Course description:

In this course we will focus on the challenges of transition from communism in the post-Soviet states through an in-depth study of the politics of independent Ukraine. The course has two goals: to analyze the various domestic and international factors influencing Ukraine’s transition from communism and its successful integration into NATO and the EU and to compare Ukrainian experience to the experience of other post-Soviet states. Although some familiarity with Ukraine’s history and politics is desirable, it is not a pre-requisite for taking this course.

The course will begin with a brief overview of the history of Ukraine in the pre-Soviet and Soviet periods, followed by a discussion of Gorbachev’s reforms and the collapse of the Soviet Union. From then on, the focus will be on the politics of modern Ukraine. We will analyze the dynamics of political, social and economic reforms in Ukraine during the 1990s, and the challenges of constructing a common national identity and formulating a balanced foreign policy during this period. Particular attention will be paid to the nature of Ukraine’s political regime under Kuchma and the causes of its collapse during the 2004 Orange Revolution. Finally, we will discuss continuities and changes in Ukrainian politics in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution, focusing on the factors that contributed to Yanukovych’s comeback in the 2010 presidential election and the future of Ukrainian democracy after his victory.

Course requirements and grading scheme:

- Literature Review 20% due Wednesday, October 19th
  - 5 pages double spaced on the readings discussed in class during weeks 3-6; the review cannot be written on the same topic as your presentation of the course readings in class (see below)

- Class Participation 20% class attendance and contribution to class discussion

- Two Class Presentations 20% one presentation will be on the course readings during one of our seminars and another presentation will be presentation of your paper proposal (during the final two weeks of classes)

- Final Research Paper 40% due Monday, December 5th
The final research paper should be 25-30 pages long, double spaced. The paper has to focus on an important aspect of Ukrainian politics of your choice, although it does not have to cover Ukraine exclusively. Comparative papers will be welcome. A handout later in the course will describe the paper assignment in greater detail.

You should email me a short (about one page double spaced) paper proposal containing the topic of your research and the main ideas you are planning to explore in your final paper, as well as preliminary bibliography by November 2nd. These will be graded as check, check minus and check plus. I will provide comments on the proposals and return them to you on November 9th.

Readings: The following book is a mandatory textbook assigned for this class: Wilson, Andrew. *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009. All other readings, including chapters from books, will be posted on Blackboard.

Handing in work: Please submit all written assignments in the hard copy form to me during the class when it is due. Late assignments can be taken to the Political Science Department in Sidney Smith Hall, 3rd floor. Please give them to the departmental secretary and make sure you register your paper in the registration book at the office. All papers have to have your name, the name of the course, and the name of the instructor on top of the first page or on the title page. Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their essays and assignments before handing them in to the instructor or to the Department. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned.

Late assignments: All late assignments will be penalized by 2 per cent per each working day. Please note that according to regulations of the Faculty of Arts and Science, the last day for undergraduate students to submit ALL work to instructors in F section courses is December 6th.

Grade appeals: All appeals should be accompanied by a letter stating why you believe that your grade should be changed.

Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is a serious offence and will not be tolerated. Instances of plagiarism will be immediately reported to the department for further investigation. An excellent source of information on how to avoid plagiarizing is the website by Margaret Procter, Coordinator of Writing Support at the University of Toronto at http://www.utoronto.ca/writign/plagsep.html

Office hours and e-mail policy: Office hours will be held each week on Wednesdays between 3-5pm in SS3118. If you are unable to meet me during this time, alternate arrangements can be made. E-mails will be answered within 24 hours, with the exception of weekends. Please consult the course syllabus and other course information BEFORE submitting inquiries by e-mail. E-mail should be used for communicating simple information; extended conversations will be conducted during my office hours.

Policy on missed classes or late assignments: All absences require medical or other documentation to be excused.
Accessibility needs: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: disability.services@utoronto.ca or http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility

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COURSE READINGS AND SCHEDULE

PART I: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Week 1 (Sept 14th). Introduction: Overview of History of Ukraine up to the 20th Century.

Week 2 (Sept 21st). Ukrainian SSR and the Collapse of the Soviet Union.

PART II: CHALLENGES OF TRANSITION IN UKRAINE


Week 4 (Oct 5th). Challenges of Transition: Building the State.


*** LITERATURE REVIEWS ARE DUE THIS WEEK***


- Svitlana Kuts et al., “Deepening the Roots of Civil Society in Ukraine. Findings From an Innovative and Participatory Assessment Project on the Health of Ukrainian Civil Society,”

PART III: UNDERSTANDING UKRAINE’S FOREIGN POLICY AND SECURITY DILEMMAS

Week 8 (Nov 2nd). Ukraine’s Place in the World. Between NATO and Russia: To Balance or not to Balance? Understanding Ukraine’s Place in European and Regional Security and the Prospects of its Integration into the EU and NATO.

*** FINAL RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSALS ARE DUE THIS WEEK***


PART IV: THE ‘ORANGE REVOLUTION’ AND BEYOND


Weeks 11-12 (Nov 23th and Nov 30th). Student presentations of their final research papers.

THE END ☺