

Department of History, Classics, and Religion

HIST 416 (2022 Fall)

Topics in the History of Eastern Europe

SOCIETY AND POLITICS IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Instructor: Adam Takács (Hungarian Visiting Professor)

Office: Tory 2-36

Office hours: W 12:00-13:30, or by appointment

Course website: eClass

Class: W 14:00-15:50

Place: Tory 2-44

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Course Description and Objectives

Discontinuity and unequal development are crucial features of the historical trajectory of Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th century. The alternation between the imperial and nation-state frameworks and the transitions between different political regimes decisively shaped this development. Building on these premises, the seminar will explore some of the main features of 20th century Central European society and politics, focusing on specific geographic areas and chronological junctions. On the one hand, the cases of Poland, Czechoslovakia (Bohemia) and Hungary will provide the focus for the historical studies. On the other hand, within these topics, particular attention will be paid to the turning points marked by three dates – 1918, 1945 and 1989 – and the political and social factors that influenced them. It is within this geographical and temporal framework that we will explore the facts and opportunities offered by nationalism, communism and democratic development for the region under study, as well as the impact of the surrounding imperial states (especially the Habsburg Empire, Germany and the Soviet Union).

Format of the Course

Each week a more general historical topic or case study will be presented and discussed in class which are based around a period marked with a core date (1918, 1945, 1989). The first part of the course will consist of a lecture and PPT presentation given by the instructor followed, in the second part, by a class discussion of the lecture, the assigned readings, questions, remarks, etc.

Grade Distribution

Attendance and Participation	20%
Glossary Articles	(3x10%) = 30%
Reading Analysis	20%
Final Paper	30%

Attendance and Participation

Active participation in weekly discussions is central to this course. Active participation means much more than just regular attendance in class; it means asking questions, commenting on lectures, offering thoughtful responses to weekly readings and questions in discussions. Comments or questions that are insightful and thought-provoking are especially welcome.

Glossary Articles

A glossary article should be written about a historical person, a historical event, and a historical concept in relation to the topics under study in the course. The aim is to write a short and factual essay concluding with a brief historical evaluation. The constraint is that each article should be chosen from a different period (1918, 1945, 1989) and in relation to a different country (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary). Length: 250 words each (Word or PDF documents). Submission dates: 2022 12 October; 2 November; 30 November.

Reading Analysis

The reading analysis can be written on any of the historical monographs given in the preliminary reading list. Papers should discuss the topic, the composition, and the purpose of the chosen book, the authors' arguments as well as pinpointing major issues within a selected theme. Length: 1500 words (Word or PDF document). Submission date: 2022, 15 November.

Final Paper

The final paper consists in completing a research paper on a historical subject related to the topics discussed during the semester. The topic chosen, which must be approved in advance by the instructor, can be a specific event in the history of a country, a social or political process, or a subject that provides an opportunity for comparative analysis. Papers should be based on the analysis of primary or secondary sources and engage the relevant literature of the topic. Further details on final papers will be discussed in class. Length: 3000 words. Submission date: 2022 14 December.

Grading and Evaluation

Marks for assignments and the final paper are given in percentages, to which letter grades are also assigned, according to the table below. The percentage mark resulting from the entire term work and examination then produces the final letter grade for the course. Grades are not final until approved by the department's chair.

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Percent Value	Grade Point Value
Excellent	A+	95-100	4.0
	A	90-94	4.0
	A-	84-89	3.7
Good	B+	78-83	3.3
	B	73-77	3.0
	B-	70-72	2.7
Satisfactory	C+	67-69	2.3
	C	61-66	2.0
	C-	55-60	1.7
Poor	D+	52-54	1.3
Minimal Pass	D	50-51	1.0
Failure	F	Below 50	0.0

Important Information

Course Material

Lecture materials (PPT slides) and weekly readings will be available through eClass.

Submission of Coursework:

All written assignments must be submitted using the electronic drop box in eClass. Unless a specific exception has been arranged, assignments sent per email will not be accepted. Comments and grades on assignments will be provided in eClass too. Unless a medical (or equivalent) excuse is provided, late assignments will be penalized by two (2) percentage points per day (including weekends); assignments more than a week late will receive a mark of 0%.

Policy about course outlines can be found in Course Requirements, Evaluation Procedures and Grading of the University Calendar.

Email Communication:

The instructor will communicate by e-mail with students using university e-mail addresses. Normally, the instructor expects to reply to e-mail queries within 2 days during the working week. The instructor generally does not answer e-mail inquiries on evenings or weekends. Students who wish to communicate with the instructor are encouraged to meet personally during office hours, at another convenient time by appointment, or at the end of class.

Course Calendar

Please note that the instructor may make minor changes to the syllabus over the course of the semester.

Week 1. Sept. 7. – Introduction to the Course

Week 2. Sept. 14. – Central-Eastern Europe on the Historical Balance Sheet

Week 3. Sept. 21. – The Remake of Poland

Week 4. Sept. 28. – The Birth of Czechoslovakia

Week 5. Oct. 5. – The Dissection of Hungary and the Treaty of Trianon

Week 6. Oct. 12. – The World War II and the Communist Takeover of Poland

Week 7. Oct. 19. – The Establishment of Communist System in Czechoslovakia

Week 8. Oct. 26. – Communist Rule and Stalinization in Hungary

Week 9. Nov. 2. – Democratic Movements and Regime Change in Poland

Week 10. Nov. 9. Reading week – *No class*

Week 11. Nov. 16. – The Collapse of the Communist System in Czechoslovakia

Week 12. Nov. 23. – Democratic Transition in Hungary

Week 13. Nov. 30. – Nationalism, Communism and Democratization in East Central Europe

14. Dec. 7. – Conclusion of the Class

Academic Integrity: The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures: Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Disclaimer: Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism in any form, and any other form of academic dishonesty, will not be tolerated and will be penalized to the fullest possible extent. Any time you use someone else's words or ideas to make a point, you must cite and acknowledge their work. All outside sources must be given credit and cited and should be clearly separated from the rest of your work. Make sure to use a footnote, and quote when using someone else's work.

Students should review the [Code of Student Behaviour](#), since ignorance is not acceptable as a defence in cases of academic offences. You may also wish to consult:

- [Notice to Instructors Regarding Plagiarism, Cheating, Misrepresentation of Facts and Participation in an Offence](#)
- the [Academic Discipline Process](#) and the [Student Pages](#) which include links to the Integrity Handbooks and Avoiding and Preventing Cheating.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

[The Academic Success Centre](#) provides professional academic support to help students maximize their academic success and achieve their academic goals. We offer appointments, advising, group workshops, online courses, and specialized programming year-round to students in all university programs, and at all levels of achievement and study.

They also administer the University of Alberta's [Duty to Accommodate procedure](#) for students and works with students, instructors, campus units, Faculties and departments, community and government agencies, and on and off-campus service providers to coordinate students' disability-related accommodation needs for participation in university programs.

For general information and to register for services visit the [Academic Accommodations](#) webpage.

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

[The First Peoples' House](#) provides an environment of empowerment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners to achieve personal and academic growth.

[Health and Wellness Support for Students](#) outlines available mental and physical health resources that are offered on-campus and in the community.

[The Office of the Student Ombuds](#) is a confidential service that strives to ensure that university processes related to students operate as fairly as possible. We offer information, advice, and support to students, faculty, and staff as they deal with academic, discipline, interpersonal, and financial issues related to student programs.

Learning and working environment: The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring that all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment.

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) section of the University Calendar.