Class code: Germany and East Central Europe (1871-2000)
POL – UA – 9515-001

Instructor Details
Gaëlle Vassogne PhD
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mobile: 733 723 479
Office hours immediately before and after class, and by arrangement via e-mail

Class Details
Spring 2015
Monday – Wednesday 16.30 – 17:50
Classroom: t.b.a.

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
This course will focus on the history of the culturally rich region of “Mitteleuropa” through analysis of the parallel evolution of Germany and the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. Mitteleuropa as a region produced such important figures as Franz Kafka, Gustav Mahler, Sigmund Freud, Theodor Herzl and Milan Kundera; historical personalities whose influence internationally is indisputable. We’ll delve into the history of the region and on the central role played by German politics and culture from the end of the 19th century, through the turbulent 20th century to the present day.

Emphasis will be on the evolution of the concept of nationalism as well as on Germany’s foreign policy in the “concert of nations”, especially towards its Eastern neighbors. The aim is to achieve an understanding of the complex evolution of national entities and their interaction between the birth of the modern German state and the integration of the Visegrád countries in NATO and the European Union.

The class will be lecture-based, with discussion of primary sources, documentaries and a short field trip.
A weekend study trip to Berlin will take place on the weekend of 23-26 April 2015. The program will include a guided tour of Berlin, visits to the Bundestag, the Berlin Wall Memorial, the Wannsee Villa and Cecilienhof. There will also be optional visits to be decided upon with the students.

Desired Outcomes
The aim of the course is to achieve an understanding of the history of the different national entities that now constitute Germany, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, and of their complex interaction. At the end of the semester, students will possess a solid knowledge of the history of Germany and the countries of Central Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as their interaction and the European context, especially from a political and diplomatic perspective. They will familiarize themselves with the major diplomatic texts involving Germany, Central Europe and the great powers. Moreover, this class will provide a new perspective on the Czech Republic and Central Europe, wider than the often limited approach which concentrates on the Cold War.

Assessment Components
1. Book review 20%
   Each student will choose a book according to his/her interests and write a critical summary. The form of this summary and the nature of the critical perspective depend on the nature of the chosen book and will be discussed with the instructor in each particular case. A list of suggested books is to be found at the end of this syllabus but other choices are possible, if approved by the instructor. The papers should respect the following format: 8 to 12 pages, Times New Roman 12, 1.5 spaced, margins 2.5 cm
2. Mid-term exam 20%
The exam is comprised of 4 essay questions (of which the students will be required to answer only 3). The mid-term exam covers the period from 1871 to 1933. A list of study questions will be provided. Chronologies and summaries will be available on the class website.

3. Presentation on the history of one East Central European country 20%
There are 6 presentation topics: Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia between 1918 and World War II, and Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia from 1945 to 1989. Each presentation should be 20 to 30 minutes long and based on a PowerPoint slide show (which will be emailed to all students after the presentation). It should also include a timeline which will be handed out to all students at the beginning of the presentation. The instructor will be available for help and can review the slide show before the presentation.

4. Final exam 20%
The exam is comprised of 4 essay questions (of which the students will be required to answer only 3). The final exam covers the period from 1933 to 2000. A list of study questions will be provided. Chronologies and summaries will be available on the class website.

5. Participation 20%
The participation reflects involvement in class, which is demonstrated through questions (asked or answered) and the preparedness, as well as the general interest showed by the student in the studied material.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent work. Shows a full mastery of the topic, great engagement in class as well as an organized and personal approach to the questions asked.

**Grade B:** Good work. Shows a proper mastery of the topic, proper research and coherent argumentation. Good participation in class.

**Grade C:** Passable work. Shows a proper mastery of the topic, proper research and sufficient knowledge of the subject and sufficient research.

**Grade D:** Poor work

**Grade F:** Fails to meet the requirements.

**Grade Conversion**

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**Attendance Policy**
Absences only for medical reasons and for religious observance will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). To be excused for religious observance, you must contact the instructor and the Associate Director via e-mail one week in advance of the holiday. Your absence is excused for the holiday only and does not include days of travel associated with the holiday. Unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from your final course grade for every week of classes missed.

**Late Submission of Work**
Late submission of work is possible, with a valid reason. However, this needs to be discussed with the instructor in advance. Unauthorized late submission of work will result in the final grade being reduced by 2% per day.
According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s work as though it were one’s own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one’s own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer’s work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student’s intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science’s Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else’s idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” (Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)

Required Text(s)
Reader to be borrowed from the NYU Prague library and primary material to be posted on the class website.

