

293NHISV368B – Communism in East Central Europe

Elective

Spring Semester, 2023/2024 Academic Year

Lecturer:	Éva Kiss, Dr
Department:	Invited guest lecturer, Institute of Social and Political Sciences
Office hours:	By appointment
Availability:	E-mail address: eva.kiss@uni-corvinus.hu
Course type:	elective
Prerequisites:	none
Credits:	6 ECTS
Number of hours per semester	Two 90-minute classes per week + 1 timeslot for the exam (2x13 +1 = 27 timeslots per semester)
Time of class:	Tuesdays 9:50-13:10
Venue:	1 st timeslot: E.3.305., 2 nd timeslot: E.3.393.

Aims and objectives and description of the course:

This course examines the rise and fall of Soviet domination in the countries of East-Central Europe after 1945. The primary focus will be on Hungary, but we will also analyse the communist dictatorships and the 1989-1990 revolutions in other countries of the region, such as Poland, East-Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia.

Learning outcomes:

- Gaining an overview of the post-war history of the East-Central European communist states, with special emphasis on Hungarian history
- A better understanding of everyday life in the communist countries of the region
- Developing argumentation skills
- Practice of writing essays and giving a short presentation on an optional topic

Course description

During the semester, we will investigate the Sovietization of Hungary after the end of the Second World War, the Stalinist political and social system, the phase of state socialism, everyday life during communism and the period of the transition to democracy. We will also analyse the communist dictatorships and the 1989-1990 revolutions in other countries of the region, such as Poland, East-Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia. The students will watch two feature films connected with the course's topic and have an opportunity to visit one of Budapest famous sights, the Memento Park.

Methodology to be used:

The course consists of lectures and seminar type classes. The lectures are based on slides and handouts. During the seminars, the students discuss and compare short primary and secondary sources; discuss films on historical topics; visit and discuss an exhibition related to the course's topic. Also, the students are asked to write a home assignment on a topic chosen from the list of recommended topics and they are encouraged to give a short presentation on it.

Detailed class schedule, 1st – 14th week:

<u>Date of class</u>	<u>Topics to be discussed</u>
Week 1 13 February	Introduction. East-Central Europe after WWII, with special attention to Hungary.
Week 2 20 February	Stalinization of East-Central Europe. The Rákosi-era in Hungary. Retreat from Stalinism, 1953-56.
Week 3 27 February	The 1956 revolution in Hungary. Repression and consolidation.
Week 4 5 March	Budapest under Communism - Visit to the Memento Park . (In case of bad weather, the field trip will be on week 5 – the topics of weeks 4 and 5 will be in reverse order).
Week 5 12 March	Reforms and life in Hungary in the Kádár-era. The late Kádár-period. Transition to democracy in Hungary, 1989-90.
Week 6 19 March	Poland – The Solidarity Trade Union and the Round Table Revolution
	Spring break (no classes)
	Intensive week (no classes)
Week 7 9 April	East-Germany from its formation till the Fall of the Berlin Wall
Week 8 16 April	Secret services in the Communist Bloc. The Stasi in East-Germany Film: The Lives of Others (German, by Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck)
Week 9 23 April	Czechoslovakia - The Prague Spring and the Velvet Revolution
Week 10 30 April	Romania – Ceausescu's dictatorship and the 1989 revolution
Week 11 7 May	Yugoslavia - Life under Tito. The wars of the Yugoslav succession in the 1990s I.
Week 12 14 May	The wars of the Yugoslav succession in the 1990s II. Film: No Man's Land (Bosnian, by Danis Tanović)
Week 13 21 May	Pre-exam (1 st exam date)
Week 14 28 May	Final exam (2 nd exam date). You can choose between the 1 st and 2 nd exam dates.

