

GOVT 731 003 / HIST 555 001: Central Asian Politics
George Mason University—Fall 2007
Wednesdays, Robinson Hall B122, 4.30-7.10 PM

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Course Description:

This course draws on social science and history readings so as to develop a comprehensive understanding of modern Central Asia. Lying between the Middle East, China and Russia, Central Asia is home to great cultural and resource wealth as well as to some of the 21st century's most pressing challenges. From the oil boom towns of Kazakhstan to the opium poppy fields of Afghanistan, the economics, politics and conflicts of Central Asia are critical to regional and often global stability and development. This course will examine topics such as: the effects of Soviet and pre-Soviet historical legacies on contemporary Central Asia; past and present processes of ethnic conflict, political protest and social mobilization; and the evolution of diverse forms of Islam throughout the region. In addition to seminar readings, students will, through real time video conferencing, periodically discuss Central Asian history, politics, current events and culture with graduate students at the American University of Central Asia (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan). Readings and interactive seminar discussions will offer multiple perspectives, thereby enabling students to identify, contextualize and address the obstacles and opportunities Central Asian states and society now face.

Course Objectives:

- By the close of this course, students will be able to identify challenges confronting the post Soviet Central Asian states of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan
- Critically evaluate US and international policy toward Central Asian political development
- Add to the academic study and policy analysis of Central Asian regime change

Course Readings:

1. Books—we will be using several texts throughout the course. While the majority of these texts are available through electronic or library reserve, students may also purchase texts through online retailers. Students are particularly encouraged to purchase the following two books, which we will be reading in their entirety:

- Jeff Sahadeo and Russell Zanca, eds., *Everyday Life in Central Asia* (Indiana University Press, June 2007)
 - Adeb Khalid, *Islam After Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (Berkeley, 2007)
2. Course Packet—These readings are denoted in the reading list by two asterisks, **.
 3. Periodicals—Understanding current events is central to our study of Central Asia and comparative politics. The following resources provide good overviews of Central Asian Current Events:
 - *Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty*: www.rferl.org
 - *EurasiaNet*: <http://www.eurasianet.org>
 4. Central Asia Internet Forums—The following forums/blogs provide compelling contributions from Central Asia scholars and enthusiasts. This is the Wild West (or East) of Central Asian studies and you are encouraged to contribute!
 - www.registan.net
 - <http://www.neweurasia.net>

Course Requirements:

1. Students are required to attend all classes.
2. Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings prior to class and to be prepared for class discussion.
3. There will be a short geography quiz the fourth week of class.
4. There will be one *mid-term exam*. Students will be asked to complete two of three possible essay questions.
5. All students are required to write a **20 page paper** and present their findings to the class (presentations of 10-15 minutes). Paper topics as well as a list of possible research resources will be distributed in class.
6. Students will be asked to write 5 précis of 500 words each. Précis should critically analyze one of the week's readings and will be graded on students' clarity of writing and understanding of central issues.

**Make-up exams and quizzes will be given only if students have proper documentation. If you anticipate you will have a conflict due to travel, please let me know within the first three weeks of class.

**This syllabus may change as the semester progresses.

Honor Code:

Much of the written work for this class will be submitted electronically through WebCT. Essays may be processed through on-line databases so as to access the originality of work.

The 2007-2008 George Mason University Catalog Honor System and Code states: “Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing of academic work and related materials constitute Honor Code violations. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty must report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee.” Students are encouraged to read the full Honor Code in the University Catalogue (<http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor13>) and to remain vigilant against any violation of the Code in their own work. Any cases of academic dishonesty in this course will be pursued according to the guidelines detailed in the George Mason Catalog.

Please do see me if you have any questions regarding the honor code.

Special Needs:

Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should contact the Disability Resource Center (703) 993-2474, or the Equity Office (703) 993-8730.

Grading

Geography Quiz—25 questions	20
Mid-term	100
In Class Exercises / Discussion	80
5 Précis	100
Research Paper and Presentation	200
Total	500 points

Grading Scale:

	A: 470-500	A-: 450-469
B+: 435-449	B: 415-434	B-: 400-415
C+: 390-399	C: 360-389	C-: 350-359
D+: 340-349	D: 310-339	D-: 300-309
F: 299 and below		

Schedule:

