FEDERAL STATE AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION
"MOSCOW STATE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (UNIVERSITY) OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS RUSSIAN FEDERATION"

Department of Comparative Politics
Department of Asian and African Studies

«Approved»
Vice-Rector for International Affairs
A.A. Baykov
« » 2018

The education program of the course

SMALLER AND MIDDLE-RANGE COUNTRIES OF EURASIA: INSTITUTIONS, CULTURES AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Politics and Economics in Eurasia
(41.04.04: M.A. in Political Science)
(code - 5279)
Qualification - Master
The form of study - full-time education
The course program is developed by Irina Kudryashova, Dr., Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Politics, and Ekaterina Koldunova, Dr., Associate Professor, Department of Asian and African Studies, 2016

© Irina Kudryashova, 2018
© Ekaterina Koldunova, 2018
© MGIMO University, 2018

The course “Smaller and Middle-range Countries of Eurasia: Institutions, cultures and political development” is elaborated in accordance with the MGIMO Educational Standard for the Master’s Program in Political Science (program track “Politics and Economics in Eurasia”).

Author Irina Kudryashova, Ekaterina Koldunova, Director of the MGIMO library Marina Reshetnikova

The program is approved by the Department of Comparative Politics
Head of Department
PART I. COURSE STRUCTURE AND TEACHING METHODS

1.1. Course position in the education program

Course “Small and middle-range countries of Eurasia: Institutions, cultures and political development” aims at providing knowledge of state- and nation-building in the region in the aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR. An emphasis on political culture factor provides the students with a perspective that highlights the interconnection of formal and informal structures and norms in political processes. Another important focus will be on the historical socio-cultural and geopolitical developments that explains to a great extent the diversity of political systems in the post-Soviet space. Answers will be sought, therefore, to the question as to why these societies have failed to establish viable and stable law-based political systems. Concerning the course’s goals internal social and political developments will be addressed first. Nevertheless, subject matter to be covered includes the ethnic and political conflicts in the borderland Eurasian countries and the emergence of ‘non-recognized’ and ‘semi-recognized states’ (Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia). An overview will be provided of the integration frameworks for the Eurasian space as well. Special attention will be given to the newest political trends in the states under investigation.

The course is developed for graduate students in Politics, Government and International Relations.

1.2. The course goals and objectives

The main goal of the course is to provide students with foundational knowledge in analyzing and evaluating the processes of state- and nation-building in the smaller and middle-range countries of Eurasia. An emphasis on political culture mechanisms ensures perceiving varieties in political systems’ functioning. Different forms of state-building are identified and explained, social and economic consequences of policy capacity/incapacity are set out. Much attention is given to interpretation of the relationship between state and society, as well as possible conflicting outcomes of institution building (civil wars, secessionism, large-scale terrorism, etc) if it ignores inequalities of power and ethnic and regional distinctive qualities. Integration projects are being analyzed as a part of state enhancing politics.

Course objectives include:
• Providing knowledge of institution-building and culture orientations in the newly independent Eurasian states: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan,
• Developing individual abilities to define research problem and structure it,
• Training skills to analyze the interdependence between patterns of political culture, institutions and development in the Eurasian states,
• Intellectual training in outlining main trends of political processes at national and subnational level.

1.3. Learning outcomes

The basic principle of the course is researching while learning. The systematic training of analytical, system and communication competencies here plays a key role. Classes are generally held to promote active learning (e.g., case studies, cooperative learning, and problem-based learning).

The lecturers use selective methods of presentation, for example discussions among the students, supervised group work, analysis of case-studies and project work to ensure convincing results.

By the end of this course students should be able to:

1. Assess the nature and development of political systems and cultures of smaller and middle-range states of Eurasia,
2. Analyze and discuss common and specific features of the political institutions’ evolution in these countries,
3. Examine critically main problems and prospects of Integration Frameworks in Eurasia taking into account domestic political developments in the states in question,
4. Understand the interaction and interconnection of internal and external factors in the outbreak and escalation of the secessionist movements and non-recognized states formation.

1.4. Course requirements

Students will be required to attend not less than 90% of classes and be prepared for class discussions. Conscientious reading of the assigned materials is a must. Students will also be required to write an essay (about 1000-1500 words) in the course and to present its main findings during the last class. Student opponents will be assigned for each presentation. The purpose of the essay is to get an experience of an analytical work writing and public discussion.

