

# **Post-Soviet Ukraine: A Case Study in Socio-Economic and Political Transformation**

## **Course syllabus**

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### **Course Description:**

During the past 20 years, Ukrainian society has experienced radical change, in its economy, in its polity, in its social practices (habitus). The objective of this course is to contextualize these transformations in current social theory, and to apply this theory to empirical analysis of three concrete social phenomena that have appeared in Ukraine since independence. In the first portion of the course, the phenomenon of post-Soviet entrepreneurship is examined – where did new business owners come from?; was privatization of Ukraine’s legacy Soviet-era assets really as important to the country’s future socio-economic development as one would gather from the literature?; are “oligarchs” really in control? These questions lead us to an examination of the structure of Ukraine’s post-Soviet elite, and political change more generally. The second part of the course examines elite networks, recruitment and circulation (particularly prior to and immediately following the Orange Revolution), and sources of elite consensus/dissensus. Finally, the third part of the course turns to an examination of transformations of everyday life practices in post-Soviet Ukraine: is the ‘homo sovieticus’ characterization still relevant?; to what extent are Ukrainians European in their values?; are regional differences exaggerated or real?

The course will consist of daily class discussions, and nightly reading assignments. Two individually written short papers will be assigned (one on socio-economic aspects of Ukraine’s transformation, and one on political change). A final “field research” assignment will be presented in groups.

### **Course requirements**

This course is conducted in seminar format. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions based on the assigned readings. Class participation will be graded.

Students will be asked to write two short papers (7-10 page essay) at the end of each week – one on economic transformation and one on political transformation in Ukraine. Written submissions should include references (APA style) to relevant literature, and should be formatted as position papers that argue for/against a defined thesis. Thesis statements will be suggested by the lecturer, but are not obligatory.

During the final portion of the course, students will be assigned a group field research task that will involve interviewing (for those with language skills) and/or observing social practices in a typical urban setting (e.g. market, café, restaurant, park). Observed social practices will be presented in class by each group, and analyzed using the theoretical frameworks learned during the course.

## Grades

Grades will be assigned according to the following breakdown:

Class participation	25%	
Essay 1 (economic transformation)	25%	Due at start of Week 2
Essay 2 (political transformation)	25%	Due at start of Week 3
Group presentation	25%	Due on last day of classes

Class topics and required readings:

Aug 6	Ukraine's post-Soviet economic transformation – what happened, and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hass, Jeff “The great experiment: Markets in the shadows of socialism” <u>Economic Sociology: An Introduction</u>. Routledge 2007 pp. 154-181</li> <li>Lane, David <u>The Rise and Fall of State Socialism</u> Chapter 8</li> <li>Wilson &amp; Kuzio <u>Ukraine: from Perestroika to Independence</u></li> </ul>
Aug 7	What does economic transformation mean? Theoretical approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collins, Randall. “Weber’s Last Theory of Capitalism”</li> <li>Hodgson, Geoffrey. “The Return of Institutional Economics”</li> <li>Rocher, Guy. “Talcott Parsons and American Sociology”</li> </ul>
Aug 8	Privatization and the rise of oligarchs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Puglisi R. “Rise of the Ukrainian Oligarchs” <u>Democratization</u> 2003, pp. 99-123</li> <li>Swain A. “Soft capitalism and a hard industry: virtualism, the “transition industry” and the restructuring of the Ukrainian coal industry” 2006</li> </ul>
Aug 9	Entrepreneurship in post-Soviet Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Codagnone, Cristiano. “New Entrepreneurs: Continuity of Change in Russian Economy and Society?” Reprinted from: Grancelli, Bruno (ed.) <u>Social Change and Modernization: Lessons from Eastern Europe</u>. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995</li> <li>Korzhov, G. “Entrepreneurs and the Perspectives of the Emergence of the Middle Classes in Post-Communist Ukraine” <u>International Journal of Sociology</u> vol. 29, no. 4 Winter 1999-2000. pp. 33-53</li> <li>McMillan J. &amp; Woodruff, C. “The Central Role of Entrepreneurs in Transition Economies” <u>Journal of Economic Perspectives</u>, vol. 16, no. 3. Summer 2002, pp. 153-170.</li> <li>Welter, F. “Exploring Entrepreneurship: SME Development in a Post-Soviet Context” TeliaSonera Institute Discussion Paper No. 5</li> </ul>
Aug 10	Doing business in today’s Ukraine	Meeting with local business owner
Aug 13	Post-Soviet business-political networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anderson, A; Jack, S. “The Articulation of social capital in entrepreneurial networks: a glue or lubricant?” in <u>Entrepreneurship &amp; Regional Development</u>, vol. 14, 2002. pp. 193-210.</li> <li>Grannovetter, M. “Business Groups”</li> </ul>
Aug 14	New/old Ukrainian political elites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higley J. &amp; Lengyel G. <u>Elites after State Socialism</u>, Introduction pp. 1-24</li> <li>Puglisi R. “Clashing Agendas? Economic Interests, Elite Coalitions and Prospects for Co-operation between Russia and Ukraine” <u>Europe-Asia Studies</u> Vol. 55, No. 6, 2003, 827–845</li> <li>Way L. “The Sources and Dynamics of Competitive Authoritarianism in Ukraine” <u>Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics</u>, Vol. 20, No. 1, March 2004, pp. 143–161</li> </ul>
Aug 15	National identity and language politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson A. <u>Ukraine: unexpected nation</u></li> <li>Shulman S. “Cultural foundations of Ukrainian national identity” <u>Ethnic and Racial Studies</u> 1999 pp. 1011-1036</li> </ul>
Aug 16	Orange Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lane D. “The Orange Revolution: ‘People’s Revolution’ or Revolutionary Coup?” <u>The British Journal of Politics &amp; International Relations</u> November 2008, pp. 525–549</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wilson A. <u>Ukraine's Orange Revolution</u> 2006</li> </ul>
Aug 17	Consensus through conflict in a post-Orange Ukraine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kudelia S. "Revolutionary Bargain: The Unmaking of Ukraine's Autocracy through Pacting"</li> <li>Laverty, N. "The Problem of Lasting Change Civil Society and the Colored Revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine"</li> <li>Osipian A. "Why Donbass Votes for Yanukovich: Confronting the Ukrainian Orange Revolution" <i>Demokratyzatsia</i> 2006 pp. 495-517</li> </ul>
Aug 20	Politics, Media and Civil Society	Guest speaker
Aug 21	European or Eurasian: examining values through everyday life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overgaard S. &amp; Zahavi D. "Phenomenological Sociology The Subjectivity of Everyday Life"</li> </ul>
Aug 22	"Long live HomoSovieticus!" The morphogenesis of the post-Soviet habitus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ledeneva, A. <u>Blat: Russia's Economy of Favours</u>. Cambridge University Press</li> <li>Sztompka P. "Trust and rapid social change: a case study" <i>Trust</i> pp. 151-190.</li> </ul>
Aug 23	Course wrap-up	Student presentations