

Political Science 362: Politics of Central Asia

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With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan emerged as independent countries. To what extent have these developments changed the lives of people in Central Asia? One possibility is that the region has returned to pre-Soviet institutions and practices, including Islam and respect for elders, so people's lives have been transformed. Another possibility is that Soviet institutions and practices remain influential so little has changed. This course examines the extent of change by exploring how government efforts to build states, nations, economies, and foreign relations historically and recently have influenced societal institutions and practices, such as ethnicity, Islam, protest, and economic survival.

Course Materials

During the semester we will read works from different disciplines as well as policy pieces. Political tracts and novels are suggested for further reading. The course also incorporates film clips, slides, regional artifacts, policy simulations, and sessions on web site creation.

Books and Articles: Three books, *Tribal Nation*; *Great Games*, *Local Rules*; and *In the Whirlwind of Jihad* may be purchased at the bookstore. The books are also on reserve at Kelvin Smith Library's circulation desk. Required materials for week one will be distributed in class; required materials for subsequent weeks will be available on the course Blackboard site. Paper or electronic copies of readings should be brought to class the days they are assigned.

News: To follow current events in Central Asia, students should consult:

- Eurasianet, <http://www.eurasianet.org/> for daily news and analyses. Scroll down or select a country under Regions.
- Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, <http://www.rferl.org/>, for news analyses and reports. Select Central Asia.

Blackboard: Students will post questions on Blackboard, as later described. To post, select Blackboard on Case's home page, login, select POSC 362, choose Assignments, Discussion Questions, click on the appropriate week, select Reply, write your questions, and click Submit. Additional assistance is available through Blackboard FAQ on the Blackboard home page.

Course Requirements

Participation: The focus of each class will be on discussion. Students should craft two analytical questions based on each week's readings and post them on the course Blackboard site by 4 pm Sunday prior to class meetings during Parts I and II of the course. Students should read their classmates' questions before the start of class. The instructor will select some questions for class discussion, and students are welcome to raise questions in class. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussion and to thoughtfully evaluate the first versions of their classmates' web sites during an in-class workshop. Students are strongly encouraged to take notes on the readings in order to be prepared to integrate and critique the materials in class. Paper or electronic copies of readings should be brought to class the days they are assigned. Because participation is critical to understanding the material, students are expected to attend all classes. Except under extraordinary circumstances, absenteeism will negatively affect students' final grades.

Short Essay: In addition to reading course materials, posting questions, and participating in class, students will write a total of four short essays, writing for two weeks in Part I and two weeks in Part II. No short essays will be accepted for Part III. Within these guidelines students can choose which week to write. The purpose of the short essays is to help students understand, critique, and integrate the readings and prepare to pose questions for discussion in class. Students should not summarize the readings but should instead use the course materials to explore their own arguments. The strongest papers typically introduce an argument in the first paragraph and then use evidence from the readings throughout the remainder of the paper to defend or explore the argument. They also usually incorporate ideas from each reading for that week and perhaps draw on ideas from previous readings as well. The quality of the short essays should improve throughout the semester. For the short essays informal citations—phrases like “as Olcott argues”—are acceptable. Short essays should be between two and two and a half pages double-spaced. They must be submitted on paper at the beginning of the class the analyzed materials are assigned. Grading of the responses will take into account the degree of independent thinking, use of assigned materials, and quality of writing.

Web Site: Students will work in pairs to create a web site with approximately 1,200 words, multiple pages, and images. The purpose is twofold—first, for the students to explore a topic covered in class in greater depth or to examine a new topic and, second, to share what they learn with their classmates. For the content of the sites, students should draw on course materials and gather and analyze additional research materials as needed. To facilitate the completion of the sites, the university's Creative New Media Officer will lead two sessions about web site creation, pairs will work during and outside of class, and the following assignments will be completed.