1.5. Course assessment

Class participation, discussions - 35%
Tests – 30%
Essay – 25%
Essay presentation – 10%
PART 2. COURSE CONTENT

2.1 Types of work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of work</th>
<th>Academic hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for lectures and seminars</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminars</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homework</strong></td>
<td><strong>114</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation for lectures, seminars and in-class tests</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting as an opponent for another student’s essay (reading an essay, preparing questions and asking them after the presentation)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course works**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation in the seminars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being an opponent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essay presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being an opponent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Course plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Outline</th>
<th>Academic hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lectures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course outline. Post-Soviet Regime Change in Comparative Perspective: From Soviet Legacy to Choice</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1. Political processes in Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarus: Stability without Development</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine: Institutional Viability and Policy Capacity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moldova: Strong Competition within a Weak State</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2. Political processes in Southern Caucasian states</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Georgia: Electoral Revolutions and Regime Transition 1 1 4 6
Armenia: Fragmented Political Leadership and Dilemmas of Political Development 1 1 4 6
Azerbaijan: Stability without Change 1 1 12 6

**Test 2**

Unit 3. Political Processes in Newly Formed Central Asian states 5 5 20 30
Kazakhstan: Post-Soviet Nation Building 1 1 4 6
Kyrgyz Republic: The Worsening Record of Democratic Governance 1 1 4 6
Turkmenistan: A Non-Institutionalized Neopatrimonial Regime 1 1 4 6
Tajikistan: The Challenges to National Consolidation 1 1 4 6
Uzbekistan: Consolidation of Authoritarianism 1 1 12 6

**Test 3**

Unit 4. 3 3 28 32
Semi-Recognized and Non-Recognized States of the Eurasian Space: Stateness without Statehood 1 1 4 4
Essay presentations and reviews - 2 32 10
Concluding discussion 2 - 4 4
Total 15 15 114 144

2.3. Course content

**Topic 1. Course outline. Post-Soviet regime change in comparative perspective: From Soviet legacy to choice.**

Introduction to the course. Course format. Goals, objectives and assessment. Course content: outline of main topics.

Soviet institutions and resources of post-Soviet state- and nation-building. Variety of local cultures and traditions. Centre-periphery relations and their impact on state- and nation-building in the Eurasian space (the NIS).

A typology of state-building processes in the newly independent states. Statehood and stateness.

General overview of regime change in the NIS. Major indices assessing the effectiveness of government, democracy, etc.

Themes for discussion:
1. What are the main factors explaining, from your point of view, the diversity of political regimes in the post-Soviet space?
2. Why did some countries complete a democratic transition, while others could not sustain more than limited political reform (according to Thomas Carothers)?
3. Why postcommunist regime dynamics cannot be explained solely in the paradigm of transition to democracy (according to Henry Hale)?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Internet-resources
• Worldwide governance indicators. – Mode of access: http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home
• Failed states index. - Mode of access: http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi
• Human development reports. – Mode of access: http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/
• Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm
• Democracy Index. Economist intelligence unit. - Mode of access: http://www.economist.com/topics/economist-intelligence-unit
• Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS (official statistical information on social and economic situation in the CIS countries) (in Russian). - Mode of access: www.cisstat.com
• Strategic Culture Foundation online journal. – Mode of access: http://www.strategic-culture.org/

UNIT 1. POLITICAL PROCESSES IN BELARUS, UKRAINE AND MOLDOVA

Topic 2. Belarus: Stability without development

Domestic political conditions after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Creation of new political institutions. Normative frameworks: Declaration of state sovereignty (1990), Constitution (1994). Executive power: President and his authorities; Government. Legislative power: National Assembly (House of Representatives, Council of the Republic). Judicial branch. Local authorities (Councils of deputies) and their role in the political system.


Union State of Russia and Belarus and its development.


Party system. The emergence of party system in early 1990s. The Belarusian Popular Front. Communist party of Belarus. Agrarian party. Liberal

Level of social development. Socio-economic indicators. Social-oriented market economy. Bureaucracy and modernization. State (80%) and private sectors (20%).

Main trends of political process (internal and external aspects): stability without development?

