

**«Central Asian Studies World Wide»**  
**Course Syllabi for the Study of Central Eurasia**  
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**Madeleine Reeves**  
**Central Asian Politics and Society**  
**Syllabus for the course offered in Spring 2001**  
**American University in Kyrgyzstan**  
**Departments of Sociology and ICP**

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## 1. Syllabus

### Central Asian Politics and Society

The American University in Kyrgyzstan  
Departments of Sociology and ICP  
Course Syllabus, Spring Term 2001

**Instructor:** Madeleine Reeves, CEP Visiting Lecturer   **Office telephone:** 66-10-92  
**Course codes:** SOC 317/ ID = 01298 (68 points)   **Home telephone:** 66-26-48 (before 10pm)  
ICP 245 / ID = 01301 (136 points)   **Email:** [madeleiner Reeves@yahoo.com](mailto:madeleiner Reeves@yahoo.com)  
**Class meets:** Tu, Th @ 1.00 pm  
**Office hours:** to be arranged

#### **Course description:**

This course adopts a historical and comparative approach to the study of contemporary Central Asian politics and society. It seeks to enable students to reflect in an informed and critical way upon the following issues and debates: the legacy of Soviet rule in the region; the emergence of new political institutions and their potential for fostering democracy; the impact of “transition” upon social institutions from the family to the nation; changing religious, ethnic and gender identities; political Islam and state policy; the development of civil society in the region; “nation-building” and the challenge of ethnic diversity; the evolving intra-regional situation and relations with Russia, the CIS and the world. It will help students to place current political developments in the region within their broader historical and geographical contexts; it will give them the comparative skills to begin to think outside the national frame in assessing the challenges facing the region, and it will afford them the critical skills necessary to assess current policy priorities of domestic and international actors in the region in an informed and analytical manner.

#### **Students for whom course is intended:**

The course is intended equally for advanced students from Sociology and ICP. Students can take it for either 68 points’ credit (as SOC 317) or 136 points’ credit (as ICP 245); ICP students wishing to take the course for 68 points should register with the SOC code and vice versa. Students taking the course for 136 points are expected to be spending the equivalent of two *para* on independent reading and writing per week *in addition to that expected for a regular 68 point course*. The written assignments which are set reflect this differential workload. For all students, whether the course is taken for 68 or 136 points, this is a heavy reading course. Students are expected to complete all of the readings and class discussions and examination questions will be premised upon the assumption that you are doing so. If readings are presenting difficulties, either in terms of their content or the level of English, you are encouraged to talk to the instructor at the first opportunity. This course is intended for *advanced* students (those in their Junior and Senior years): lectures and readings are pitched accordingly.

**Teaching methods:**

Teaching will consist of lectures and class discussions, based around the readings for the given week. Wherever possible, original documents relating to the period or issue under discussion will be included as part of the reading for that week.

**Assessment:**

Since this is a cross-listed course, with students taking it for both 68 and 136 points, different sets of requirements apply according to the credit for which it is being taken:

**a) Students taking the course for 68 points (SOC 317):**

|  |                   |             |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Attendance and participation</b>    | <b>40 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Mid-term exam</b>                   | <b>40 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Final exam</b>                      | <b>40 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Final paper</b>                     | <b>40 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Collection of notes on readings</b> | <b>40 points</b>  | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>Total possible</b>                  | <b>200 points</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**b) Students taking the course for 136 points (ICP 245)**

|  |                      |             |
|--|----------------------|-------------|
| <b>Attendance and participation</b>    | <b>30 points</b>     | <b>15%</b>  |
| <b>Mid-term exam</b>                   | <b>30 points</b>     | <b>15%</b>  |
| <b>Final exam</b>                      | <b>40 points</b>     | <b>20%</b>  |
| <b>4 analytical essays</b>             | <b>4 x 20 points</b> | <b>40%</b>  |
| <b>Collection of notes on readings</b> | <b>20 points</b>     | <b>10%</b>  |
| <b>Total possible</b>                  | <b>200 points</b>    | <b>100%</b> |

**Explanation of the assessment requirements:**

**1. Attendance and participation** Since this is a large group and the success of the course depends on students participating actively in class discussions, attendance will be taken every time we meet. You may miss up to four classes during the course of the semester for personal reasons; if you miss any more than four classes without the support of a doctor's note, your grade will be reduced by 5 points (2.5%) for every subsequent class missed. Students who are obviously not paying attention in class (persistently talking, preparing for other classes, going out part way through for excessive periods, sleeping....) will be counted as absent for that class. Students with an attendance record of 100% during the term will be given a 5 point bonus to their grade.