- Topic (February 25, posted on Blackboard)—In one or two sentences each student should describe a possible topic for a web site. Grading will be based on whether such a description is submitted.
- Draft Bibliography (March 4, posted on Blackboard)—The draft bibliography should include all the materials that the pair of students has found and expects to be useful for the content of the web site. Draft bibliographies should be posted on Blackboard. Grading will take into account the variety, relevance, and number of sources.

- Site Description and Revised Bibliography (March 25, posted on Blackboard)—In one paragraph each pair of students should describe the main and secondary messages they intend to get across to users of their web site. Students are encouraged to discuss their messages with the instructor in advance. The revised bibliography should include all the materials that the pair has reviewed and expects to be useful for the content of the web site. Each pair should post the site description and revised bibliography as a single document on Blackboard. Grading will be based on whether such a description is submitted and the variety, relevance, and number of sources
- First Version of Web Site (April 10)— The instructor’s evaluation will be based on the degree to which the site demonstrates an understanding of Central Asian politics, the extent of research, and the quality of the production.
- Final Version of Web Site (April 15)— The instructor’s evaluation will be based on the degree to which the site demonstrates an understanding of Central Asian politics, the extent of research, the quality of the production, and improvements made since the first version.

Final Paper: Students will write a final essay examining the extent of change in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Students are expected to analyze a specific question related to this larger topic. Students should limit their question by focusing, for example, on only one subject, such as Islam. In completing this essay, students can rely exclusively on course materials, and informal citations are appropriate. *Undergraduates’* final essays should be 4-5 pages long. *Graduate students’* essays should be 8-10 pages long. Students should bring to class April 22 two paper copies of a one-page outline of their final paper argument, subpoints, and evidence. Papers are due at the beginning of class April 29 and should be printed out. Grading of the final paper will take into account the degree to which the argument examines change in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the use of evidence to support the argument, and the quality of writing.

All written work should be carefully structured and grammatically correct. To avoid plagiarism, students should review “Plagiarism: What It is and How to Recognize and Avoid It,” distributed in class. Cases of plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be investigated by university judicial bodies.

Blackboard discussion questions, class participation, and class attendance will constitute 10 percent of the course grade, the four short essays will count for a total of 30 percent, the draft bibliography for 5 percent, the web site description and revised bibliography for 5 percent, the first version of the web site for 5 percent, the final version of the web site for 25 percent, and the final paper for 20 percent. Students will lose a half of a grade on an assignment for each day it is late. Not completing an assignment will negatively affect a student’s final grade.

Course Schedule and Readings

Day 1 (January 14): Introduction to Central Asia and the Course

Part I: Building States, Nations, and Economies

Week 1 (January 16): State Formation—Tribes and Khanates

Elizabeth E. Bacon. *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Culture Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980. Read “Preface,” “The Land and the People,” “Before the Conquest: The Pastoral Nomads,” “Traditional Oasis Culture,” xxxv-91. (Distributed in class January 14.)

NO CLASS January 21

Week 2 (January 23): Nation-building—From Nomad to *Homo Sovieticus*

Adrienne Lynn Edgar. *Tribal Nation: The Making of Soviet Turkmenistan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. Read “Assembling the Nation: The Creation of a Turkmen National Republic,” “Ethnic Preferences and Ethnic Conflict: The Rise of a Turkmen National Elite,” “Helpers, Not Nannies: Moscow and the Turkmen Communist Party [part],” “Dueling Dialects: The Creation of a Turkmen Language,” “A Nation Divided: Class Struggle and the Assault on ‘Tribalism,’” “Cotton and Collectivization: Rural Resistance in Soviet Turkmenistan,” “From Soviet Republic to Independent Nation-State,” 41-109, 124-220, 261-265.

SUGGESTED:

Sharof Rashidov. *The Banner of Friendship*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969. A political piece by one of the former first party secretaries of Soviet Uzbekistan. Available from instructor.

Chingiz Aitmatov. *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983. A novel by a Kyrgyz author set in Soviet Kazakhstan. Helpful and enjoyable to read anytime during the semester. On reserve.

Part I: Building States, Nations, and Economies [cont.]