Themes for discussion:
1. What are the reasons of 'authoritarian stability' in Belarus? What are the factors, which make this 'stability' sustainable? What are the fundamental weaknesses of this situation?
2. What are the specific features of national ideology in Belarus (according to Natalia Leschenko)?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings

**Internet resources**

- Belorussian Institute for Strategic Studies. URL: http://belinstitute.eu/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

**Topic 3. Ukraine: Institutional viability and policy capacity**


Differences in regional preferences and political orientations. Crimean autonomy.

Mixed, polarized, and segmented nature of the political culture of Ukraine. Complicated system of interaction between formal and informal norms under the presidency of Leonid Kravchuk and Leonid Kuchma.

Institutionalization of the party system in Ukraine. Electoral protests and democratization. Outcomes of the Orange revolution.

Nation-building under Viktor Yushchenko and Viktor Yanukovych. The relationship between political attitudes and partisanship.


**Themes for discussion:**

1. What are the main factors explaining Ukraine's weakness in state- and nation-building?
2. Prospects for overcoming the current Ukrainian crisis phenomena (your point of view).

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Additional Readings


 Topic 4. Moldova: Strong competition within a weak state


Centers and borders. Basis for the Dniester war. Local consequences of secession.

Nature of political culture in present-day Moldova. Value references, contradictions and differences between orientations and subcultures. Stages of ‘nationalizing policy’ in Moldova.


Development goals for Moldova. Association agreement with the EU.
Difficult task of reunification (Moldova-TMR): towards the ‘common state’?

Themes for discussion:
1. What historical and sociocultural factors influenced Moldova's state-and nation-building the most?
2. Parties and government in Moldova. Why Moldova avoided an authoritarian consolidation model?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Additional Readings


Internet-resources
UNIT 2. POLITICAL PROCESSES IN SOUTHERN CAUCASIAN STATES

Topic 5. Georgia: Electoral revolutions and regime transition


Nationalism as a cultural revival in the post-independence era. Radical nationalistic politics of Gamsakhurdia as a major factor leading to the independence wars of the South Ossetians and the Abkhaz. No-war-nor-peace situation since the end of civil war (1994). ‘Years of chaos and lawlessness’ (E. Shevarnadze).

Political situation under Shevarnadze: A blend of democratic elements and the post-communist clan system of power. Shortage of resources as a major problem of economic modernization.


Themes for discussion:
1. What are the stages of political transformation in Georgia?
2. What is the relationship between the social structure and the dynamics of institutional transformation in Georgia?
3. What kind of democracy was created in Georgia by Mikheil Saakashvili?

Compulsory Readings


General Readings


Additional Readings


Internet-resources

- Georgia news, map, links. - Mode of access: http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/georgia
- The President of Georgia. Website. - Mode of access: https://www.president.gov.ge/en/
- Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm

Topic 6. Armenia: Fragmented Political Leadership and Dilemmas of Political Development


Level of social development. Socio-economic indicators.

Main trends of political process (internal and external aspects).

**Themes for discussion:**
1. What are the main features of Armenian political process and political culture? What cultural narratives do contribute most to it?
2. What factors do favour or impede democratization in Armenia? What is the role of Constitutional reform in this process? Outline your arguments applying to the readings/ facts.

**Compulsory Readings**


**Additional Reading**


Internet resources
- The official site of the President of the Republic of Armenia/URL: http://www.president.am/en/
- National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia/URL: http://www.parliament.am/?lang=eng

Topic 7. Azerbaijan: Stability without change


Political culture framework: nationalism, modernism, turkism.


Effects of the Aliievs’ ‘petroleum’ modernization. Azerbaijan as one of the fastest-growing economies worldwide. Socio-economic challenges and prospects.

Referendum on constitutional amendments (2009). Elimination of presidential term limits and granting the President the power to postpone presidential and parliamentary elections for an indefinite period during the war-
time. Ruling party and informal family and patronage networks as a source of support to the regime.

Political challenges to I. Aliev’s regime.