**2. Mid-term and final exams** These will be in-class, closed-book exams, consisting of both short answer and essay questions. Detailed guidelines will be given well in advance of the exam. So long as what you are trying to communicate is comprehensible, the level of English of your answer will not be assessed *per se*. Credit will be given for thoughtful, analytical and well-structured answers. The mid-term exam will be held in class on **Thursday 22nd February**, and will be based on all the material covered up to that date. The final exam will occur some time

**during the week of May 19-27** and will be based upon the readings and lecture material for the whole course.

**3. Analytical essays** Students taking the course for **136 points' credit** (ICP 245) are expected to produce **4 analytical essays** corresponding to the four sections of the course. Essay questions will be distributed at least a week ahead of the due date and answers will be expected to demonstrate comprehension of, and a critical response to, the material of that section of the course. These essays should be typed, double-spaced and 4-6 pages in length. The deadlines for these four essays are as follows:

- Essay 1 (on the idea of Central Asia as a “world region”): **Tuesday 23rd January**
- Essay 2 (on Central Asia’s Soviet experience): **Tuesday 20th February**
- Essay 3 (examining the post-Soviet experience of a single Central Asian state) **Tuesday 10th April**
- Essay 4 (examining some political/social dilemma common to the Central Asian states) **Thursday 17th May**

Students taking the course for **68 points' credit** are expected to produce **1 typed, double-spaced analytical essay** of 5-10 pages' length incorporating any of the material covered during the course of the term. Essay questions will be distributed well advance of the due date, which is **Thursday 17th May**.

**4. Collection of notes on the readings** There are several reasons why I am including your notes on the class readings as part of the assessment.

- The first of these is pragmatic: since this is a course in which the majority of distributed reading materials will have to be returned at the end of the term, it is essential that you make your own notes on the readings as the course progresses, rather than relying on underlining the text and putting notes in the margins. The course packets will have to be used again in subsequent years so you should avoid marking the text directly, and get into the habit of having a note-book beside you for jotting things into as you read.
- The second derives from the academic benefit of making notes. Taking notes demands that you read a text *actively*: that you constantly seek to distinguish the main argument from subordinate ones; that you remain alert to flaws or problems with the argument, key quotes, places where the author disagrees with other you have read etc. This means that you are more likely to *understand* and to *remember* a text on which you have had to produce your own notes.
- The third argument relates to the long-term benefit you are likely to gain from a course in which you have taken notes. It is a lot easier and more efficient to refresh your memory (both when it comes to taking exams and in the future when you need to go back to your materials for a particular course) to have somebody’s argument summarized on two or three pages than to have to re-read the entire text.
- The final reason is that it allows the instructor to gain a more accurate picture of the degree to which you are completing and comprehending the readings. It also means that *you* gain credit for an activity which you should be undertaking anyway as an ordinary part of your studies.

Your collection of notes on the readings up to and including those for week 10 of the course are due in class on **Thursday March 15th**.

Guidance on effective note-taking will be given early in the course.

### **5. Tutorials (for students taking the course for 136 points only)**

It is my strong conviction that students at AUK do not, as a general rule, receive sufficient feedback on their written work and that many students are not therefore producing essays which are not as tightly argued or carefully structured as they might be. It is particularly hard to ensure the necessary degree of individual attention to students' work when we have a class this size and out-of-class contact time is limited. I am therefore proposing a system of **tutorials** to enable each student to receive constructive feedback on their written work from the instructor and their fellow students.

•How does a tutorial work? In a tutorial, a group of 5 or so students meet with the instructor in an informal environment and discuss in detail the essay which they have recently completed. Before the tutorial group meets, each student is expected to have read all of the other students' essays from their tutorial group, and they are expected to attend the tutorial ready to offer their constructive comments and observations on the work of their peers. In the tutorial itself, we will discuss in more detail than is possible in the class setting the issues arising from the essays which the students in your group have written. We will pay particular attention to structuring good essays, to developing an argument and the use of appropriate academic style. The tutorial will be your opportunity to raise questions relating to the content or structure of your particular essay, and to really pay attention to these issues by reading and discussing your work and that of your peers. There will be three tutorials for each group, to discuss the first, second and third analytical essays which you have written. Tutorials will last approximately one hour and will be convened at a mutually convenient time for the group, probably on a Saturday shortly after the due date for the essay. Your constructive participation in the tutorial will form part of the assessment for your overall participation in the course.