Week 3 (January 28, 30): National Politics—Divergent or Similar Paths?

Martha Brill Olcott. "Central Asia's Catapult to Independence," *Foreign Affairs*, 71, 3 (Summer 1992), 108-130.

International Crisis Group. *Kyrgyzstan: A Hollow Regime Collapses*. International Crisis Group. (April 27, 2010), 1-16.

Sebastien Peyrouse. "The Kazakh Neopatrimonial Regime: Balancing Uncertainties among the 'Family,' Oligarchs and Technocrats," *Demokratizatsiya*, 20, 3 (Fall 2012), 345-370.

Lawrence P. Markowitz. "The Sub-national Roots of Authoritarianism: Neopatrimonialism and Territorial Administration in Uzbekistan," *Demokratizatsiya*, 20, 3 (Fall 2012), 387-408.

SELECT ONE of the following two (or read both if you have time):

International Crisis Group. *Tajikistan: On the Road to Failure*. International Crisis Group. (February 12, 2009), 1-19.

International Crisis Group. *Turkmenistan after Niyazov*. International Crisis Group. (February 12, 2007), 1-15.

SUGGESTED: Islam Karimov. *Uzbekistan: The Road of Independence and Progress*. Tashkent: Uzbekiston, 1992. A political tract by the current president of Uzbekistan. Available from instructor.

Week 4 (February 4, 6): Economic Legacies and Change—A Stakhanovite on the Silk Road to Capitalism

Gregory Gleason. *Markets and Politics in Central Asia: Structural Reform and Political Change*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Read selections from "Kazakhstan and Globalization," "Kyrgyzstan and the Reform Path," "Civil War and Reconstruction in Tajikistan," "Petro-dollars and 'Positive Neutrality' in Turkmenistan," "Economic Self-Reliance and the 'Uzbek Path,'" 37-52, 65-74, 82-92, 99-110, 117-127.

International Crisis Group. *Central Asia: Decay and Decline*. International Crisis Group. (February 3, 2011), 1-42. Read 1-36.

SUGGESTED: Sharaf Rashidov. *The Victors*. Translated by Olga Shartse. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958. A novel with economic and environmental themes by one of the first party secretaries of Soviet Uzbekistan. Available from instructor.

Part I: Building States, Nations, and Economies [cont.]

Week 5 (February 11, 13): Foreign Relations—The Great Game

Alexander Cooley. *Great Games, Local Rules: The New Great Power Contest in Central Asia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. Read “Local Rules: How Central Asian Regimes Survive,” “Washington’s Central Asia Detour to Afghanistan,” “Moscow’s Quest for a Privileged Role,” “The SCO and Beijing’s Great Leap Westward,” “Anti-Terrorism, Democratization, and Human Rights,” and either “Geopolitical Competition and Political Stability: Kyrgyzstan’s Base-bidding War” or “The Price of Access: Contracts and Corruption,” 16-116 and either 116-133 or 134-148.

Week 6 (February 18, 20): Web Site Creation Sessions

The university’s Creative New Media Officer will lead sessions on web site creation in our classroom. There is no reading for this week, discussion questions need not be posted, and short essays will not be accepted. Students are encouraged to begin the reading for next week.

Part II: Societal Processes and Forces

Week 7 (February 25, 27): Islam—Beaded Bracelets and Shariat

Martha Brill Olcott. *In the Whirlwind of Jihad*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012. Read "Islam and the State in the Soviet Union," "Islam in the Communities," "Islamic Revival in the Uzbek Communities," "Managing Islam' Since Independence," 51-74, 135-158, 159-190, 191-221. Refer to glossary on page 377-384, as needed.

DUE February 25: Web Site Topic

Week 8 (March 4, 6): Ethnicity—Manas and Tamerlane Take Center Stage

Sergei Abashin. "Nation-construction in Post-Soviet Central Asia." In *Soviet and Post-Soviet Identities*, edited by Mark Bassin and Catriona Kelly, 150-168. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Olivier Ferrando. "Policies and Practices of Language Education in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Between Ethnic Identity and Civic Consciousness." In *Soviet and Post-Soviet Identities*, edited by Mark Bassin and Catriona Kelly, 254-277. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

International Crisis Group. *Kyrgyzstan: Widening Ethnic Divisions in the South*. International Crisis Group. (March 29, 2012), 1-23. Read 1-17.