Themes for discussion:
1. What are the main features of ‘sultanistic semiauthoritarianism’ in Azerbaijan?
2. What are the core features of Azerbaijan as a rentier state and how the ‘resource curse’ influences political development?
3. The sources and limits of "authoritarian stability" (compare the cases of Belarus and Azerbaijan)

Compulsory Readings

Additional Reading
UNIT 3. POLITICAL PROCESSES IN NEWLY FORMED CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

Topic 8. Kazakhstan: Post-Soviet Nation Building


Main trends of political process (internal and external aspects). Soft authoritarian rule (economic stability first, political reform second)?

Themes for discussion:

1. What are the main features of political regime in Kazakhstan? What are the specifics of political networks there?
2. Why can one describe Kazakhstan as a ‘managed democracy’? Why not?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Internet resources

- Eurasian Home. Analytical Resources (Kazakhstan Country Profile)/URL: http://www.eurasianhome.org/xml/t/databases.xml?lang=en&nic=databases&country=98&pid=45


Political participation and patterns political culture. Clans and political elites. Ethnocracy and ethnopolitics. Traditional components of political culture. “Counter elite” as a driving force for constitutional reform. Role of Islam in the political process.


Level of social development. Economy liberalization. Socio-economic indicators.

Main trends of political development (internal and external aspects): moving away from the “democracy show-case”?

Themes for discussion:

1. What are common features of 'tulip revolution' and other 'colour revolutions'? What is specific about 'tulip revolution'?
2. What are structural reasons of ongoing political instability in Kyrgyzstan?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Internet resources
- Kyrgyzstan Political Risk Analysis URL: http://www.emergingeuropemonitor.com/analysis/russia-cis/kyrgyzstan/political-risk

Topic 10. Turkmenistan: A Non-Institutionalized Neopatrimonial Regime

Political participation and political culture. Political elites as “agents of de-modernization and re-traditionalization”. Nontransparent political process.
Traditional components of political culture. Ruhnama ideology as Turkmen national project. Features of civil society.


Level of social development. Land reform and energy sector. Socio-economic indicators.

Main trends of political process (internal and external aspects): transitional period?

Themes for discussion:
1. What are the main features of the political elite in the post-Soviet Turkmenistan?
2. Why did Turkmenistan saw no serious political transformations for the past two decades?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Internet-resources
• Why Turkmenistan bothered holding presidential elections, Carnegie Moscow Center, February 21, 2017, URL: http://carnegie.ru/commentary/68071

Topic 11. Tajikistan: The challenges to national consolidation

Historical background to the establishment of independent Tajikistan.
Struggle over reforming the political system in the wake of the disintegration of the USSR. Social and economic consequences of the independence.
Regionalism and clan rivalry over the control of political power. Patronage networks based on regionalism as a key to political mobilization in the aftermath of the Soviet breakdown. The client-patronage principle in the formation of interest groups.
Presidential elections of 1994 and the election of E. Rahmonov (Rahmon).
Government dependency on one regional group. Developing nationalistic narrative based on the propaganda about the Samanid.
Constitutional amendments (2003): establishment of the upper chamber of parliament and the prolongation of the president mandate. Prevailing power structure and the interests of regions.
State and socio-economic development. Main challenges to political consolidation and development.

Themes for discussion:
1. What were the reasons and driving forces of the civil war in Tajikistan?
2. What are the main challenges to national consolidation in Tajikistan?
3. From your point of view, is Rahmon's regime strong or weak?

**Compulsory Readings**


**Further Readings**


**Additional Readings**


**Internet resources**

• Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm
• President of Republic of Tajikistan. Official site. – Mode of access: http://www.prezident.tj/en
• Tajikistan news, map, links. – Mode of access: http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/tajikistan
• Worldwide governance indicators. – Mode of access: http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home

Topic 12. Uzbekistan: Consolidation of authoritarianism


Main trends of political process (internal and external aspects). Stable authoritarianism?

Themes for discussion:

1. What are the main obstacles for Uzbekistan’s transit to liberal democracy? (according to Vitaly Naumkin “Uzbekistan’s State-Building Fatigue”)?
2. What are the main reasons of re-traditionalization in the political life of Uzbekistan?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Internet resources


UNIT 4

Topic 13. Semi-recognized and non-recognized states of the Eurasian space: Stateness without statehood

‘De facto state’ and ‘quasi-state’ as units of political analysis.

Historical background to the secessionist conflicts in Azerbaijan, Moldova and Georgia. Weakening of the Soviet state and rise of nationalistic movements. Increase of ethnic and regional tensions as a result of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Formation of new local and regional loci of power. Concept of ‘ethnic ownership’ of land.

