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PSCI 321.01: Post-Communist Politics

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Post-communist

Instructor: Eric H. Hines
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Email: eric.hines@umontana.edu

Course Number: PSCI 335
Class Location: LA 337
Meeting Time: MWF 9:10AM-10:00AM
Website: Moodle (<http://umonline.umat.edu>)
CRN (Add/Drop): 74789

You may schedule an appointment with me online at <http://meetme.so/erichines>.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PREREQUISITES

The purpose of this course is to analyze the long-term prospects for democratization and democratic consolidation in postcommunist states with a focus on Central and Eastern Europe including Russia. The course presents the case that the remarkable divergence in the political and economic development of the 29 postcommunist states is the result of differences in the social and economic legacy of the communism, pre-communist economic development, how communism ended, and different institutional arrangements and developments. To support this claim, the course will show that:

- Despite efforts to homogenize the theory of Communism in different states, the practice of communism still differed because of numerous theoretical variations.
- The dual political system in communist states where the Communist party and the state held overlapping responsibility affected the capacity of postcommunist states.
- Communist-era social policy and its transformation of the structure of society continue to influence support for the state and democracy in postcommunist states.
- Democratization in postcommunist countries came in two distinct waves, leading to highly divergent outcomes in the success of democratic transitions.
- Transforming the economies of postcommunist states was the most complicated aspect of the transition from communism and the source of the greatest variation.
- Democratization in postcommunist countries came in two distinct waves, leading to highly divergent outcomes in the success of democratic transitions.
- The institutional structures and practices postcommunist countries have converged towards one of two equilibria — a democratic one and an authoritarian one.
- Politics in postcommunist states is visibly different than politics in Western states, especially in the role political parties and civil society play in politics.

Prerequisites and Required Skills: To enroll, students must have junior or senior standing. There are no prerequisite courses or knowledge required for this course, but completion of PSCI 220 and a knowledge of comparative government is recommended.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Materials. There is three required books for sale at the UC bookstore or online:

Holmes, Leslie. 2009. *Communism: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199551545.

White, Stephan. Richard Sakwa, and Henry E. Hale. 2014. *Developments in Russian Politics* 8. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. ISBN: 9780822358121.

White, Stephen, Judy Batt, and Paul G. Lewis. 2013. *Developments in Central and East European Politics* 5. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. ISBN: 9780822354826.

All other required materials are available on [Moodle](#).

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENTS

After completing this course, students will be able to:		This will be assessed by:
1	Explain the competing values and interests that define the unique boundaries of post-communist politics.	Midterm Exam Essay Final Exam Essay
2	Use theory to evaluate the status of postcommunist political institutions and explain institutional development.	Final Exam Essay Final Paper
3	Compare and contrast competing ideas about communism, democracy, capitalism, and related concepts.	Midterm Exam Essay
4	Assess the role historical patterns of economic and political development affect post-communist states.	Midterm Exam Essay Final Paper

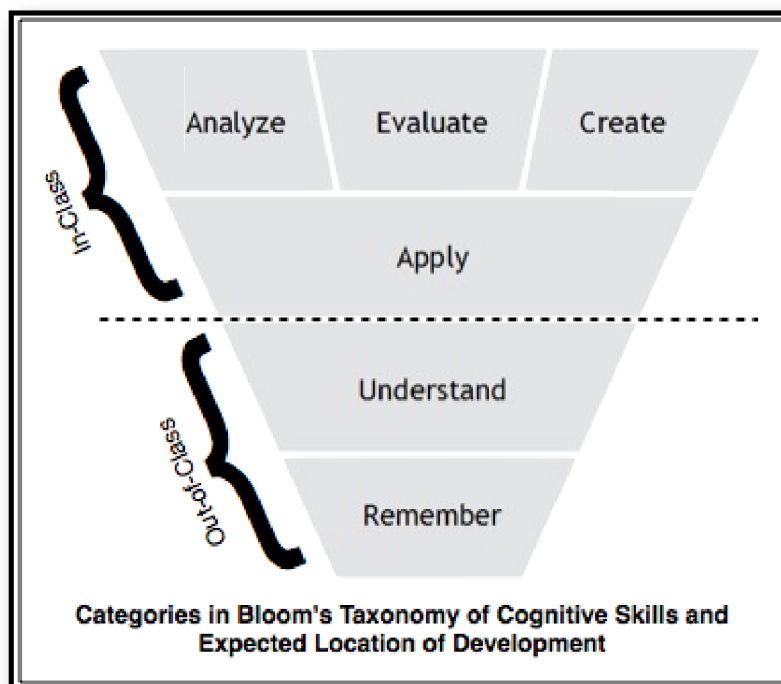
COURSE PHILOSOPHY, CLASS PEDAGOGY, AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning is more than memorizing facts and answering questions on a test. It is the process of enhancing your ability to use information to understand of how things work and how to make them better. This course will enhance your ability to:

- Ask the right questions
- Frame good problems.
- Acquire information.
- Evaluate sources of information.
- Critically investigate & solve problems.
- Make choices among alternatives.
- Explain abstract ideas to others.
- Generalize to new situations.

Pedagogy

The structure of this course is influenced by a taxonomy of cognitive skills developed by Benjamin Bloom. He identified six steps to the learning process students must complete to master a subject and organized them into a pyramid (see figure below) to show how more complex skills developed on a foundation of simpler ones. In this course, students will focus on remembering and understanding concepts outside of class, while in-class time will be focused on the application of concepts.



Learning Objectives

Bloom translated his taxonomy into discrete and measurable actions called learning objectives, which are statements that start with an action (verb) associated with the intended cognitive skill and end with an object that describes the knowledge students are expected to acquire or construct. Learning objectives have been developed for each topic based in this course and are the basis for all instruction and assessment.