### **Changes to the syllabus:**

Outreach commitments with CEP may mean that I am not available at the arranged class times all weeks of the semester. In such circumstances, I will inform students in advance and endeavour, wherever possible, to schedule make-up classes. Additional assessments will not be added to the syllabus; however, I reserve the right to alter readings and/or lecture topics to meet the needs of the students taking the course. Additional readings may be scheduled if they relate to current developments in the region.

### **Staying abreast of Central Asian politics**

In addition to reading a local daily or weekly newspaper, students are encouraged to make use of several excellent email and web resources giving information on social and political developments in the region. In particular, you may find the following English-language resources useful:

**Transitions On Line (TOL):** published in Prague, this weekly email briefing gives details of political developments across the former Soviet Union and East-Central Europe. It includes analytical briefings and more detailed analysis. Subscription is free to citizens of CIS countries.  
<http://www.tol.cz>

**RFE/RL Daily Briefing:** A free daily email briefing of political developments in Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia. They also have a useful archive facility which you can search. Subscribe by following the instructions on their website: <http://www.rferl.org>

The **Carnegie Institute** in Moscow publishes occasional papers on the web relating to social and political developments in the former Soviet Union. They are generally very well-informed and can be downloaded for free. The web address is: <http://www.carnegie.ru>

The **Central Asia Caucasus Analyst**, published by Johns Hopkins University in the US provides analytical articles and field reports (including some by AUK students) on developments throughout Central Asia. <http://www.cacianalyst.org>

The **Eurasia Institute** publishes commissioned and free-lance articles relating to the region: includes field reports and some more analytical articles: <http://www.eurasianet.org>

The **Forum for Central Asian Studies** at Harvard University has links to hundreds of websites, governmental, non-governmental and academic, relating to Central Asia. It includes links to all of the on-line newspapers and journals relating to the region. From their web-site it is possible to subscribe to the Central Asia Listserve, which provides regular announcements on educational and conference opportunities relating to the region:  
<http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~casww/index.html>

### **Practicalities:**

Ours is an extremely large class, which means that all of the usual elements of academic courtesy - that you turn up on time to class, that you listen when the instructor or one of your peers is talking, that you hand in work on time and return books promptly - become all the more important to the functioning of the class. Students consistently absent without good reason, late in person or with their work, or who misuse the precious resources for this class, will be dropped. **Please phone me in advance (or leave a message with the secretary in the Sociology department) if you will be unable to attend class.** Genuine difficulties with attendance will be treated sympathetically; however, for all AUK students, **class time should take priority over any paid employment** you may have. It is your responsibility to make sure that your employer is aware of your academic schedule. ‘Nuff said!

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## **Schedule of Classes**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION: THEORISING “CENTRAL ASIA”**

**Week 1:** Introduction to the course. Critical reading and writing skills  
(09/01, 11/01)

**Week 2: The politics behind geography: defining “Central Asia” as a world region****(16/01, 18/01)**

Reading: Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen, ‘Introduction’ and ‘World Regions: An Alternative Scheme’ from *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press), 1997, p.1-19, 157-188

**First analytical essay due in class Tuesday January 23rd  
(for those taking the class for 136 points)**

**II. CENTRAL ASIA IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT****Week 3: Central Asia from the mid-19th Century to 1924; colonialism, annexation and the *Jadid* movement****(23/01, 25/01)**

Reading: Adeb Khalid, ‘The Making of Colonial Society’ and ‘The Origins of Jadidism’ from *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley, CA: university of California Press), 1998, p. 45-113

Document: Ш. А., К культурной жизни Туркестана Жизнь национальностей № 27, IX 1920, p.3

