

PLS100 Introduction to the politics of Central Asia Fall 2020

Professor: Dr. Hélène Thibault

Room & schedule: Online lectures will be posted at the beginning of every week.

Virtual office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 6-7pm or by appointment.

Email: helene.thibault@nu.edu.kz

Teaching assistant: Viktoriya Malikova

Virtual office hours: By appointment.

Email: viktoriya.malikova@nu.edu.kz

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 be asynchronous, and the professor will upload short video recorded lectures on Moodle every Tuesday. Throughout the semester, there will also be a number of guest lectures provided by local and foreign specialists. The exact dates and schedule of the guest lectures are to be confirmed. They will be recorded and available on Moodle.

CLASS POLICIES

Late submissions

You must submit your assessments on the day of the set deadline unless you have been formally granted a discretionary postponement. The deadline for receipt of assessment tasks is noon (Nur-Sultan local time) on the cut-off date. NU operates a grace period of 12 hours so work submitted before midnight on the cut-off date will be accepted without penalty. If your submission is received up to 24 hours after the grace period, the assessment will be accepted but the task score will be reduced by up to 10 percentage points. For example, if the deadline is Monday at noon, you have until midnight on Monday to send it without penalty. If you send it before midnight on Tuesday, it will still be accepted, but 10% will be taken away from your grade. Submissions received beyond this point will not be marked and you will not be considered to have completed the assessment task. You will not be offered another opportunity.

Grades

Your final grade is final. It is not a basis for negotiations. You are entitled to receive feedback and I will try to be as detailed as possible in my comments.

Readings

Readings are available through the library or on Moodle when specifically indicated.

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.
- Not providing references for a direct quote or statistics.
- 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.

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.

Online quizzes 6x5%

In order to help students better assimilate the material contained in the weekly readings, a total of 6 online quizzes (each worth 5%) will be used to test the students' comprehension of the assigned readings and/or guest speakers' presentation. Therefore, students have to read the texts before starting to answer the quiz. It will consist of multiple-choice questions and short answer questions.

Deadline: The quizzes will be opened on Moodle Tuesday at noon and will have to be completed before Thursday at noon. There will be 6 quizzes so pay attention to the syllabus to know when the quizzes are due.

Movie review 15%

You will watch the Kazakhstani comedy *Ақим* (available for free [here](#)) and write a review to reflect on the concepts of power and identity. Your task will be to write a short summary of the movie as well as present an analysis by using the concepts found in some of the readings, in particular, those of Week 6. The word limit is from 500 to 700 words. Additional information about the format will be posted in a separate document on Moodle.

Deadline: Thursday September 25, noon.

Field report 20%

Students will have to produce a field report about the structure and responsibilities of their local Akimat or Maslikhat. The idea is to help students to make better sense of the country's government's structure and the relations between local, regional and national organs. More details about the format and expectations will be provided in a separate document on Moodle and during lectures.

Deadline: October 16, noon.

Final exam 35%

The exam will be based on class lectures and assigned readings seen since the beginning of the semester. It will consist of two short essays. More details about the format will be provided in a separate document on Moodle and during lectures.

Deadline: December 1st, noon.

COMPONENTS OF FINAL MARK

Evaluation Format	Weight	Date
Online quizzes	(6x5) 30%	Ongoing
Movie review	15%	Week 6 - September 25, noon
Field report	20%	Week 8 - October 16, noon
Final exam	35%	December 1 st , noon

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. More special guest lectures will also be added.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1 INTRODUCTION

August 17 – 23

Live presentation of the syllabus+ Q&A, Tuesday 18 10:30.

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>

ONLINE QUIZ. (Optional)

WEEK 2 LATE SOVIET PERIOD

August 24 – 30

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

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 31 – SEPTEMBER 6

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

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.

ONLINE QUIZ.

WEEK 4 NATIONALISM

SEPTEMBER 7 – 13

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.

*Isaacs, Rico. 2016. *Film and Identity in Kazakhstan*. I.B. Tauris. Chapter 4. MOODLE.

SPECIAL LECTURE: RICO ISAACS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN POLITICS, UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN. (TBC)

WEEK 5 POLITICAL LEGITIMATION

SEPTEMBER 14 – 20

Fauve, Adrien. 2015. "Global Astana: Nation Branding as a Legitimization Tool for Authoritarian Regimes." *Central Asian Survey* 34 (1); 110–24.

Schatz, Edward. 2009. "The Soft Authoritarian Tool Kit: Agenda-Setting Power in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan." *Comparative Politics* 41(2): 203–22.

ONLINE QUIZ.

WEEK 6 FORMAL INSTITUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 21 – 27

Janenova, Saltanat and Colin Knox. 2018. "Public councils in Kazakhstan: a case of emergent participative democracy?", *Central Asian Survey* 37 (2), 305-321.

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

MOVIE REVIEW DUE SEPTEMBER 25, AT NOON.

