More than 25 years after the collapse of the Soviet state, Central Asia (and its neighbour Afghanistan) continue to see vexed relations between state and society. In this course, we ask: 1) What impact did Soviet-style modernization have and what are the legacies of that modernization project? 2) How have relations between society and state changed since 1991? 3) How do individuals and groups relate to the state? 4) What role do religion and ethnicity play in political and social life? 5) What are the primary axes for variation in the experiences of these six states (Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan)? Although this is a political science course, about half of our readings are by anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and others.

**Books**

Available at the Bob Miller Book Room (180 Bloor Street West, Lower Level, 416-922-3557):


**Requirements**

*Participation (15%).* Since this is a seminar, come ready to discuss the material. Active participation ensures that I won’t have to guess what you know and how engaged you are with the material.

*Presentations (15%).* Each student will give two (2) in-class presentations during the term. The **analytic** presentation lasts 5-7 minutes and is worth 10% of your final mark. A top analytic presentation poses thoughtful ways to analyze the week’s materials. It shows familiarity with the material but does **not** summarize readings. An analytic presentation that merely summarizes the readings will earn a maximum mark of “C.” The **presentation on additional readings** lasts 4-5 minutes and is worth 5% of your final mark. A top presentation first briefly summarizes the additional readings assigned for the week before providing a clear thesis about how these additional readings improve our understanding of the topic. A sign-up sheet for both presentations will be circulated during our first class meeting.

*Response to Film (5%).* Write a response to the film “The Speaker.” Your reaction should be 400-500 words (please provide a word count) and should offer a clear thesis, along with commentary, analysis, and/or questions about the film. Top marks are reserved for responses that demonstrate close familiarity with and serious thinking about the film. This is due on January 24, but I will accept—without penalty—submissions through February 7, after which I will accept no submissions. Submissions are via turnitin.com.

*Pause-and-Think Papers (30%):* Students will write two (2) papers that encourage thinking **across** the weeks’ topics. For each, a) choose any two weeks (excluding the week of your analytic presentation and week 10), b) read and re-read all the material for those two weeks, including the additional readings, c) write a 1200-1400-word (please provide a word count) paper in which you creatively put the two sets of readings into conversation with each other. (The second paper must cover weeks that are different from the first paper.) Top marks are reserved for papers that are well written, demonstrate a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the
material, and advance a well substantiated and creative thesis that links the disparate readings. The first paper is due on February 14. The second paper is due on March 28. Late submissions are penalized a flat 15%, whether they are 7 minutes or 7 days late, after which I accept no further submissions. Submissions are via turnitin.com. Details will follow.

Term Paper (35%): Choose a topic that is in the news concerning Central Asia. Write a concise report (2200-2800 words; provide a word-count) that, based on scholarly research on related/similar topics, gives scholarly depth to the news coverage of your topic. Top marks are reserved for papers that are well written, well researched, and offer a thesis that is clear, convincing, and innovative. Papers under 2000 words or over 3000 words are penalized a full letter grade. Due on April 4. Late submissions are penalized a flat 15%, whether 7 minutes or 7 days late, after which I accept no further submissions. Submissions are via turnitin.com. Details will follow.

Course Policies

Office hours: No appointment is needed. If you cannot make office hours but would like to meet, email me to schedule a mutually agreeable time.

Email: Consult the syllabus and other course information before sending email. If you have a simple question, send a message. If you do not receive a reply within 3 days, please resend. Email is great, but extended conversations are conducted face to face.

Keep copies: Keep draft work and hard copies of all assignments until the marked versions are returned.

Late penalties: Your review of the film may be submitted up to two weeks after the due date without penalty; I will not accept submissions after that. All other papers, if late, are penalized a flat 15% of possible marks; no paper is accepted more than 7 days late.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto’s policy on Plagiarism at http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html. This course uses Turnitin.com, a web-based program to deter plagiarism. Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University’s use of Turnitin.com are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Extensions: Sometimes extraordinary circumstances justify an extension. I discuss possible extensions during office hours, not via email. I consider such circumstances only until 2 weeks before the due date. After that, I discuss extensions only if a student has an official note from a doctor or from the University.

Missed Assignments: If, due to a bona-fide emergency, you miss an assignment you must: 1) contact me within 48 hours with a complete explanation, and 2) provide official documentation. I consider the your request on an individual basis; in some cases, I authorize make-up assignments, in other cases I do not.

Medical or Other Documentation: If an illness or other event interferes with your ability to complete your work on schedule, you need to provide official documentation. If you are truly incapacitated, your documentation must show this. I scrutinize the documentation to see how long of an extension, if any, is warranted, based on the severity and duration of your incapacitation.
Accessibility Needs: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, visit http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility as soon as possible.

Notice of Collection: The U. of Toronto respects your privacy. The information on medical certificates is collected pursuant to section 2(14) of the University of Toronto Act, 1971. It is collected for the purpose of administering accommodations for academic purposes based on medical grounds. The department will maintain a record of all medical certificates received. At all times it will be protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If you have questions, please refer to www.utoronto.ca/privacy or contact the University’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Office at 416-946-5835. Room 201, McMurrich Bldg., 12 Queen’s Park Crescent, Toronto, ON, M5S 1A1.

Equity Statement

The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns you may contact the U of T Equity and Diversity officer.

Course Outline

Week 1 (January 10): Introduction

Week 2 (January 17): The Onset of Soviet Power

Additional

Week 3 (January 24): Soviet Period
- Submit Review of “The Speaker” by 11:59 pm via Turnitin.com
Week 4 (January 31): Soviet Legacies


Additional

Week 5 (February 7): Islam, State, and Society

- Eric McGlinchey, Introduction

Additional
- Ibañez-Tirado, Diana, “‘How can I be post-Soviet if I was never Soviet?’ Rethinking categories of time and social change—a perspective from Kulob, southern Tajikistan,” *Central Asian Survey* 34(2), 2015: 190-203.

**Week 6 (February 14): State Building and Nation Building**
● *Pause-and-Think Paper due by 11:59 pm via turnitin.com*

**Additional**

**Week 7 (February 21): READING WEEK**

**Week 8 (February 28): Regime and Society**
● McGlinchey, chapter on Kazakhstan
● Kelly M. McMann, “Market Reform as a Stimulus to Particularistic Politics,” *Comparative Political Studies* 42(7): 2009: 971-994

**Additional**

**Week 9 (March 7): Regime Durability (and Change)**
● McGlinchey, chapter on Kyrgyzstan and chapter on Uzbekistan
● “An Uzbek Spring has Sprung, but Summer is Still a Long Way Off,” *The Economist*, 14 December 2017:
Week 10 (March 14): In-Class Film Screening, Title TBA
- One more reading, TBA

Week 11 (March 21): Afghanistan I
- Murtazashvili, Jennifer Brick. Informal order and the state in Afghanistan. Cambridge University Press, 2016, excerpts TBA

Additional

Week 12 (March 28): Afghanistan II
- Pause-and-Think Paper due by 11:59 pm via turnitin.com
- Coburn, entire book

Additional

- Term paper due by 11:59 pm via turnitin.com
Alexander Cooley and John Heathershaw, “Introduction,” in their *Dictators without Borders*. Forthcoming, Yale University Press


Additional