Consolidation of power and crystallization of independent state-like entities. Party systems and elections. Political participation and opposition.

Redesign of history curricula and framing national narratives.

Economy and social condition. Role of the patron state.

Institution viability and capacity to fulfill the functions of a state. The effects of partial recognition in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Themes for discussion:

1. What are the main factors of the formation of de-facto states in the post-Soviet space?
2. Do these de-facto states function as state entities?
3. What are the prospects for de-facto states’ integration into the current system of international relations?

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


**Additional Readings**


**Internet resources**

- Abkhaz world. – Mode of access: http://abkhazworld.com/aw/abkhazia
- Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. MFA site. – Mode of access: http://www.nkr.am/en/
- Ossetians (history, culture, political issues). - Mode of access: http://ossetians.com/eng/
- Parliament (Supreme Council) of the Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic. Official site. - Mode of access: http://www.vspmr.org/?Lang=Eng
2.4 ESSAY TOPICS
1. National history and national identity in Ukraine and Belarus.
2. “Color revolutions” and regime change in Georgia and Ukraine.
3. The Orange revolution in Ukraine: triumph of civil society?
5. Political effects of semi-presidentialism in Ukraine.
7. Political discourses of identity politics and nation-building in Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia.
8. Patterns in political leadership in Transcaucasia.
10. Re-traditionalization in Central Asia: implications for political process.
11. Elite-recruitment models and bureaucracy in the newly formed Central Asian states.
12. Political modernization and traditional political culture in Kazakhstan.
13. ‘New’ institutions and the fusion of power in Uzbekistan.
15. Neo-patrimonial political regimes: case of Turkmenistan.
16. Elite and counter-elite factor in Kyrgyz “tulip revolution”.
17. Prospects for nation-building in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

EXAM TOPICS
1. The limits of "authoritarian stability" (compare the cases of Belarus, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan).
2. Analytical approaches to the problem of de facto states in the post-Soviet space.
3. How could you define the phenomenon of "colour revolutions" in the post-Soviet space?
4. What do you think about the current and possible impact of political Islam on the durability of regimes in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan?
5. What are the structural factors of political instability in Ukraine and Moldova?

6. Political modernization and traditional political culture in the newly formed Central Asian states.

7. Features of state and nation-building in the so-called "transit territories" of European post-Soviet space.

8. What are the political consequences of the institutionalization of presidential system in Armenia and Azerbaijan?

9. Show the relationship between institution-building and political stability in the cases of Georgia and Ukraine.

10. Neo-patrimonial political regimes in post-Soviet Central Asia: the reasons of establishment, main modifications and prospects.

2.5 EXAM TIMING

- Fall semester tests – last week of December; exams January 10-25
- Spring semester tests – last week of May; exams June 1-25

2.6 READING LIST

Compulsory Readings


Further Readings


Additional Reading


Internet resources


17. Eurasian Home. Analytical Resources (Kazakhstan Country Profile)/URL: http://www.eurasianhome.org/xml/t/databases.xml?lang=en&nic=databases&country=98&pid=45
18. Failed states index. - Mode of access: http://library.fundforpeace.org/fsi

24. Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS (official statistical information on social and economic situation in the CIS countries) (in Russian). - Mode of access: www.cisstat.com

25. Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS (official statistical information on social and economic situation in the CIS countries) (in Russian). - Mode of access: www.cisstat.com


35. Official site of President of Azerbaijan. – Mode of access: http://en.president.az/


37. Ossetians (history, culture, political issues). - Mode of access: http://ossetians.com/eng/


41. Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm

42. Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm

43. Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm

44. Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm

45. Polity IV project. – Mode of access: http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm

46. President of Republic of Tajikistan. Official site. – Mode of access: http://www.prezident.tj/en

47. Press Service of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan/URL: http://www.press-service.uz/en/


51. Strategic Culture Foundation online journal. – Mode of access: http://www.strategic-culture.org/

52. Tajikistan news, map, links. – Mode of access: http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/tajikistan


56. The official site of the President of the Republic of Armenia/URL: http://www.president.am/en/


59. The President of Georgia. Website. - Mode of access: https://www.president.gov.ge/en/


