

JSIS 420A/POL S 520A: Post-Soviet Security, Spring 2014

**M/W 1:30-3:20
SMI 311**

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**Office Hours: Wednesday 3:30-4:30 or by appointment
Course website: <https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/srad/20258/>**

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, fifteen new states were created. While this was celebrated in the west as a triumph over its longtime adversary, the people who lived through what (former) Russian President Vladimir Putin called “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century” endured new and varied hardships. The rapid collapse of an empire gave rise to outbreaks of nationalism and secessionism, mass migration and refugees, the decay of infrastructure and public services, and economic collapse. Some of the successor states endured civil war, while others simply remained fragile and corrupt.

This course is about security issues in the region—defined as the fifteen former Soviet republics. We will use a broad conception of security that encompasses not only conventional security issues such as interstate war, but also other large-scale processes that affect individual well-being. Yet, as we learned recently, old-fashioned “hard” security issues like military invasions and territorial changes are still relevant. We will discuss how internal and external sources of insecurity are connected.

Assignments

- Response papers (different for grads and undergrads—see below) analyzing and critiquing reading
- Policy memo analyzing a current topic and making recommendations to an influential decision maker (5-7 pp.)
- Take-home final or research paper

Grading

Grades will be determined by the following formula:

- Response papers—25%
- Class participation—15%
- Policy memo—30%
- Final exam (or research paper)—30%

Important Dates

The response papers are due on the day that we discuss those readings.

The policy memo is due on May 28, with an abstract on April 28.

Oral presentation of findings on June 2.

The optional research paper is due on the same day as the final is due: June 11

Participation

Since this is a seminar, participation is a large part of the grade. Most of every class will be taken up by discussion. Students should complete the reading by the dates indicated below. Instructor reserves the right to administer unannounced quizzes if it appears students are not doing the reading.

Response Papers – for undergraduates

Every student will write 10 1-page response papers (anticipate having to do one for each class session with a handful of reprieves for busy days). *Students will submit it in hard copy at the end of class.* No late response papers will be accepted. Each paper should have two parts:

1) Select two **major** readings of the day (i.e. book chapters or scholarly articles, not newspaper articles). In one sentence, state, in your own words, what you see as the main idea (thesis) of each reading. Then **briefly** interpret or define that argument/concept/idea and explain why it is important for understanding something about post-Soviet security, broadly understood.

2) Write three questions on the reading assigned for that day. The questions may be items that were not addressed but, you think, should have been. They may be framed as a challenge to a claim by an author that is not backed by the evidence, or that contradicts things other authors have argued. Or it might involve an implication of an argument, for example, whether the claim would stand up if taken to its logical conclusion. Or it might be an educated speculation about how the readings can be applied for policy purposes. Or something else entirely, as long as it comes out of the reading.

Be sure to indicate what texts you are referring to. Full citations are not necessary; short-hand is OK.

The paper should not exceed 1 double-spaced 12-point font page. Indicate at the top which of your papers it is, i.e. “response paper #5”. Cleverer titles are optional.

Response papers – for graduate students

Starting in Week 2, graduate students will write *brief* (3 to 4-page; double-spaced, 12-point font) papers on the assigned reading for *four* sessions of your choosing. The papers are designed to help you engage scholarly arguments. They should *not* summarize the reading(s).

Instead, they should link the reading with broader themes addressed in the class. What is the broader significance of the readings? How do they advance our knowledge or frame an issue in a new way?

Each paper should evaluate the main argument(s) in the texts. Is the argument convincing and/or plausible? What evidence does the author bring to support it? What are the author’s assumptions or possible biases? If a claim seems problematic or unsubstantiated, how could it be corrected or further investigated? What additional evidence would strengthen the argument?

