Course Description

This course provides a survey of the politics of post-Leninist transition in Russia, Eastern Europe, and China. It begins with an overview of the origin and development of Leninism in the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe, stressing both the similarities and differences between these countries’ experiences under Leninism. The second part of the course examines and analyzes the profound political, economic, and social changes in former Leninist societies during the post-Leninist transition. Specifically, we will cover regime transition; institution-building; economic reforms; social transformation; as well as nationalism and ethnic conflicts. The course will conclude with a broad discussion of the comparative prospects of liberal capitalist democracy taking root in former Leninist countries. The primary aims of the course are to familiarize students with the major challenges confronting former Leninist countries as they move away from socialism, and to provide students with not only the theoretical tools necessary for understanding the collapse of Leninism, but also the perspectives crucial to making well-grounded evaluations of the emerging political and socio-economic trajectories in these countries.

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course will be determined in the following manner:

Seminar participation  20%
Oral presentations  20%
20-30 page research paper  60%

Class attendance and active, informed participation are mandatory. Students must complete the assigned readings prior to the seminar meetings. The oral presentations require each student to analyze and report on a number of assigned readings for a given week. In addition, students are required to write a major research paper on any aspect of transition in post-Leninist countries, but the topic must be finalized in consultation with the instructor. To facilitate the writing process, a 3-page paper proposal (1 page description, 1 page outline, 1 page bibliography) will be due at the beginning of seminar on March 11, 2010. The final draft of the paper must be placed in my box by 2 p.m., Monday, May 3, 2010. Late papers without university-approved reasons will result in grade reduction.
Readings


These books are available at Mary Jane Bookstore downtown. The rest of the readings will be included in a course pack available also at Mary Jane. Those marked with “available on-line” can be retrieved by clicking on “Journals - Print and Online” from the Libraries web page and typing in the title of the journal in the search box.

PART I: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

January 21: Introduction

- Course syllabus

January 28: Leninism: Vision and Strategy


February 4: Leninism in the Soviet Union

- Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*, 56-77, 194-266, 398-418
February 11: Leninism in China and Eastern Europe


PART II: POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

February 18: The Collapse of Leninism in Eastern Europe and Russia

- Archie Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism*, 481-617

February 25: The Decline of Leninism in Comparative Perspective


March 4: Building Democratic Institutions

- Ekiert and Hanson, eds. *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*, 157-181
PART III: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

March 11: Economic Reforms in Russia and Eastern Europe

- Ekiert and Hanson, eds., *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*, 89-119, 289-316

March 18: Economic Reforms in Comparative Perspective


PART IV: SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

March 25: Post-Communist Social Conditions

- Ekiert and Hanson, eds., *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe*, 210-288

PART V: TRANSFORMATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

April 8: National Identity in Russia and Eastern Europe
April 15: Post-Communist Nationalism in Comparative Perspective

- Cheng Chen, The Prospects for Liberal Nationalism, 95-133, 204-218

April 22: The International Dimension of Post-Communist Transition

- Andrew Janos, “From Eastern Empire to Western Hegemony: East Central Europe under Two International Regimes,” East European Politics and Society 15:2 (2001): 221-250
- Ekiert and Hanson, eds., Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, 120-154
- Mary E. Gallagher, “‘Reform and Openness’: Why China’s Economic Reforms Have Delayed Democracy,” World Politics 54:3 (April 2002) [available on-line]

PART VI: CONCLUSION: FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE

April 29: Making Sense of Post-Communist Transitions

- Ekiert and Hanson, eds., Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe, 15-86