Class session	Topic	Readings and Seminar Meeting
WK 1: 8/29	Course Introduction	<p>Lecture—Overview of Course and Introduction to Central Asia</p> <p>Uzbek selection from BBC Documentary: Simon Reeve, <i>Holidays in the Danger Zone: The Stans</i> (BBC, 2005)—<i>Entertaining, but note conceptions Reeve has of Central Asians.... and Central Asians have of Reeve</i></p>
WK 2: 9/5	Defining Eurasia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anne McClintock, “The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term ‘Post-Colonialism,’” <i>Social Text</i> 31/32 (1992), pp. 84-98.** 2. Scott Levi, “Turks and Tajiks in Central Asian History,” Ch. 1 in <i>Every Day Life</i> (hereafter <i>EDL</i>) (18 pages). 3. Adrienne Edgar, “Everyday Life among the Turkmen Nomads,” in <i>EDL</i> (10 pages). 4. Olivier Roy, <i>The New Central Asia</i> (2000), Ch. 2, “The Russian Conquest,” (pp. 25-35). ** 5. Stephen Kotkin, “Mongol Commonwealth? Exchange and Governance across the Post-Mongol Space,” <i>Kritika</i> 8:3 (Summer 2007), pp. 487-531.**
WK 3: 9/12	Soviet Rule and Identity in Eurasia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Benedict Anderson, <i>Imagined Communities</i> (Verso, 1991), Chs. 1-4.** 2. Francine Hirsch, “Toward an Empire of Nations: Border-Making and the Formation of Soviet National Identities” <i>Russian Review</i> 59:2 (2000), pp. 201-226. ** 3. Douglas Northrop, “Languages of Loyalty: Gender, Politics, and Party Supervision in Uzbekistan, 1927-41,” <i>Russian Review</i> 59:2 (2000), pp. 179-200. ** 4. Morgan Y. Liu, “A Central Asian Tale of Two Cities: Locating Lives and Aspirations in a Shifting Post-Soviet Cityscape,” in <i>EDL</i> (19 pages).
WK 4: 9/19	Post-Soviet Central Asia—State Power and “Deep Identities”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ed Schatz, <i>Modern Clan Politics: The Power of “Blood” in Kazakhstan and Beyond</i> (2004), Chs. 1, 5-7 (pp. 3-20, 95-162).** 2. Kathleen Collins, “The Logic of Clan Politics: Evidence from the Central Asian Trajectories,” <i>World Politics</i> 56:2

		<p>(2004), pp. 224-261. **</p> <p>3. Lowell Barrington, Erik Herron and Brian Silver, “The Motherland Is Calling: Views of Homeland among Russians in the Near Abroad,” <i>World Politics</i> (January 2003), pp. 290-313.**</p>
WK 5: 9/26	What Color Is Your Revolution?	<p>1. Steven Fish, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” <i>World Politics</i> (October 2002), pp. 4-37. **</p> <p>2. Fiona Hill and Kevin Jones, “Fear of Democracy or Revolution: The Reaction to Andijon,” <i>Washington Quarterly</i> (Summer 2006), pp. 111-125. **</p> <p>3. Scott Radnitz, “What Really Happened in Kyrgyzstan” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> (April 2006), pp. 132-146. **</p> <p>4. Andrew Reynolds, “The Curious Case of Afghanistan,” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 17:2 (April 2006), pp. 104-117. **</p> <p>5. Article on Tajikistan-TBA.**</p> <p>Documentary: Galima Bukharbaeva, Director IWPR, Uzbekistan, <u>Firsthand Eyewitness to the Andijan Events</u>, Washington, DC, September 2005</p>
WK 6: 10/3	Gender, Family, Society and State in Central Asia	<p>1. Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” <i>Theatre Journal</i> 40:4 (December 1988), pp. 519-531.**</p> <p>2. Charles Hirschkind and Saba Mahmood, “Feminism, the Taliban, and Politics of Counter-Insurgency,” <i>Anthropological Quarterly</i> 75:2 (Spring 2002), pp. 339-354.**</p> <p>3. Douglas Northrop, “The Limits of Liberation: Gender, Revolution, and the Veil in Everyday Life in Soviet Uzbekistan,” Ch. 6, <i>EDL</i>.</p> <p>4. Marianne Kamp, “The Wedding Feast: Living the New Uzbek Life in the 1930s,” Ch. 7, <i>EDL</i>.</p> <p>5. Elizabeth Constantine, “Practical Consequences of Soviet Policy and Ideology for Gender in Central Asia and Contemporary Reversal,” Ch. 8, <i>EDL</i></p> <p>6. Greta Uehling, “Dinner with Akhmet,” Ch. 9, <i>EDL</i>.</p>