Papers should also compare and contrast the arguments in the readings. If there are readings assigned on that day by more than one author, compare them with each other. If only one author is assigned, compare the arguments to readings from previous

weeks. Are the authors' arguments complementary or contradictory? Why do they make different claims? Is it because they make assumptions that lead to different conclusions? Is it because they get their evidence from different sources or gather it in different ways? Is it because they were written at different times and had different amounts of knowledge upon which to build?

Related, how does the reading build on the reading from past weeks? What is important to know in order to situate this week's readings? How are the elements connected? Or alternatively, how does this research contradict the earlier reading?

In writing this paper, you have to be selective. Choose only a few points on which to compare and evaluate the arguments. You do not need to answer all the questions posed here. Feel free to take risks. Don't spend time trying to divine the "right" answers, i.e., what the instructor wants to hear. Follow your ideas where they lead.

Policy memo

This 5-7 page paper should address a pressing security-related issue in the FSU and make concrete recommendations to a relevant decision maker, for example a political leader in the region, a philanthropist, or an international organization. Write as an expert on your chosen topic and as if your opinion will be taken seriously. The style will differ from the response paper.

It should first identify and give some background to the problem to be addressed. Why is it a problem? What historical or other details are necessary to consider in comprehending the problem and deciding how to address it? Whom does the problem affect? Why would it be good to solve? Who would benefit? How has it been addressed in the past? Why have those efforts been insufficient?

Second, it should propose a solution to the problem. What concrete steps should the policy maker take? Why would this work better than what has been tried before? Why is it better than other policies that one could conceivably propose? What kind of resources are necessary to carry it out? How costly (in terms of money, political capital, or time) will it be to mobilize these resources? What are some possible pitfalls or sources of resistance to this policy and how can they be overcome? How will we recognize if the policy is successful? By what metric?

Some points to keep in mind when writing your memo:

- Identify a specific problem and say why (and for whom) it's a problem.
- Note and briefly review strategies that have been tried before.
- Be realistic about what's possible and the resources available.
- Tailor the memo to the reader.
- Anticipate challenges to your strategy and sources of resistance and consider ways of dealing with them.
- Don't spend too much of your 5-7 pages giving background. Give only as much as is necessary.

Turn in a short summary of your proposed memo on 4/28.

Oral presentation

On June 2, students will make a 5-minute presentation of their research, using Power Point. It should summarize the problem and main findings/recommendations of the policy memo.

Final Exam

There will be a take-home final exam due one week from the last day of class. It will consist of several essay questions.

Optional Research Paper

Students can choose to write an 8-10 research paper instead of taking the final exam. Graduate students are especially encouraged to choose this option. Students should submit a one-paragraph abstract for approval by the instructor on 4/28.

Keeping up with Current Events

Finally, students should try to stay informed on developments in the region. The best coverage on the former Soviet Union can be found on BBC (www.bbc.co.uk/), Radio Liberty (rferl.org), Eurasianet (eurasianet.org), Institute of War and Peace Reporting (iwpr.net); and English-language Russian sites Pravda (english.pravda.ru), RIA Novosti (en.rian.ru), and RT (<http://rt.com/usa/>) for the Russian point of view. Be prepared to discuss news in class.

Reading

Articles and book excerpts are on e-reserve. Big files will be on the course website.

There is one required book:

Christoph Zürcher, *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus* (New York University Press, 2007).

Week 1) Introduction

Introduction: 3/31

Security and the Soviet Collapse: 4/2

Roland Paris, "Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?" *International Security* 26(2), Fall 2001: 87-102

Daniel Treisman, *The Return: Russia's journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev*. Simon and Schuster, 2012, chapter 5, 163-196.

"Russia: Excerpts from Putin's State-Of-The-Nation Speech," April 25, 2005.
<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1058630.html>

Arnold Beichman, "Putin's Russia: Stalin Lite."
<http://www.hoover.org/pubaffairs/dailyreport/archive/2820756.html>

Week 2) Transition Legacies

Imperial Legacies: 4/7

Jack Snyder, "Introduction: Reconstructing Politics Amidst the Wreckage of Empire," in Barnett Rubin and Jack Snyder, *Post-Soviet Political Order: Conflict and State-Building* (Routledge, 1998), 1-13.