**Week 4: The territorial delimitation of Central Asia and its legacy****(30/01, 01/02)**

Reading: Steven Sabol, ‘The creation of Soviet Central Asia: the 1924 national delimitation’ *Central Asian Survey*, 14 (2), 1995, p.225-241  
Francine Hirsch, ‘Toward an Empire of Nations: Border-Making an the Formation of Soviet National Identities’ *The Russian Review*, 59 (2): 2000, p. 201-226

Document: И. Ходоров, Национальное размежевание Средней Азии *Новый восток*, № 8-9, 1925: 65-81

Supplementary: Olivier Roy, ‘The Sovietisation of Central Asia’ from *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus), 2000, p. 50- 84

**Week 5: Soviet rule in Central Asia: modernization or failed transformation?****(06/02, 08/02)**

Reading: Olivier Roy, ‘The Recomposition of Solidarity Groups During the Soviet Period’ and ‘Political Factionalism and National Affirmation During the Soviet Era’ from *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations* (London and New York: I.B. Taurus), 2000, p. 85 - 124  
Douglas Northrop: Languages of Loyalty: Gender, Politics, and Party Supervision in Uzbekistan, 1927-41 *The Russian Review*, 59 (2): 2000, p.179-200

Documents: С. Таджиев, Новый латинизированный алфавит - мощное орудие культурной революции *Революция и национальности*, № 2, 1930: 64-67

В. Нодель, в национальных республиках *Революция и национальности*, № 3, 1930: 30-39

П. Рысаков, Практика шовинизма и местного национализма *Революция и национальности*, № 8-9, 1930: 25-34

М. Галин, Культурное строительство среднеазиатских советских республик *Революция и национальности*, № 5, 1931: 73-81

С. М., Оседание - важнейший этап ликвидации национального неравенства *Революция и национальности*, № 7, 1932: 33-39

**Week 6: Perestroika, Soviet Collapse and the dilemmas of political independence****(13/02, 15/02)**

Reading: Olivier Roy, ‘From Nationalism to Independence’ from *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations* (London and New York: I. B. Taurus), 2000, p. 125-142  
Graham Smith, ‘From transformation to fragmentation’ from *The Post-Soviet States: Mapping the Politics of Transition* (London: Arnold Publishers), 1998, p. 15-43

- Documents: 'Ethnic Assimilation Debated by Scholars' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 40 (9), 1988: 15-26  
'Scholars Identify Pressing Ethnic Issues' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 40 (11), 1988: 1-4  
'Writers Debate National Culture' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 40 (11), 1988: 5-7  
'Writers Debate National Culture-II' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 40 (12), 1988: 16-19  
 Eden Naby, 'Tajiks Reemphasize Iranian Heritage as Ethnic Pressures Mount in Central Asia' *RFE/RL Report on the USSR*, 16/02/90, p. 20-22  
 Annette Bohr, 'Turkmenistan under Perestroika: An Overview' *RFE/RL Report on the USSR*, 23/03/90, p. 20-29  
 James Critchlow, 'Uzbekistan: The Next Nationality Crisis?' *RFE/RL Report on the USSR*, 18/05/90, p. 6-13  
'Kirgizia Hit by Ethnic Battles With Uzbeks' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 42 (23), 1990: 1-5  
'Kirgiz-Uzbek Riots: What Caused Them?' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 42 (25), 1990: 14-16  
'A Coup Chronology: The First Two Days', 'Leningrad Takes Steps to Resist Coup', 'Sampling Initial Reaction Around Russia' and 'Sampling Reaction in the Other Republics' *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 43 (33), 1991: 15-26

### Week 7: Post-communist democratization and authoritarianism in comparative contexts

(20/02, 22/02)

- Reading: Bruce Parrott, 'Perspectives on postcommunist democratization' from Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1997, p. 1-39

**Second analytical essay due in class Tuesday 20th February  
(for those taking the class for 136 points)**

**Mid-term exam in class Thursday 22nd February  
(for all students)**

## III. THE CONTEMPORARY CENTRAL ASIAN STATES: COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

### Week 8: Kazakhstan and Central Asia: "15 shades of difference"?

(27/02, 01/03)

- Reading: Michael Rywkin, 'Kazakhstan and the Rest of Central Asia: Fifteen Shades of Difference' *Nationalities Papers*, 23 (3), 1998, p. 573-579  
 Martha Brill Olcott, 'Democratization and the growth of political participation in Kazakhstan' from Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1997, p. 201-241

