Course description: This course offers 1) the story of the region caught in the geographical trap between Germany and Russia, 2) lessons from Czech transition to democracy, 3) a guide to current Czech and Slovak politics and societies 4) field trips and prominent guests. From the establishment of Czechoslovakia through the post-WWII expulsion of Germans and the Prague Spring of 1968 to the Velvet Revolution, Václav Havel and the post-Havel era. Students will gain basic knowledge of Central Europe’s political, historical and economic issues. Critical reading of sources and independent thinking required.

Grading policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation/attendance</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge test</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical review of a film</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</tbody>
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Schedule of classes

Week 1
25 January - OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE (or “The Greatest Czech”)

27 January - WHO IS WHO IN THE REGION (or “Something between New Mexico and New Jersey”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics, pp. 1-7 (Introduction to A Small Country)
Facing History, pp. 30-31
Woodrow Wilson: Fourteen Points

Week 2
1 February - AFTER THE GREAT WAR: THE FATHERS OF CENTRAL EUROPE (or “Professor Masaryk and Field Marshall Pilsudski”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics pp. 19-23
J.V. Polisensky: History of Czechoslovakia in Outline, pp. 111-121
Robin H.E. Shepherd: Czechoslovakia. The Velvet Revolution and Beyond, pp. 9-19.
For your interest (in the NYU library): Karel Čapek: Talks with TGM

3 February - THE WORLD WAR II: WARRIORS AND COLLABORANTS (or „Why didn’t Beneš fight?“)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics, pp. 38-43
Saddam’s Lidice (in: The Wall Street Journal)
Facing History, pp. 176-177
For your interest (in the NYU Library): Jan Svěrák: Dark Blue World (a movie on DVD)

Week 3
8 February - POST-WAR EXPULSION. COMMUNIST TAKEOVER. STALINIZATION (or “The Putsch”)
Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
Václav Havel: Edvard Beneš. Dilemmas of a European Politician
Recommended Readings:
Facing History, pp. 210-213

10 February – STALINIZATION. HUNGARY 1956 (or „World´s biggest Stalin statue“)
Recommended Readings:
Charles Gati: Come Clean in Hungary, p. 69

Week 4
15 February - THE PRAGUE SPRING in 1968 (or “The frost coming from Kremlin”)
Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
Ludvík Vaculík: 2000 Words Manifesto
Recommended Readings:
Zdeněk Mlynář: Nightfrost in Prague, pp. 120-123
Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics, pp. 56-61

17 February – THE “NORMALIZATION” IN THE CZECHOSLOVAKIA. POLISH MARTIAL LAW (or “Charter 77 and Solidarity on the scene”)
Required Readings (in Charter 77 and Solidarity on the scene”)
Václav Havel: Power of Powerless (excerpts)
Recommended Readings:
Michael Long: Making history, pp. 10-15
The Declaration of Charter 77
Solidarity (http://countrystudies.us/poland/81.htm)

Week 5
22 February - THE 1989 REVOLUTIONS (or “A miracle of our life”)
Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
Václav Havel: New Year’s Address to the Nation on Jan 1, 1990
Recommended Readings:
T. Carba, A. Koráb, D. Borek: Legacy, pp. 100-103
Carol Skalnik Leff: Czech and Slovak Republics, pp. 75-82

24 February - Knowledge test + BUILDING POLITICAL DEMOCRACY. ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (or “How strong are historical patterns?”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics, pp. 90-102 (Parties and Elections)
Lou Reed: Václav Havel (Time Magazine, Nov 13, 2006)
Week 6
1 March - PRIVATIZATION AND ECONOMIC REFORMS (“The magic of vouchers”)
  Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
  Václav Klaus: Margaret Thatcher (Time Magazine, Nov 13, 2006)
  Recommended Readings:
  Robin H.E. Shepherd: Czechoslovakia. The Velvet Revolution and Beyond, pp. 75-95

3 March - LUSTRATION AND DEALING WITH THE PAST (or “A witch hunt?”)
  Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
  Kieran Williams: A Scorecard for Czech Lustration (Central Europe Review, Nov 1999)
  For your interest (in the NYU Library): Florian Henckel: The Lives of Others (a movie on DVD)

Week 7
8 March – DO NOT LOOK BACK IN ANGER (or “Other lustration models”)
  Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
  Pavel Žáček: Coming to Terms with the Past – the Czech Middle Way (in: Transformation. The Czech Experience, pp. 181-191)

10 March - Visit to the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes (or to a gallery)

Week 8
15 March - THE SPLIT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA (or “The Rise of Vladimír Mečiar”)
  Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
  Carol Skalnik Leff: The Czech and Slovak Republics, pp. 126-141

17 March - MID-TERM EXAM

Week 9 – Spring Break – no classes

Week 10
29 March - CONSTITUTIONS. THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT (and „The Mašín Brothers -- the Greatest Story of the Cold War“)
  Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
  Preambles and the first articles of Czech and of Slovak Constitutions
  Dan Bilefsky: 3 Czech Friends, Cast as Heroes and as Murderers (The New York Times, Jun 2, 2008)

31 March - NEW FOREIGN POLICY (or “The Warsaw Pact dissolved”)
  Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
  Czech-German Declaration of Jan 1997

Week 11
5 April - FREEING THE MEDIA (or “TV Nova story”)
  Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
7 April - THE HIDDEN CHURCH AND ATHEISM IN THE CENTRAL EUROPE (“Does religiosity matter?”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Miriam Therese Winter: Ludmila’s Story (http://www.beliefnet.com)

Week 12
12 April - Discussion with a guest (to be announced)

14 April - SLOVAKIA AFTER THE SPLIT (or “Surviving Mečiar”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Robin H.E. Shepherd: Czechoslovakia. The Velvet Revolution and Beyond, pp. 149-165
The Economist: And the winner is... (Aug 14, 1997)

Week 13
19 April - THE KLAUS GOVERNMENT (or “His rise and fall”)
Required Readings (in the Course Reader):
Václav Havel: The Adress to the Parliament in Rudolfinum, Dec 1997

Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
Steven Saxonberg: The Czech Republic before the New Millenium, pp. 20-33
The Economist: Embarassing for some (Aug 8, 2002)

Week 14
26 April - SLOVAKIA UNDER DZURINDA GOVERNMENT 1998-2006 (or “The new Central European Tiger”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
The Economist: Mikuláš Dzurinda, Slovakia’s turn for the better
Mark Landler: Slovakia No Longer Laggard in Automaking (The NY Times, Apr. 13, 2004)
The Economist: Fragile reformer (Nov 6, 2003)
The Economist Intelligence Unit: Political Forces in the Slovak Republic (Sep 7, 2007)
The Economist Intelligence Unit: Bashing Business (Jun 27, 2008)

28 April - Discussion with a guest (to be announced)

Week 15
3 May - THE CZECH REPUBLIC: THE ERA OF INSTABILITY (or “Through three ČSSD cabinets to 2010 election”)
Recommended Readings (in the Course Reader):
The Economist Intelligence Unit: Political Forces in the Czech Republic (Feb 28, 2007)
The Economist: Up and Limping (Jan 23, 2007)
The Economist Intelligence Unit: Country Profile. The Czech Republic (Jul 2, 2008)

5 May - THE CZECH-&-SLOVAKIA IN THESE DAYS (a discussion)

Week 16
10 May – FINAL EXAM