

PLS100 Introduction to the politics of Central Asia

Fall 2019

Professor: Dr. Hélène Thibault

Room: 8.154

Schedule: Tuesday and Thursday, 9am to 10:15 am

Office number: 8.507A

Office hours: Monday 13:00-14:00 and Friday: 10:00-12:00

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Teaching assistant: Bagnur Karbozova

Office number: 8.239

Office hours: Mon&Wed 10-12pm & 2-4pm; Tue&Thurs 2-4pm.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will introduce key concepts and theories in political science that will be useful for the study of Kazakhstani and Central Asian politics such as the state structure and legal and political systems. In particular, we will discuss the different aspects of contemporary politics such as institution-building, political economy, gender and religion, foreign policy, civil society dynamics, etc. The course will pay a special attention to the Soviet legacies to better understand the transition to independence and the countries' institutional and nation-building processes. At the end of the class, students will be able to make a critical judgment on the evolution of Kazakhstani and Central Asian politics since independence and analyse current dynamics. The course will also propose a comparative perspective to highlight similar and different socio-political realities of Central Asian countries. The course will take the form of lectures but we will also dedicate the last 50 minutes of class time to discussions and/or exercises in small groups.

CLASS POLICIES

Cell phones

The use of cell phones in class is strictly forbidden. It can be very disruptive for you and your classmates and I reserve the right to withdraw one point from your final grade every time I see you use your cell phone. Laptops and pads can be used ONLY to take notes.

Class attendance

Class attendance is necessary to successfully complete this course. Students should be on time and keep an excellent attendance record (see assessment methods below). Students are expected to actively contribute to class discussions and exercises based on the required weekly readings. Sleeping in class will count as an absence.

Late submissions and missed in-class assessments

Late submissions are not accepted. Exceptions are made only for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the professor. All absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness should be supported by a medical certificate. If a student misses an in-class assessment and does not find a way

to contact the professor within a twenty-four-hour window prior to the deadline or exam date (either personally or via a friend or family member), the student may receive a zero for the assessment.

Beware of Academic Fraud!

Academic fraud is an act committed by a student to distort the marking of assignments, tests, examinations, and other forms of academic evaluation. Academic fraud is neither accepted nor tolerated by the University. **Academic fraud in this class will result in an automatic failure for this class and anyone found guilty of academic fraud is liable to other severe academic sanctions.**

In recent years, the development of the Internet has made it much easier to identify academic plagiarism. The tools available to your professors allow them to trace the exact origin of a text on the Web, using just a few words.

Here are a few examples of academic fraud:

- presenting an author's argument or ideas as your own without quoting him or her;
- engaging in any form of plagiarism or cheating;
- presenting falsified research data;
- handing in an assignment that was not authored, in whole or in part, by the student;
- submitting the same assignment in more than one course.

In addition, students who share their work with others are also subject to an academic misconduct penalty. If someone asks for a writing sample for this course, you should direct him/her to the instructor. Do not give your draft to other students in and outside of the course. Finally, any student caught cheating via electronic devices, consultation of notes or verbal and non-verbal communication during an exam will receive a zero for the exam.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Language quality

You will be judged on your writing abilities for written assignments. I understand that English is not your first language but it is your responsibility to take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes in your written assignments. You could be penalized to up to 5%, to the professor's discretion.

Class attendance 10%

The teaching assistant will take attendance at the beginning of every class. I reserve the right to lower your final grade by 10% if you miss more than four lectures. It is important to be on time. Three late check-ins will result in an absence. Sleeping in class will count as an absence.

Movie review 10%

You will watch the movie *5 причин не влюбиться в казаха* and answer few questions to reflect on the concepts of gender, ethnicity, and, identity. Your task will be to write a short summary of the movie as well as present an analysis by using the concepts of identity and ethnicity used in the weekly readings on nationalism. The word limit is from 500 to 800 words. You will have to upload your document in Moodle. Deadline: Thursday September 6, 9am.

Midterm exam 30%

The exam will be based on class lectures and assigned readings. It will combine multiple-choice questions as well as short essays. It will take place on Week 8, after the Fall break.

