The Governments and Politics of Eastern Europe

Spring 2022, 21:790:330:01; Tuesday, Thursday 2:30-3:50pm
Prof. Alexander J. Motyl; 728 Hill Hall; ajmotyl@rutgers.edu

Learning Objectives

DEVELOP ARGUMENTS IN CLEAR AND COHERENT TEXTS AND ORAL COMMUNICATIONS; READ A VARIETY OF TEXTS FOR MEANING AND INFORMED ANALYSIS; EVALUATE INFORMATION CRITICALLY; PRODUCE IDEAS AND TEXTS CREATIVELY; UNDERSTAND AND USE METHODS AND FORMS OF INQUIRY SPECIFIC TO THE BROAD DISCIPLINARY CATEGORY (OR CATEGORIES) WITHIN WHICH THE COURSE FALLS; UNDERSTAND PAST AND PRESENT INTERRELATIONSHIPS AMONG DIVERSE POLITICAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL, RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND/OR GENDER GROUPS; UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS DEFINING SOCIAL, POLITICAL, CULTURAL, AND/OR INTELLECTUAL QUESTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY AND/OR HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Syllabus

January 18: Introduction.

January 20: What is Eastern Europe? Where is Eastern Europe? Where did it come from?

January 25, 27, February 1, 3, 8, 10: Historical background: empires, wars, and nations.

February 15, 17: State and nation building and democratic breakdowns in the interwar period; the Holodomor as genocide.

February 22, 24: Devastation: Soviet atrocities; World War II; the Holocaust as genocide. FIRST PAPER DUE FEBRUARY 22.

March 1, 3: Nationalist resistance, Communist rule, occupied Germany and Austria, and Cold War.

March 8, 10: Stalinism, Tito, and national Communism. SECOND PAPER DUE MARCH 8.

March 22, 24: De-Stalinization and national rebellions; divided Berlin and Germany’s Ostpolitik.
Readings: http://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/berlin-wall; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rr8oQLHWe4KU

March 29, 31: The collapse of Communism, German reunification, the collapse of the USSR. THIRD PAPER DUE MARCH 29.

April 5, 7: The wars in Yugoslavia; EU and NATO enlargement.

April 12, 14: Putin Russia, war with Ukraine, and the rise of the populist right.

April 19, 21: America and Eastern Europe.

April 26, 28: Eastern Europe within a changing EU, NATO.

Requirements

Students must write three 1-page papers and deliver a 10-minute report on a topic of their choice. Each paper must be exactly one page long, double-spaced, 12-point font, regular margins. Name, date, and assignment topic on one line! No citations or footnotes! PAPERS THAT DEVIATE FROM THESE INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE PENALIZED BY 5 POINTS. PAPERS MUST BE SENT TO AJMOTYL@RUTGERS.EDU BY 2:30PM ON THE DUE DATE. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED. NO EXTRA CREDIT, NO RESUBMISSIONS.

Papers must be written in the form of personal testimonies by:

1. A German soldier who served on the eastern front and returned home in 1919.  
   Due: Feb. 22.
2. A Polish officer who survived the Katyn massacre.  
   Due: March 8.
   Due: March 29.

Grades

The papers and report will be graded on a 0-20 scale. The final grade will be the mathematical average of the four grades.