### Week 9: Uzbekistan: the new regional hegemon?

(06/03 only)

- Reading: William Fierman, 'Political development in Uzbekistan: democratization?' from Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1997, p. 360-408

### Week 10: Kyrgyzstan: still the "island of democracy"?

(13/03, 15/03)

- Reading: Eugene Huskey, 'Kyrgyzstan: the fate of political liberalization' from Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1997, p. 242-276

- Document: OSCE report on the October 29th Presidential Election in the Kyrgyz Republic\_

**Collection of notes on readings due in class Thursday 15th March  
(for all students)**

**SPRING BREAK 17-25th MARCH -- NO CLASSES**

**Week 11: Turkmenistan: a new Central Asian sultanate?**

**(27/03, 29/03)**

Reading: Michael Ochs, 'Turkmenistan: the quest for stability and control' from Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, p. 312-359

Supplementary: John Anderson, 'Authoritarian political development in Central Asia: the case of Turkmenistan' *Central Asian Survey* 14 (4), 1995, p. 509-527

**Week 12: Tajikistan: dealing with state collapse**

**(03/04, 05/04)**

Reading: Muriel Atkin, 'Thwarted democratization in Tajikistan' from Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrott (eds.), *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1999, p. 277- 311

**Third analytical essay due in class Tuesday 10th April  
(for those taking the class for 136 points)**

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**IV. CENTRAL ASIA AND THE WORLD: COMMON CHALLENGES, RECURRENT DILEMMAS**

**Week 13: Managing multi-ethnicity: peaceful co-existence or conflict potential? Case study of the Ferghana Valley**

**(10/04, 12/04)**

Reading: Anara Tabyshalieva, 'Flashpoint of Conflict: the Ferghana Valley' and 'Towards Regional Cooperation in Central Asia' from *The Challenge of Regional Cooperation in Central Asia: Preventing Conflict in the Ferghana Valley* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace), 1999, p. 19-42

**Week 14: Islam and civil society in Central Asia: complementary or competing logics?**

**(17/04, 19/04)**

Reading: John Anderson, 'Creating a Framework for Civil Society in Kyrgyzstan' *Europe-Asia Studies*, 52 (1), 2000, p. 77-93

Olivier Roy, 'Islam' from *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, (London and New York: I. B. Taurus), 2000, p. 143-160

Gregory Gleason, 'Transition in Asia' from *The Central Asian States: Discovering Independence* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press), 1997, p. 168-185

**Week 15: Changing geopolitics: Central Asia, Russia and the World**

**(24/04, 26/04)**

Reading: Olivier Roy, 'A new geo-strategic context' from *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*, (London and New York: I.B. Taurus), 2000, p. 190-200

**Funny Week 16: Over a barrel? The politics of oil and water in Central Asia**

**(Th. 03/05, Th. 10/05 - note the dates!!)**

Reading: Gregory Gleason, 'Central Asia and the World' from *The Central Asian States: Discovering Independence*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press), 1997, p. 136-167

**Week 17: Re-writing the past: the politics of history, language and place in Central Asia**

**(15/05, 17/05)**

Reading: Edward Allworth, 'History and group identity in Central Asia' and Annette Bohr, 'The Central Asian States as Nationalising Regimes' from Graham Smith et al (eds.), *Nation-building in the*

*post-Soviet Borderlands: the Politics of National Identities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1998, p.67-90, 139-164

**Final analytical essay due in class Thursday 17th May  
(for all students)**

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**Week 18: Reading and exam week**

**Final exam: date to be decided  
(for all students)**

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## 2. Essay questions

### **Central Asian Politics and Society Analytical Essay 1 for students taking the class for 136 credits**

The essay is due in class on **Tuesday January 30th** (note that this is a week later than it says in the syllabus).

It should be a concise, analytical essay, no longer than 6 pages in length double spaced. It will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- a) do you develop a coherent *argument*? (i.e. are your opinions backed up with evidence, are you giving *reasons* why you hold a particular position?)
- b) is your argument *well structured*? (i.e. do the different parts of the essay form a coherent whole? Has the essay been thoughtfully planned out?)
- c) is your essay *focused*? (i.e. does it seek to answer the question that is posed, or does it roam from the point?)
- d) does it follow the rules of *academic style*? (i.e. do you reference your sources appropriately?)