Due March 4: Draft Bibliography

NO CLASS March 11, 13

Week 9 (March 18, 20): Economic Coping—"All Five Fingers Are the Same But They All Live Differently"

Kelly M. McMann. "The Shrinking of the Welfare State: Central Asians' Assessments of Soviet and Post-Soviet Governance." In *Everyday Life in Central Asia: Past and Present*, edited by Jeff Sahadeo and Russell G. Zanca, 233-247. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007.

International Crisis Group. *Central Asia: Migrants and the Economic Crisis*. International Crisis Group. (January 5, 2010), 1-19.

Gül Berna Özcan. *Building States and Markets: Enterprise Development in Central Asia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Read "The Gendered Economy," 122-145.

Bartolmiej Kaminski and Saumya Mitra. *Borderless Bazaars and Regional Integration in Central Asia*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2012. Read "The Dynamism of Bazaars, 53-77.

Part II: Societal Processes and Forces [cont.]

Week 10 (March 25, 27): Organizing and Protesting—Growing Frustration

Kelly M. McMann. "The Civic Realm in Kyrgyzstan: Soviet Economic Legacies and Activists' Expectations." In *The Transformation of Central Asia: States and Societies from Soviet Rule to Independence*, edited by Pauline Jones Luong, 213-245. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004.

Scott Radnitz. "What Really Happened in Kyrgyzstan," *Journal of Democracy*, 17, 2 (April 2006), 132-146.

Peter Salmon. "Repression Intensifies Against Kazakh Oil Workers' Uprising," *Debatte*, 19, 1-2 (April-August 2011), 507-510.

Peter Salmon. "Police Massacre has Opened a Dark Chapter for Kazakh Workers' Movement," *Debatte*, 20, 1 (April 2012), 73-77.

Due March 25: Web Site Description and Revised Bibliography

Week 11 (April 1): A Night at the Central Asian Cinema—*Angel on the Right*

On April 1 class will be held in the evening in Clark 110 in order to watch the Tajik film *Angel on the Right*. Class will not meet in the morning.

NO CLASS April 3

Part III: Evaluating the Extent of Change in Central Asia

Week 12

(April 8): Final Preparation of First Versions of Web Sites

Students will have the class period to work on their web sites. There is no reading for this week, discussion questions need not be posted, and short essays will not be accepted. Students should use time they would normally prepare for class discussion to work on their web sites.

(April 10): Feedback on First Versions of Web Sites

Class will meet in room LL06 B and C of Kelvin Smith Library. Students will view each others' first versions of web sites and offer feedback. There is no reading for this week, discussion questions need not be posted, and short essays will not be accepted.

Due April 10: First Version of Web Site

Week 13

(April 15): Presentation of Web Sites

The class will review the final versions of the web sites in our regular classroom. There is no reading for this week, discussion questions need not be posted, and short essays will not be accepted.

Due April 15: Final Version of Web Site

(April 17): Discussion of Change

For this week students are expected to review their notes and be prepared to discuss to what extent the lives of those living in Central Asia have changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union and emergence of independent countries. Discussion questions need not be posted, and no short essays will be accepted for this week.

Week 14

(April 22): Final Paper Workshop

For this week students are expected to review their notes and be prepared to provide classmates with feedback on their final paper outlines. Discussion questions need not be posted, and no short essays will be accepted for this week.

DUE April 22: Outline of Final Paper Argument and Evidence

(April 24): Individual Meetings about Final Papers

Students will meet individually with the instructor during this class period or during office hours this week to discuss their final papers. The class as a whole will not meet April 24.

Week 15 (April 29): Conclusion

DUE April 29: Final Paper