



INTS 332 | Central Asia Today

(1.0 Unit*)

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Instructor: Bermet Tursunkulova, Ph.D.

Time: TBD

Location: American University of Central Asia (AUCA), Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Number of hours: 60 (4 academic hours per week, over the course of 15 weeks)

**One Bryn Mawr unit is equivalent to four undergraduate semester hours or five graduate semester hours.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course designed to provide students with a deeper understanding of contemporary society in Central Asia, with particular attention to the politics, culture, and economies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Students will gain new insights into the governments, daily living conditions, religious makeup, ethnic composition, and major economic challenges of each of the five Central Asian republics. They will also examine the major political and economic issues faced by the people of each republic, their histories, and their long-term prospects. The course also explores regional relations among the five republics, as well as the regional stance in global affairs. Historical topics include the rise and fall of the U.S.S.R., the impact of collectivization, Stalinism, the collapse of the U.S.S.R., the emergence of the independent republics, and the most recent decolonization trends in the region. The course will seek to expand the classroom into our surrounding community to immerse students in the region's culture and maximize their time in Central Asia.

Particular attention is paid to the Kyrgyz Republic, where the program is based. The course includes guided travel to an adjacent Central Asian republic for an extended weekend.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successfully completing the course, students will have a comprehensive understanding of the region's contemporary history; the political, social and economic development of each of the Central Asian countries; and the key choices each country has made on the way to its development and consolidation as a nation-state. Students will also have an essential understanding of the major challenges faced by each country, and a basic knowledge of the most essential scholarly work about the region.

COURSE CONDUCT

To have a good, interesting course experience, we all must do our parts. You must go through the assigned readings and documentaries and make sure you retain some thoughts, questions, or any other sort of record from each completed assignment. The best way to do that is by keeping good written notes. All readings will be made available through our e-course page – they are all required readings unless they are marked as recommended. In addition to assigned course materials, you should keep up with news and analysis about the region.

Be informed that any instance of plagiarism in any work (including minor assignments!) may lead to a grade of F for the whole course. Late assignment submissions will not be graded. Other course issues,



terms, and requirements including make-up classes, will be further communicated in class and via additional announcements on e-course.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance in this class is required. Make-up work will be allowed only in cases of excused absences, which include documented illness, religious holidays, or family emergencies. In addition to contacting the American Councils Resident Director, you are required to notify me in writing immediately so that I can arrange make-up work. All other absences will be considered unexcused and will result in an immediate 10% reduction of your grade. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes late without a valid excuse will not receive credit for attending. More than three unexcused absences will result in automatic course failure.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact American Councils in accordance with its Accommodations Policy, which was distributed to all participants upon admission to the program. Students seeking accommodations who have not yet informed American Councils of this request should speak to the Resident Director immediately about their needs. Students are also welcome to contact me regarding accommodations but should be aware that all accommodations are provided in accordance with the American Councils Accommodations Policy.

DISCUSSION RULES

As this class has a discussion component and small group work covering sensitive political topics, please observe the following rules during the discussions and small groups' works: (1) listen carefully and be respectful to the other participants in the discussion or group, (2) be sure that you understand the positions and opinions stated and ask for clarification, if necessary and (3) offer your viewpoint in respectful and non-confrontational manner, in order to achieve constructive dialogue with the instructor and your colleagues.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Grading will consist of:

Category	% Points
In-class participation	10%
Quizzes and tests	20% (2 times x 10% each)
Mid-term exam	20%
In-class case presentation	15%
Final research paper	35%
TOTAL	100%

Grade Scale

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
4.0 Scale	4	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.0	0.0
% Points	94–100	90–94	87–90	84–87	80–84	77–80	74–77	70–74	60–70	0–60

READING LOAD



Participants in the course are expected to read from around 30 to 40 pages per week. Students are expected to budget their time accordingly, as complete all required reading selections prior to a particular class for which they have been assigned.

IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION

The class is lecture-style but I ask for student participation and feedback multiple times during each session. Participation is key in establishing in-class dynamics and gauging feedback regarding the perception of material presented. Thus active participation is very important for our progress. Assessment will be based on attendance, preparation of readings, participation in class discussion with the focus on qualitative contribution to the discussion, ability to answer questions based on the readings, come up with own interpretations and react to comments made by other students. Participation will be graded on a one time basis at the end of the semester with an overall weight of 10%.

IN-CLASS QUIZZES

This course has two in-class quizzes on paper that will be administered during the semester. The quizzes consist of 15-20 questions each and are given after each corresponding topical course theme. The quiz should be taken within one academic hour.

IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS

The presentations will be completed in groups of 2-3 people. The presentation will be based on the topic your group has selected at mid-term from a selected list of topic. It should consist of 5-10 slides that outline the importance of the case selection, relevance, methods and results of your research on the cases drawn from the topical modules of the course.

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER

The final research paper will be a result of your selected mid-term topic and abstract. It will be an original paper in the range of 3000 and maximum 3500 words long that includes research question overview, theory, research methods, sources used and the results of your research endeavor.

COURSE CONTENT (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Week	Topic	Required Reading
1	Introduction: The Making of Central Asia	• Holdsworth, "Soviet Central Asia: 1917–1940" (1952) • Arne Haugen, "Drawing Borders" (Chapter 8 from his book) • Francine Hirsch, "Toward an Empire of Nations" • Sabol, "The Creation of Soviet Central Asia: The 1924 National Delimitation"
2	Library tour	
3	Assessing the Soviet Legacy	• Adeeb Khalid, "Backwardness and the Quest for Civilization" • Laura Adams, "Can We Apply Postcolonial Theory to Eurasia?" • Pauline Jones Luong, "Politics in the Periphery" • J. Luong, "Sources of Institutional Continuity: The Soviet Legacy in Central Asia"
4	Building Independent and Modern States in Central Asia	• Martha Brill Olcott, "Central Asia's Catapult to Independence" • John Anderson, "Constitutional Development in Central Asia" • Kathleen Collins, "The Logic of Clan Politics in Central Asia" • Roy, Chapter 9: "From Independence to Emerging Nationalism"
5	Claiming Nationhood	• Sergey Abashin, "Nation Building in Post Soviet Central Asia"

	In-class quiz	• Rogers Brubaker, "Nationalizing States Revisited: Projects and Processes of Nationalization in Post Soviet States" • Murzakulova and Shoeblein, "Invention of Legitimacy: The Struggles in Kyrgyzstan to Craft an Effective Nation State Ideology" • Recommended: James Mellon, "Myths, Legitimacy and Nationalism in Post Soviet Central Asia"
6	Political Economies of Central Asian States	• Richard Pomfret, "Reform and Performance of Central Asian Economies" and "Central Asia After Two Decades of Independence" • Assel Rustemova, "Political Economy in Central Asia" • Kelly McMann, "Absence of Alternatives" (from her Corruption as a Last Resort) • Recommended: Cooley, Heathershaw and Sharman, "The Rise of Kleptocracy: Laundering Cash, Whitewashing Reputations"
7	Central Asia and/in the World	• Alex Cooley, Great Games, Local Rules • Eric McGlinchey, "Geopolitically Stuck, Politically Free" • George Gavrilis, "The Elusive Quest for Central Asian Cooperation"
8	In and Out: Migration in and from Central Asia	• Hann and Pelkmans, "Realigning the State and Islam in Central Asia" • Heathershaw and Montgomery, "Myths of Muslim Radicalization in Central Asia" • Marlene Laruelle, "Revisiting Islam in Central Asia"
9	Kyrgyzstan: Constitutionally Challenged	• Scott Radnitz, "Networks, Localism and Mobilization in Aksy" • E. Dzhuraev et al., "The Law and Politics of Keeping a Constitutional Order" • Cummings et al., "State and Regime in the Kyrgyz Republic"
10	Turkmenistan: A Cult of Personality	• Michael Denison, "The Art of the Impossible" • Slavomír Horák, "The Elite in Post Soviet and Post Niyazov Turkmenistan" • Luca Anceschi, "Analyzing Turkmen Foreign Policy in the Berdymukhamedov Era" • Edgar, "Genealogy, Class, and Tribal Policy in Soviet Turkmenistan, 1924–1934"
11	Kazakhstan: The Performative State	• Adrien Fauve, "Global Astana" • Sally Cummings, "Legitimation and Identification in Kazakhstan" • Mateusz Laszczkowski, "State Building(s)"
12	Tajikistan: The Post-War Road to...	• John Heathershaw, "Tajikistan's Virtual Politics of Peace" • Filippo Menga, "Building a Nation Through a Dam"
13	Uzbekistan: Fatherly Governance	• Nick Megoran, "Framing Andijon, Narrating a Nation" • Matteo Fumagalli, "Ethnicity, State Formation, and Foreign Policy in Uzbekistan"
14	Challenges of Understanding Central Asia	• R. Pomfret, "Economic Reform and Performance in Central Asia" • Local Rules: How Central Asian Regimes Survive • Lewis, "Central Asia: Fractured Region and Illiberal Regionalism" • Masha Udensiva Brenner, "Great Games, Local Rules, and the Shifting Dynamics of a Multipolar World"
15	Cultural class	
	Final paper due	