Rogers Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe," *Daedalus* 124, 2 (1995): 107-132.

Rajan Menon, In the Shadow of the Bear: Security in Post-Soviet Central Asia
International Security, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Summer 1995): 149-181.

Nationalism as Cause and Consequence of Collapse: 4/9

Zurcher, Ch. 2, 11-41

Mark. R Beissinger, "Nationalism and the Collapse of Soviet Communism,"
Contemporary European History 18 (2009): 331-347.

Barry R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict." *Survival* 35.1 (1993): 27-47.

Week 3) State Weakness

Economic Decline in the 1990s: 4/14

Andrei Shleifer, "Government in Transition." *European Economic Review* 41.3-5 (1997): 385-410.

Fred Weir, "Russia's Descent into Latin America," *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 28, No. 51 (Dec. 18, 1993): 2811-2813.

Deepa Narayan and Patti L. Petesch, *Voices of the Poor from Many Lands* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), Chapter 11, "The Russian Federation: Struggling against the Tide," 301-332.

Organized Crime: 4/16

Vadim Volkov, "Violent Entrepreneurship in Post-Communist Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 51(5), Jul., 1999: 741-754.

Timothy Frye, "Private Protection in Russia and Poland," *American Journal of Political Science* 46, 3 (2002): 572–584.

Gavin Slade, "Georgia's War on Crime: Creating Security in a Post-Revolutionary Context." *European Security* 21.1 (2012): 37-56.

Week 4) Transitional Civil Wars

The Chechen Wars: 4/21

Zurcher ch. 3-4, 42-114.

The Georgia and Karabakh Wars: 4/23

Zurcher chs. 5-6, 115-85

Week 5) Regimes and States

Governance and Corruption: 4/28

Scott Radnitz, "The Color of Money: Privatization, Economic Dispersion, and the Post-Soviet "Revolutions," *Comparative Politics* 42.2 (2010): 127-146.

Daniel Treisman, "Putin's Silovarchs," *Orbis* 51, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 141-153.

Keith A. Darden, "The Integrity of Corrupt States: Graft as an Informal Political Institution" *Politics and Society*, (December 2007), 35-59.

Wikileaks US Embassy Moscow cable, 11-19-09. Available at:
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/11/28/world/20101128-cables-viewer.html#report/russia-09MOSCOW2823>

Authoritarianism: 4/30

Michael McFaul and Kathryn Stoner-Weiss, "The Myth of the Authoritarian Model How Putin's Crackdown Holds Russia Back" *Foreign Affairs* Jan-Feb., 2008.

Stephen E. Hanson, "The Uncertain Future of Russia's Weak State Authoritarianism," *East European Politics & Societies*, February 2007; vol. 21, 1: 67-81.

Lilia Shevtsova, "Implosion, Atrophy, or Revolution?" *Journal of Democracy* 23.3 (2012): 19-32.

Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes. "An Autopsy of Managed Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 23.3 (2012): 33-45.

Week 6) Sources of Conflict: Xenophobia and Energy

Ethnicity, Intolerance, and Security: 5/5

Charles King and Rajan Menon, "Prisoners of the Caucasus: Russia's Invisible Civil War." *Foreign Affairs* 89, 4 (2010): 20–34.

Sarah E. Mendelson and Theodore P. Gerber, "Soviet Nostalgia: An Impediment to Russian Democratization," *The Washington Quarterly* 29(1), Winter 2005-06: 83–96.