Student Responsibilities

This learning philosophy imposes upon students the responsibility to:

1. Review the learning objectives for each topic.
2. Complete all assigned readings and exercises before class.
3. Ask the professor for assistance if they difficulty with specific learning objectives.
4. Attend class regularly, but only when they are fully prepared to participate.
5. Complete all course assignments by their deadlines (Late work is not accepted).
6. Review all feedback from the instructor, including feedback posted online.
7. Ask for clarification if instructions or feedback are not fully understood.
8. Finish the class (University policy on incompletes will be strictly enforced).
9. Inform the instructor beforehand if they cannot fulfill these responsibilities.

CLASS POLICIES

Academic Misconduct

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which is available for review online at: <http://life.umt.edu/VPSA/name/StudentConductCode>.

Accessibility and Students with Disabilities

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please present the instructor with a letter from [Disability Services for Students](#) (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and suggested accommodations.

The instructor has attempted to make all course material accessible. If you find course material that has barriers to accessibility, please notify the instructor as soon as possible so the oversight can be corrected as quickly as possible.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following paragraphs outline the basic requirements for this course. More detailed information on specific assignments can be found on Moodle.

Weekly Reading Responses (100 points). Each week on Friday, I will post a short question based on the week's readings on Moodle. Students will submit a 1-2 paragraph response to the question directly in Moodle by the following Wednesday. I will randomly select between 2-3 responses to grade and average the grades to arrive at a reading response score.

Simulation and Debriefing Paper (300 points). Students will engage in a simulation of the politics of regime change in the fictional country of Ruritania. After the simulation, students will write a combination debriefing paper and midterm covering communism's historical legacy and the transition to postcommunism.

Final Paper (300 points). Using a theoretical framework developed in the course, you will write a 10-12 page paper comparing one aspect of the political system (executive, legislature, judiciary, political parties, federalism/unitary system, etc) in at least four postcommunist and provide an explanation using economic, cultural, sociological, international, and historical factors to account for why the countries evolved in similar or different ways.

Final Exam (300 points). A final take-home exam covering postcommunist institutions will be due at the end of the course's schedule final exam period via Moodle.

GRADING

Grades are based on a 1000 pt. scale with points.

Grading Scale. A = 1000-930, A- = 929-900, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-639, F = <600.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I reserve the right to make changes to this course schedule. Any changes will be posted to Moodle and distributed to students via email. The textbooks are marked by a word from their title. Additional materials marked with an (M) are available on Moodle.

Date	Topic	Assignment
8/25	Introduction; Distribution of Syllabus	
8/27	Puzzle: The Quality of Post-Communist Democracy	Central, Ch. 14
8/29	Framework: Communism	Holmes, Chapter 1
9/1	LABOR DAY	NO CLASS
9/3	Framework: Postcommunism	Holmes (1997); Clark (2002) - (M)
9/5	Framework: Democracy	Dahl (1998) - (M)
9/8	Framework: Democratization	Welzel (2008) - (M)
9/10	Historical Legacy: A Brief History of Communism	Holmes, Chapter 2
9/12	Historical Legacy: The Communist Political System	Holmes, Chapter 3
9/15	Historical Legacy: The Communist Economic System	Holmes, Chapter 4
9/17	Historical Legacy: Communist Social Policy	Holmes, Chapter 5
9/19	Historical Legacy: International Communism	Holmes, Chapter 6
9/22	Democratic Transition, Part I	Return, Ch. 7, pgs. 181-195
9/24	Democratic Transition, Part II	Return, Ch. 7, pgs. 195-209
9/26	Special Focus: The End of the Soviet Union	Sakwa, Ch. 2 - (M)
9/29	Economic Transition	Central, Ch. 12; Russian, Ch. 11
10/1	Outcomes: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland	Central, Chapters 1-2
10/3	Outcomes: Western Balkans and the East	Central, Chapters 3-4
10/6	Outcomes: Russia	Russian, Chapter 1
10/8	Special Focus: The Role of the EU	Central, Ch. 5
10/10	Special Focus: Hungary	Readings TBD - (M)
10/13	<i>Ruritania Simulation</i>	
10/15	<i>Ruritania Simulation</i>	
10/17	<i>Ruritania Simulation</i>	
10/20	Political Culture	Schöpflin (1990) - (M)
10/22	Postcommunist Public Opinion	Rose (2009), Chs. 2, 11, 16 & 17 - (M)

Date	Topic	Assignment
10/24	Civil Society: Central and Eastern Europe	Central, Ch. 11
10/27	Civil Society: Russia	Russian, Ch. 7
10/29	Institutions: Executives I	Central, Ch. 7
10/31	Institutions: Executives II	Russian, Ch. 2
11/3	Institutions: Parliaments I	Central, Ch. 9
11/5	Institutions: Parliaments II	Russian, Ch. 3
11/7	Institutions: Elections I	Central, Ch. 8
11/10	Institutions: Elections II	Russian, Chs. 4 and 6
11/12	Institutions: Political Parties I	Central, Ch. 10
11/14	Institutions: Political Parties II	Russian, Ch. 5
11/17	Institutions: Judiciary	Smithey and Ishiyama (2002) - (M)
11/19	Institutions: Media	Russian, Ch. 8
11/21	Institutions: Federalism	Russian, Ch. 10
11/24	Special Focus: Russian Foreign Policy	Russian, Chs. 13-14, TBD
Thanksgiving Break: No Class November 26-28		
12/1	Special Focus: Social Policy in Central Europe	Central, Ch. 13
12/3	Special Focus: Russian Social Policy	Russian, Ch. 12
12/5	Conclusions	Final Paper Due @ 11:55 pm (M)
		Final Exam Due (M)