Assignments:

1. **Research paper (midterm paper):** Students are asked to write an approximately 2,000–word home assignment (“midterm paper”) on a topic chosen from the list of recommended topics.
2. **A short outline of the research paper** is to be submitted and approved in advance.
3. **Short home assignments: 3 history essays, or 2 history essays and a presentation**
To get maximum points for this category, the students are required to write 3 short (600–700 words) history essays; or submit 2 history essays and give a presentation on their research topic. The written assignments will be provided on Moodle about 2 weeks before the due date. One can (but does not have to) submit all 3 essays *and* give a presentation, and the 3 best results will count.
4. **Final test. A study guide will be provided a few weeks ahead of the test.**

All assignments will be posted on Moodle and must be submitted via Moodle.

Assessment, grading:

Grades are **earned** by the students based on their class attendance, class participation, their achievements in the assignments (group or otherwise) and any quizzes, homework and midterm and final exam (where applicable). If the student completed at least one of the course takes either in full or in part, the subject can only be closed with a grade.

Grades are not negotiable. Any attempt at negotiation may potentially result in official disciplinary action!

Class participation	10%
Outline of the research paper	5%
Research paper (Midterm paper)	20%
Short home assignments (one of these can be a presentation)	30%
Final test	35%

Class attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory. Participation in lectures is an important part of the process and understanding of the subject. **Attendance of the seminars is compulsory.** The acceptable level of absence is ¼ of all lessons (i.e. 3 occasions). **In exceptional cases** (hospital treatment, permanent illness) provided that the total absence is less than 50%, the tutor can (if he/she so decides) give an opportunity for supplement. *Study and Examination Regulations – 21§ (3) and (5)*

Simple doctor’s certificates will not be accepted. If the student has exceeded the maximally allowed number of absences, only verifiable, official hospital- or treatment centre documentation proving hospital treatment or permanent illness shall be accepted.

Students whose absence from the seminars exceeds the maximally allowed 3 occasions (partial seminar attendance is counted as absence), will be given a “not signed” (aláírás megtagadva”) grade. Students receiving the “not signed” grade will not have the option of taking either the final or any of the retake examinations but shall have to retake the course in a subsequent semester.

Students who in any way disrupt a class will be warned once. If the student’s disruptive behaviour continues after the first warning, the tutor has the right to send the student out of the room and note that the student has been absent from the given class. This includes use of cell phones and other electronic messaging devices during class. Laptops may be used for the sole purpose of taking notes during

lectures. Any other use (such as Facebook, instant messaging, emailing, surfing the web or like activities) will cause you to lose this privilege and your class participation points will be deducted. Please, close your laptops during film screenings.

Cheating, plagiarism

Any attempt at cheating or plagiarism in quizzes, assignments or at examinations shall result in an automatic “F” (fail) grade and the student will not be able to take either the final examination or the retake examinations but shall have to retake the course in a subsequent semester.

Compulsory reading:

Material provided on Moodle

Recommended readings:

Cartledge, Bryan: *The Will to Survive. A History of Hungary* (London, 2011) – selected chapters

Crampton, Richard: *Eastern Europe in the 20th Century and After* (Second edition, Routledge, 2001) - selected chapters

Sebestyen, Victor: *Revolution 1989. The Fall of the Soviet Empire* (London, 2009)

Stokes, Gale (Ed.): *From Stalinism to Pluralism. A Documentary History of Eastern Europe since 1945* (Oxford, 1996)

Sources on the web – to be announced in class

Grading:

<i>Percentage achieved</i>	<i>International grade</i>
97-100	A+
94-96	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0-59	F

International grading scale

<i>Percentage achieved</i>	<i>Hungarian grade</i>	<i>ECTS equivalent</i>	<i>Explanation for the Hungarian grade</i>
87-100	5	A	Excellent
77-86	4	B	Good
67-76	3	C	Satisfactory
60-66	2	D	Pass
0-59	1	F	Fail
	Nem jelent meg	DNA	Did not attend (no credit)
	Nem vizsgázott	I	Incomplete (no credit)
	Aláírva	S	Signed (no credit)
	Megtagadva	R	Refused (no credit)

Hungarian and ECTS grading scale