Aleksei Tarasov, "Has Siberia Had Enough of Russia?" OpenDemocracy.net, November 21, 2013, <http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/aleksei-tarasov/has-siberia-had-enough-of-russia>

Sean Guillory, "How Russian Nationalism Fuels Race Riots," *The Nation*, November 1, 2013, <http://www.thenation.com/article/176956/how-russian-nationalism-fuels-race-riots>

Energy, Politics, and Security: 5/7

M. Steven Fish, *Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics* (New York: Cambridge University press, 2005), Chapter 5, "The Structural Problem: Grease and Glitter," 114-138. (Big file, on website.)

Karen Smith Stegen, "Deconstructing the "Energy Weapon": Russia's Threat to Europe as Case Study." *Energy Policy* 39.10 (2011): 6505-6513.

[possible additional article depending on current events]

Week 7: Politics in the Shadows

Quasi-states: 5/12

Charles King, "The Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia's Unrecognized States," *World Politics* 53, July 2001: 524-552.

Pål Kolstø, "The Sustainability and Future of Unrecognized Quasi-States," *Journal of Peace Research* 43, Nov. 2006: 723-740.

Alexander Cooley and Lincoln Mitchell, "Engagement without Recognition: A New Strategy toward Abkhazia and Eurasia's Unrecognized States," *The Washington Quarterly* 33, 4 (2010): 59-73.

Ellen Barry, "Abkhazia Lures Its Expatriates, Welcoming Them One by One," *New York Times*, May 7, 2009.

International Illicit Trade: 5/14

William Finnegan, "The Countertraffickers," *New Yorker*, May 5, 2008,
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/05/05/080505fa_fact_finnegan

Alexander Kupatadze, "Organized Crime and the Trafficking of Radiological Materials,"
The Nonproliferation Review 17, no. 2 (2010): 219-234.

David Lewis, "High Times on the Silk Road: The Central Asian Paradox." *World Policy Journal* 27.1 (2010): 39-49.

"Viktor Bout, Arms-Dealer Extraordinaire," *The Economist*, Dec. 18, 2008.

Week 8) Russia and the Near Abroad

Is Russia the Threat or the Threatened?: 5/19

Andrew Kydd, "Trust Building, Trust Breaking: The Dilemma of NATO Enlargement."
International Organization 55.4 (2001): 801-828. Feel free to skim the math: 812-15.

Yulia Tymoshenko, "Containing Russia," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2007.

Sergei Lavrov, "Containing Russia: Back to the Future?" response to Tymoshenko.
http://www.in.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/8f8005f0c5ca3710c325731d0022e227?OpenDocument

Fiona Hill, "Moscow Discovers Soft Power," *Current History*, October 2006, 341-47.

The South Ossetia War: 5/21

Charles King, "The Kosovo Precedent," *NewsNet: Newsletter of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies*, May 2008.

Charles King, "The Five-Day War," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2008.

From *The Economist*:

-- "The Independence Precedent" November 29, 2007.

-- "Tales from the Black Sea," July 3, 2008.

-- "A Scripted War," "Responding to an Aggressive Russia," & "The Dangers of the Safe Route," August 14, 2008.

-- "South Ossetia is not Kosovo" and "Put out Even More Flags," August 28, 2008.

Olesya Vartanyan and Ellen Barry, "If History Is a Guide, Crimeans' Celebration May Be Short-Lived," *New York Times*, March 18, 2014.

Week 9) Things Get Ugly

Holiday on 5/26

Crimea: 5/28

Sasse, Gwendolyn. "The 'New' Ukraine: A State of Regions." *Regional & federal studies* 11.3 (2001): 69-100.

Joshua Kucera, "Crimea Scene Investigation," *Slate*, February 23-27, 2009.

Putin's Crimea Speech, March 18, 2014.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/transcript-putin-says-russia-will-protect-the-rights-of-russians-abroad/2014/03/18/432a1e60-ae99-11e3-a49e-76adc9210f19_story.html

TBD

Week 10: Conclusions

Presentations 6/2

Post-Soviet Security after Russia/Crimea 6/4

TBD

Commonwealth of Independent States