Conference report 15%

During Week 6, students will attend the conference entitled “Kazakhstan’s Political Transition” held at NU on Friday September 20. I understand that you might have other classes on that day and I don’t expect you to attend all presentations but you should attend at least 2 panels and write a +-250-word summary of each panel that will summarize the presenter’s main arguments and follow-up discussions. Deadline: September 27, 5pm.

Final exam 35%

The exam will be based on class lectures and assigned readings seen since the beginning of the semester. It will combine multiple-choice questions as well as short essays. The final exam will take place during exam week. The date is determined by the Registrar’s office.

COMPONENTS OF FINAL MARK

Evaluation Format	Weight	Date
Attendance	10%	Ongoing
Movie review	10%	Week 4 - September 6
Conference report	15%	Week 7 - September 27
Midterm exam	30%	Week 8 - October 10
Final exam	35%	TBD November/December

GRADING

A	95-100	Excellent, exceeds the highest standards in the assignment or course.
A-	90-94.9	Excellent, meets the highest standards in the assignment or course.
B+	85-89.9	Very good, meets the highest standards in the assignment or course.
B	80-84.9	Good, meets most of the standards in the assignment or course.
B-	75-79.9	More than adequate, shows some reasonable command of the material.
C+	70-74.9	Acceptable, meets basic standards for the assignment or course.
C	65-69.9	Acceptable, meets some of the basic standards for the assignment or course.
C-	60-64.9	Acceptable, while failing short of meeting basic standards for the assignment or course in several ways.
D+	55-59.9	Minimally acceptable.
D	50-54.9	Minimally acceptable, lowest passing.
F	0-49.9	Did not satisfy the basic requirements of the course.

The information contained in the course outline may change throughout the semester.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION

August 12 – 18

Tuesday: Presentation of the syllabus.

Thursday: Heathershaw, John. 2010. "Central Asian Statehood in Post-Colonial Perspective". In Kavalski, Emilian (Ed). *Stable outside, fragile inside: post-Soviet statehood in Central Asia*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate; 87-101.
<https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/handle/10036/3185>

WEEK 2 LATE SOVIET PERIOD

August 19 – 25

Tuesday: Dadabayeva, Gulnara and Dina Sharipova. 2016. "Novy Uzen Riots in 1989: Ethnic Conflict or Economic Nationalism?", *Cahiers d'Asie centrale* 26; 225-245.

Thursday: Bennigsen, Alexandre. 1988. "Unrest in the World of Soviet Islam". *Third World Quarterly*, 10(2); 770-786.

WEEK 3 TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE AND INSTITUTION BUILDING

AUGUST 26 – SEPTEMBER 1

Tuesday: Cummings, Sally. 2005. *Kazakhstan: Power and the Elite*. I.B.Tauris; 14-57. MOODLE.

Thursday: Nurumov, Dmitry and Vasil Vashchanka. 2016. "Constitutional Development of Independent Kazakhstan". In R. Elgie, S. Moestrup (eds.), *Semi-Presidentialism in the Caucasus and Central Asia*. Palgrave Macmillan; 143-172. MOODLE.

WEEK 4 NATIONALISM

SEPTEMBER 2 – 8

Tuesday: Kazakhstan's Nationhood: Politics and Society on the Move
<http://voicesoncentralasia.org/kazakhstans-nationhood-politics-and-society-on-the-move/>

Laruelle, Marlène. 2016. "Which Future For National Patriots? The Landscape Of Kazakh Nationalism." In *Kazakhstan In The Making*, Marlène Laruelle ed. Lanham [etc.]: Lexington Books: 155-180. MOODLE.

Thursday: Sharipova, Dina, Aziz Burkhanov and Alma Alpeissova. 2017. "The Determinants of Civic and Ethnic Nationalisms in Kazakhstan: Evidence from the Grass-Roots Level". *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 23(2); 203-226.

Movie review due this week!

WEEK 5 POLITICAL LEGITIMATION

SEPTEMBER 9 – 15

- Tuesday: Fauve, Adrien. 2015. "Global Astana: Nation Branding as a Legitimization Tool for Authoritarian Regimes." *Central Asian Survey* 34 (1); 110–24.
- Thursday: *Schatz, Edward. 2009. "The Soft Authoritarian Tool Kit: Agenda-Setting Power in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan." *Comparative Politics* 41(2): 203–22.
- *Isaacs, Rico. 2016. *Film and Identity in Kazakhstan*. I.B. Tauris. Chapters 4 and 5. MOODLE.

