, 2001.
- Magris, Claudio: *Danube*. London, 2001.
- Mason, David S.: *Revolution and Transition in East-Central Europe*. Boulder, 1996.
- Mazower, Mark: *Hitler's Empire (Nazi Rule in Occupied Europe)*. London – New York, 2008.
- Michnik, Adam: *Letters from Freedom*. University of California Press, 1998.
- Sayer, Derek: *The Coast of Bohemia. A Czech History*. New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1998.
- Stein, Eric: *Czecho/Slovakia. Ethnic Conflict - Constitutional Fissure - Negotiated Breakup*. Michigan, University of Michigan Press, 1997.
- Tismaneanu, Vladimir: *The Revolutions of 1989*. London/New York, Routledge, 1999.