WK 7: 10/10	MIDTERM	MIDTERM
WK 8: 10/17	Islam in Central Asia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Edward W. Said, "Impossible Histories: Why the many Islams cannot be simplified," <i>Harper's Magazine</i> (July 2002), pp. 69-74. ** 2. Adeb Khalid, <i>Islam After Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia</i> (Berkeley, 2007).
WK 9: 10/24	Approaching Islam through Every Day Life	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eric McGlinchey, "Divided Faith: Trapped between State and Islam in Uzbekistan," Ch. 19, <i>EDL</i>. 2. David Abramson and Elyor Karimov, "Sacred Sites, Profane Ideologies: Religious Pilgrimage and the Uzbek State," Ch. 20, <i>EDL</i>. 3. Sean Roberts, "Everyday Negotiations of Islam in Central Asia: Practicing Religion in the Uyghur Neighborhood of Zarya Vostoka in Almaty, Kazakhstan," Ch. 21, <i>EDL</i> 4. David Montgomery, "Namaz, Wishing Trees, and Vodka: The Diversity of Everyday Religious Life in Central Asia," Ch. 22, <i>EDL</i>. <p>Documentary: <i>Habiba: A Sufi Saint from Uzbekistan (Part 1 of Constanzo Allione's, Where the Eagles Fly: Portraits of Women in Power, 1995)</i></p>
WK 10: 10/31	Central Asia's Political Economy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" <i>World Politics</i> (April 2001), pp. 325-361.** 2. Pauline Jones Luong & Erika Weinthal, "Prelude to the Resource Curse: Explaining Oil and Gas Development Strategies in the Soviet Successor States and Beyond," <i>Comparative Pol. Studies</i> 34:4 (2001), pp. 367-395. ** 3. Cynthia Werner, "Women, Marriage, and the Nation-State: The Rise of Nonconsensual Bride Kidnapping in Post-Soviet Kazakhstan," in Jones Luong, <i>The Transformation of Central Asia</i>, pp 59-89.** 4. Seymour M. Hersh, "The Price of Oil," <i>The New Yorker</i>, July 8, 2001. **

<p>WK 11: 11/7</p>	<p>The Trafficking Dilemma—The Drug and Sex Trade and the Crisis Among Central Asia’s Youth</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women” in Wendy Kolmar and Frances Bartkowski, <i>Feminist Theory: A Reader</i> (McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2005).** 2. Saltanat Sulaimanova, “Migration Trends in Central Asia and the Case of Trafficking of Women,” in Daniel L. Burghart and Theresa Sabonis-Helf, eds., <i>In the Tracks of Tamerlane</i>, pp. 377-400. ** 3. Vanda Felbab-Brown, “Afghanistan: When Counter-narcotics Undermines Counterterrorism,” <i>Washington Quarterly</i> 28:4 (Fall 2005), pp. 55-72. ** 4. Svante E Cornell and Niklas L P Swanstrom, “The Eurasian Drug Trade: A Challenge to Regional Security,” <i>Problems of Post – Communism</i> 53:4 (Jul/Aug 2006).** <p>Film: Darezhan Omirbaev, <i>Kairat</i> (Kazakhstan, 1991)—How Do the challenges of youth in Central Asia compare to those elsewhere?</p>
<p>WK 12: 11/14</p>	<p>Challenges to Central Asia’s Environment</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” <i>Science</i> 162: 3859 (Dec. 13, 1968), pp. 1243-1248.** 2. Elinor Ostrom, “Coping with Tragedies of the Commons,” <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, Vol. 2 (1999), pp. 493-535.** 3. Erika Weinthal, Beyond the State: Transnational Actors, NGOs, and Environmental Protection in Central Asia, in Jones Luong, <i>The Transformation of Central Asia</i> pp. 246-270.** 4. Philip Micklin, “The Aral Sea Disaster,” <i>Annual Review of Earth and Planetary Sciences</i> 35 (May 2007), pp. 47-72.** <p>Film: Germ warrior Andy Weber : Neutralizing Bioterror Weapons (ABC news productions, 2002).</p>
<p>WK 13: 11/28</p>	<p>Aiding Central Asia—The Pitfalls and Successes of Foreign Aid</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thomas Carothers, <i>Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve</i> (Washington, D.C. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999), Readings TBA. ** 2. Alexander Warkotsch, “The OSCE as an agent of socialisation? International norm Dynamics and political

		<p>change in Central Asia,” <i>Europe-Asia Studies</i> 59:5 (July 2007), pp. 829-846.**</p> <p>3. Barnett R. Rubin, “Crafting a Constitution for Afghanistan,” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 15:3 (July 2004), pp. 5-19.**</p> <p>4. Eric McGlinchey and Erica Johnson, “Aiding the Internet in Central Asia,” <i>Democratization</i> 14:2 (April 2007), pp. 273-288.**</p> <p>5. Mat Bivens, “Aboard the Gravy Train,” <i>Harper’s Magazine</i> (August 1997) **</p>
WK 14: 12/5	Select Topics in Central Asia	Readings / Presentations – TBA