Internet Research Guidelines
The careful and critical use of internet resources is encouraged, it being understood that Wikipedia and such websites can be a good way to acquire a first view of the presentation subject but cannot be considered scholarly sources and are not sufficient for a good presentation.

None

Session 1
Monday, February 2
Overview of course: Prague as a capital city of Mitteleuropa
Short field trip to Old Town Square (weather permitting)

Session 2
Wednesday, February 4
What is Mitteleuropa? Germany, Austria-Hungary and Central Europe before the 1848 revolution
Assigned reading

Session 3
Monday, February 9
Definition(s) of nationalism
Assigned reading
Further reading

Nationalism and statehood in Germany and Central Europe: an overview

Assigned reading


Session 4
Wednesday, February 11

Germany’s unification

Assigned reading

Session 5
Monday, February 16

Germany from the unification to the beginning of the First World War: an overview

Assigned reading
Gordon A. Craig: *Germany 1866 – 1945*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981. (Chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, 8).

Session 6
Wednesday, February 18

Mitteleuropa after Germany’s unification

Assigned reading

Session 7
Monday, February 23

Germany’s foreign policy: Bismarck’s Balance of powers

Assigned reading

Further reading

Session 8
Wednesday, February 25

The First World War and the end of old Central Europe

Assigned Reading
Jörg Brechtfeld: *Mitteleuropa and German Politics: 1848 to the Present*. London, Palgrave, 1996. (Chapter 4)*


Further reading

Session 9
Monday, March 2

The Paris Peace Conference, the national reconstruction of Europe’s centre and the question of minorities in Central Europe.

Assigned reading


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<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned reading</th>
<th>Further reading</th>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Wednesday, March 18</td>
<td>Central Europe between the two World Wars: the rise of authoritarian regimes</td>
<td>Jörg Brechtfeld: <em>Mitteleuropa and German Politics: 1848 to the Present</em>. London, Palgrave, 1996. (Chapter 4)*</td>
<td>Central Europe between the two World Wars: the rise of authoritarian regimes</td>
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Further reading
Gordon A. Craig: *Germany 1866 – 1945*. Oxford University Press, 1981. (Chapter 20)

The birth of the two German states
Further reading


The Adenauer Era: the end of the German Sonderweg and the Hallstein Doctrine
Assigned reading


Further reading
Timothy Garton Ash: *In Europe’s Name. Germany and the Divided Continent*. London, Jonathan Cape, 1993. (Chapter 5)*

Brandt’s Ostpolitik and the normalization of the relations between Germany and the Eastern Block.
Assigned reading
(http://www.ghi-dc.org/publications/ghipubs/bu_supp/supp001/supp01.html)


Further reading
Timothy Garton Ash: *In Europe’s Name. Germany and the Divided Continent*. London, Jonathan Cape, 1993. (Chapter 5)*

Mikhail Gorbachev, Helmut Kohl: perestroika and the road to German unity
Assigned reading


Further reading


German unity, domestic and international aspects
Assigned reading

Timothy Garton Ash: *In Europe’s Name. Germany and the Divided Continent*. London, Jonathan Cape, 1993. (Chapter 7)*

pp. 233 - 252.*

Further reading
Timothy Garton Ash: *In Europe’s Name. Germany and the Divided Continent*. London,
Jonathan Cape, 1993. (Chapter 8)*


**Central Europe between World War II and the fall of the Wall. Revolt and reform**

Presentations on Hungary and Poland

**Session 27**
Monday, May 11

Central Europe between World War II and the fall of the Wall. Revolt and reform

Presentation on Czechoslovakia

**Session 28**
Wednesday, May 13

**Final exam**

**Session 29**
Monday, May 18

Germany’s new relations with the East Central European countries. A Summary

Return of exams, movie (“Václav Havel – Prague, Castle”, a documentary by Petr Jančárek and Martin Vidiák)

**Session 30**
Wednesday, May 20

Toilet breaks should be taken before or after class. Drinking is permitted in class, eating is not. Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class except for emergencies

Laptops can be used in class with permission of the lecturer

Students are expected to arrive to class promptly and to remain for the duration of the class. If timely attendance becomes a problem, the participation grade will be 0.

**Classroom Etiquette**

**Required Co-curricular Activities**

Study trip to Berlin, 23 -26 April 2015.

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**Books for the book review (suggestions)**


Adrian Hyde-Price: *The International Politics of East Central Europe*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1996