WEEK 6 POLITICAL TRANSITION

SEPTEMBER 16 – 22

- Tuesday: Siegel, David. 2018. "The Political Logic of Cadre Rotation in Post-Soviet Central Asia." *Problems of Post-Communism* 65(4); 253-270.

No class on Thursday: Conference "Kazakhstan's Political Transition", September 20. Location: TBD.

WEEK 7 INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 23 – 29

- Tuesday: Collins, Kathleen. 2004. "The Logic of Clan Politics: Evidence from the Central Asian Trajectories", *World Politics* 56(2); 224-261.
- Thursday: Junisbai, Barbara. 2010. "A Tale of Two Kazakhstans: Sources of Political Cleavage and Conflict in the Post-Soviet Period". *Europe-Asia Studies*, 62(2); 235-269.

Conference report due this week!

FALL BREAK

September 30 – October 6

WEEK 8 EXAM WEEK

OCTOBER 7 - 13

WEEK 9 RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS

OCTOBER 14 - 20

- Tuesday: Omelicheva, Mariya Y. 2016. "Islam and power legitimation: instrumentalisation of religion in Central Asian States", *Contemporary Politics*, 22:2, 144-163.
- Thursday: Thibault, Hélène. 2019. "The Art of Managing Religion in a Post-Soviet Soft Authoritarian State", In Jean-François Caron (ed). *Kazakhstan and the Soviet Legacy Between Continuity and Rupture*. Palgrave-Macmillan; 155-179. MOODLE.

WEEK 10 SOCIAL DYNAMICS

OCTOBER 21 – 27

- Tuesday: Azamat and Barbara Junisbai. 2019. "Are Youth Different? The Nazarbaev Generation and Public Opinion in Kazakhstan". . In Jean-François Caron (ed). *Kazakhstan and the Soviet Legacy Between Continuity and Rupture*. Palgrave-Macmillan; 101-138. MOODLE.
- Thursday: Burkhanov, Aziz & Yu-Wen Chen. 2016. "Kazakh perspective on China, the Chinese, and Chinese migration", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(12); 2129-2148.

WEEK 11 GENDER

OCTOBER 28 – NOVEMBER 3

- Tuesday: Kandiyoti, Deniz. 2007. The politics of gender and the Soviet paradox: neither colonized, nor modern?, *Central Asian Survey*, 26(4); 601-623.
- Thursday: Werner, Cynthia. 2009. "Bride Abduction in Post-Soviet Central Asia: Marking a Shift Towards Patriarchy through Local Discourses of Shame and Tradition", *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15(2); 314-331.

WEEK 12 FOREIGN POLICY

NOVEMBER 4 – 10

- Tuesday: Sullivan, Charles. 2019. "End of an Era? Kazakhstan and the Fate of Multivectorism. In Jean-François Caron (ed). *Kazakhstan and the Soviet Legacy Between Continuity and Rupture*. Palgrave-Macmillan; 31-50. MOODLE.
- Thursday: Vysotskaya, Alena and Guedes Vieira. 2016. "Eurasian integration: elite perspectives before and after the Ukraine crisis", *Post-Soviet Affairs* 32(6); 566-580.

WEEK 13 POLITICAL ECONOMY

NOVEMBER 11 – 17

- Tuesday: Heathershaw, John and Alexander Cooley. *Dictators without borders: power and money in Central Asia*; p. 1-52. MOODLE.
- Thursday: Dossym Satpayev and Tolganay Umbetaliyeva. 2015. "The protests in Zhanaozen and the Kazakh oil sector: Conflicting interests in a rentier state". *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 6; 122-129.

WEEK 14 MEDIA

NOVEMBER 18 – 24

- Tuesday: Lewis, David. 2016. "Blogging Zhanaozen: hegemonic discourse and authoritarian resilience in Kazakhstan", *Central Asian Survey*, 35(3); 421-438.
- Thursday: Nikolayenko, Olena. 2015. "Youth Media Consumption and Perceptions of Electoral Integrity in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan", *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 23(3); 257-276.

Final exam during Exam week. Date to be determined by the Registrar's Office.