HISTORY 891:
Historiography of Modern Eastern Europe

Professor Kathryn Ciancia
Office Hours: Wednesdays, Mosse 4124, 1:30-3:30pm
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Seminar: Tuesdays, Humanities 5245, 4-6pm

Course Description
This class has three aims: to introduce graduate students to the complex and turbulent modern history of Eastern Europe, to critically explore the ways in which this dynamic field emerged over time and continues to develop today, and to train graduate students in core verbal, written, and reading skills. We will read a series of texts that open up exciting debates on key questions of East European historiography: Why does “Eastern Europe” exist as a field of study? How can East European history be effectively integrated into European history more broadly? What can it reveal to scholars who have primarily focused on the western part of the continent? What specific contributions has East European history made in the fields of nationalism and national indifference, urban and environmental history, gender studies, and the history of mass violence and genocide? We will focus on topics that have led to often controversial arguments, including the treatment of national minorities under empires and nation-states, the Holocaust as an East European event, and society and politics under Communism. Throughout, we will be sensitive to how people in the region have dealt with their own histories and how memory and history have often come into conflict. Students will be assessed by their participation in the seminar discussions, their critical written and oral reviews of the class materials, and a final piece of work in which they evaluate the current state of the field.

Methods of Assessment

- **Short book review (25% of total grade):** There will be one short “book review” assignment due at the beginning of the week in which we discuss that text. You can choose to write on ONE of the books for weeks 4, 5, or 7.

- **Discussion participation (40% of total grade):** I will assess your participation in three ways:
  a) **Class participation.** You should be prepared for lively and engaged discussion. Remember that quality is better than quantity and that listening carefully to the thoughts of your classmates before responding is an important skill to develop.
  b) **Discussion leading.** In addition to participating each week, each student will lead discussion for the first 30 minutes of one seminar. Take a look at the syllabus to consider in which week you would like to lead discussion. You will post your 3 discussion questions under the appropriate heading at our Learn@UW website by 6pm the day before class.
c) **Quick responses:** Each week, everyone should check the questions on Learn@UW and post a quick response (no more than 200 words) to one of the questions by 2pm on Tuesday (i.e. two hours before class begins).

- **Final paper (35% of total grade):** You will write an assessment of the state of the field in which you bring multiple texts into dialogue with one another. We will discuss the format of this piece of work closer to the deadline.

### Assigned Readings

All readings are marked with a symbol to help you to locate them:

**UB/R:** For purchase and on reserve in College Library  
**CR:** Course Reader  
**L@UW:** Uploaded document or link provided at our Learn@UW site

The course reader for this class can be purchased from the Copy Center in Mosse Building.

### Weekly class schedule

**Week 1 (01/21): Class Introductions**

*No assigned readings*

**Week 2 (01/28): Eastern Europe, Central Europe, Europe....**

**Readings:**

Week 3 (02/04): Modern Nationalism and the City

Readings:
2. Book review of Nemes (use Jstor to find reviews by Ritter, Okey, Gluck, and Molnar)

Week 4 (02/11): History through Commodities and Consumption

Readings:

Week 5 (02/18): Shifting the Paradigm? National Indifference

Readings:

Week 6 (02/25): Poland as a Colonial Space?

Readings:
4. Winson Chu et al., “A Sonderweg through Eastern Europe? The Varieties of German Rule in Poland during the Two World Wars,” German History 31, no. 3 (2013): 318-344. L@UW
Week 7 (03/04): Identities in the Habsburg Empire and Beyond

Readings:

Week 8 (03/11): Biopolitics and the State

Readings:

Week 9 (03/25): Jews, Poles, and the Holocaust

Readings:

Week 10 (04/01): Communist Takeovers and Postwar Migrations

Readings:

Week 11 (04/08): The Everyday Culture of Communism

Readings:
Week 12 (04/15): Reassessing the End of Communism

Readings:

Week 13 (04/22): Repositioning Identities in the 1990s

Readings:

Week 14 (04/29): Memory in Post-Totalitarian Eastern Europe

Readings:

Week 15 (05/06): Conclusions

No assigned readings
Class Policies and Further Resources

Office Hours
My office hours are posted at the top of the syllabus. Please come by! These hours are set-aside specifically for students, and I would be happy to discuss any aspect of the class with you.

Class Etiquette
There is no laptop use in discussion, although you can bring a tablet/kindle if you need it to access the readings electronically. You must ensure that you bring the relevant readings to our discussion. Come and speak with me if you are concerned about this policy.

We will begin discussions on time, so please make sure that you arrive a few minutes early. Persistent tardiness leads to a lower participation grade.

If you know that you are going to be absent from our discussion, it is your responsibility to inform me as soon as possible.

Papers should be turned in on time to avoid a grade penalty. If there is a problem, it is important that you speak to me in plenty of time prior to the deadline. Papers are considered late if they come in after the beginning of lecture on the due date. Late papers will be penalized by a half-grade per day. A hard copy of the paper should be submitted in lecture AND an electronic copy should be uploaded into the dropbox at Learn@UW. Email submissions will not be accepted.

Academic Honesty
There is information about what constitutes plagiarism here (http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html), but please come and speak with me during office hours if you have questions or concerns.

Disabilities
Disability guidelines for course accommodations may be found at the UW McBurney Disability Resource Center site: http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/
Please come and see me if you would like to talk further about disability issues.

Writing Resources and Guidelines
All papers should conform to the specified page limit. They should be double-spaced, with good margins and consistent, accurate footnotes. The Chicago Manual of Style can be found online at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org

The University’s Writing Center is a wonderful resource that allows you to work with a consultant to improve your written work. Take a look at their website (http://www.writing.wisc.edu/index.html) for more information.