WEEK 7 INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS

SEPTEMBER 28 – OCTOBER 4

Collins, Kathleen. 2004. "The Logic of Clan Politics: Evidence from the Central Asian Trajectories", *World Politics* 56(2); 224-261.

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.

**SPECIAL LECTURE: BARBARA JUNISBAI, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES, PITZER COLLEGE.
ONLINE QUIZ.**

FALL BREAK

OCTOBER 5 – October 11

WEEK 8 POLITICAL TRANSITION

OCTOBER 12 - 18

Burkhanov, Aziz, Serik Orazgaliyev and Eduardo Araral. 2020. "Political Culture and Power Transition: The Case of Kazakhstan". In Jean-François Caron (ed). *Understanding Kazakhstan's 2019 Political Transition*. MOODLE.

Caron, Jean-François and Viktoriya Malikova. 2020. "Understanding Anti-Regime Activists' Failures During the 2019 Kazakhstan Presidential Election". In Jean-François Caron (ed). *Understanding Kazakhstan's 2019 Political Transition*. MOODLE.

**SPECIAL LECTURE: VIKTORIYA MALIKOVA, NU PSIR/GSPP GRADUATE.
FIELD REPORT DUE OCTOBER 16, AT NOON.**

WEEK 9 RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS

OCTOBER 19 - 25

Beyssembayev, Serik. 2016. "Religious Extremism in Kazakhstan: From Criminal Networks to Jihad". *Central Asia Fellowship Papers* No. 15, February. <https://centralasiaprogram.org/archives/9484>

Thibault, H el ene. 2019. "The Art of Managing Religion in a Post-Soviet Soft Authoritarian State", In Jean-Fran ois Caron (ed). *Kazakhstan and the Soviet Legacy Between Continuity and Rupture*. Palgrave-Macmillan; 155-179. MOODLE.

**SPECIAL LECTURE: SERIK BEYSSEMBAYEV, SCHOLAR AND FOUNDER OF THE PAPER LAB.
ONLINE QUIZ.**

WEEK 10 SOCIAL DYNAMICS

OCTOBER 26 – NOVEMBER 1

Kosnazarov, Daniyar. 2019. "#Hashtag Activism: Youth, Social Media, and Politics," In Marl ene Laruelle (Ed.) *The Nazarbayev Generation: Youth in Kazakhstan*. MOODLE.

Burkhanov, Aziz & Yu-Wen Chen. 2016. "Kazakh perspective on China, the Chinese, and Chinese migration", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(12); 2129-2148.

SPECIAL LECTURE: DANIYAR KOSNAZAROV, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF STEPPE.

WEEK 11 GENDER

NOVEMBER 2 – NOVEMBER 8

Kandiyoti, Deniz. 2007. The politics of gender and the Soviet paradox: neither colonized, nor modern?, *Central Asian Survey*, 26(4); 601-623.

Mambetov, Madi. 2019. “О токсичной маскулинности”, *Manshuq*, January 29, <https://manshuq.com/life-toxic-masculinity-01-2019>

Dall’Agnola, Jasmin. (2020), “Queer Culture and Tolerance in Kazakhstan. A critical reflection on politically correct speech’, in Dall’Agnola, J and Moradi, J (eds) *PC on Earth. The Beginnings of the Totalitarian Mindset*. Columbia University Press.

**SPECIAL LECTURE: LEYLA ZULEIKHA MAKHMUDOVA, KAZAKHSTANI ACTIVIST.
ONLINE QUIZ.**

WEEK 12 FOREIGN POLICY

NOVEMBER 9 – 15

Ambrosio, Thomas. 2020. “Security Hedging After Nazarbayev? The Future of Kazakhstan’s Alignment with Russia”. In Jean-François Caron (ed). *Understanding Kazakhstan’s 2019 Political Transition*. MOODLE.

Vysotskaya, Alena and Guedes Vieira. 2016. “Eurasian integration: elite perspectives before and after the Ukraine crisis”, *Post-Soviet Affairs* 32(6); 566-580.

SPECIAL LECTURE: ANDRÉ CARSTENS, AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS.

WEEK 13 POLITICAL ECONOMY

NOVEMBER 16 – 22

Heathershaw, John and Alexander Cooley. *Dictators without borders: power and money in Central Asia*; p. 1-52. MOODLE.

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.

Ybrayev, Zhandos. 2020. COVID-19 in Kazakhstan: Economic Consequences and Policy Implications. <https://centralasiaprogram.org/archives/16542>

ONLINE QUIZ.

WEEK 14 MEDIA

NOVEMBER 23 – 29

Lewis, David. 2016. “Blogging Zhanaozen: hegemonic discourse and authoritarian resilience in Kazakhstan”, *Central Asian Survey*, 35(3); 421-438.

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 DUE DECEMBER 1ST, AT NOON.