The essay is worth 20 points (10% of your grade for the course).

It should answer ONE of the following questions:

1. **“Central Asia is ... perhaps best understood as a world region with a solid past but a tenuous present and a cloudy future” (Lewis and Wigen, *The Myth of Continents*, p. 180). What do Lewis and Wigen mean by this claim? Is it a fair assessment of Central Asia’s place in the world? Why, or why not?**
2. **What do you understand by the term “meta-geography”? In your opinion do meta-geographical constructs basically help or hinder our ability to understand world geography?**
3. **Is there still any analytical value in dividing the world into “first, second and third worlds”; “developed, developing and under-developed countries” and/or “north and south” in order to comprehend global inequalities. If not, what scheme would you propose? Where would you place Kyrgyzstan within your scheme, and why?**

### **Central Asian Politics and Society Analytical Essay 2 for students taking the class for 136 credits**

The essay is due in class on **March 2nd**.

It should be a concise, analytical essay, no longer than 6 pages in length double spaced. It will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- a) do you develop a coherent *argument*? (i.e. are your opinions backed up with evidence, are you giving *reasons* why you hold a particular position?)
- b) is your argument *well structured*? (i.e. do the different parts of the essay form a coherent whole? Has the essay been thoughtfully planned out?)
- c) is your essay *focused*? (i.e. does it seek to answer the question that is posed, or does it roam from the point?)
- d) does it follow the rules of academic *style*? (i.e. do you reference your sources appropriately?)

The essay is worth 20 points (10% of your grade for the course).

It should answer ONE of the following questions:

1. “Lenin maintained that with the right leadership it was possible to “skip stages” [in societal development], proceeding directly from feudalism to socialism” (Gregory Gleason, *The Central Asian States: Discovering Independence*, 1997, p. 48). How was this reflected in Soviet policies towards Central Asia?
2. “A Soviet republic is an empty frame which produces an effect of reality” (Olivier Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 1997, p. ix). Is it?
3. “Rather than primordial nations slumbering [sleeping] for 74 years, waiting to be aroused by Gorbachev’s embrace, the nationalities of the USSR were constantly being shaped by the state-initiated transformation of the Soviet years” (Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, 1993, p. 160). What implications does this have for our understanding of the reasons for Soviet collapse?
4. “A system of governance which provides freedom, uncertain results and certain procedures” (Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*, 1992). Is this a sufficient definition of democracy?

## **Central Asian Politics and Society**

### **Analytical Essay 3 for students taking the class for 136 credits**

The essay is due in class on **Thursday May 3rd**

It should be a concise, analytical essay no longer than 6 pages in length double spaced. It will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- a) do you develop a coherent *argument*? (i.e. are your opinions backed up with evidence, are you giving *reasons* why you hold a particular position?)
- b) is your argument *well structured*? (i.e. do the different parts of the essay form a coherent whole? Has the essay been thoughtfully planned out?)
- c) is your essay *focused*? (i.e. does it seek to answer the question that is posed, or does it roam from the point?)
- d) does it follow the rules of academic *style*? (i.e. do you reference your sources appropriately?)

The essay is worth 20 points (10% of your grade for the course).

It should answer ONE of the following questions:

1. **“We must prove to Kazakhstani scholarship that the Kazakhs are a more ancient and historically well-known people (*narod*) than the Mongols. False theories are not only falsifications of history, but are also encroachments (*posyगतel’stvo*) on history, on the territorial integrity and culture of the Kazakh people” (). What is the role of studying the past for the present self-definition of the Central Asian states?**
2. **“A strong executive power is necessary to prevent bloodshed and confrontation and preserve interethnic and civic calm, peace, and stability in the region, for which I am prepared to pay any price, however high. If you like, this is necessary for movement towards democracy” (President Karimov, quoted in Annette Bohr, *Uzbekistan: Politics and Foreign Policy* (1998), p. 4). Discuss.**

3. Are there still grounds for regarding Kyrgyzstan as an “island of democracy” in Central Asia?
4. Are economic or historical factors the more useful in trying to understand the reasons for Tajikistan’s descent into civil war?

**Central Asian Politics and Society**  
**Analytical Essay 4 for students taking the class for 136 credits**

The essay is due in my box in the sociology office on **Monday May 21st - and this is a firm deadline!!!-** It should be a concise, analytical essay between 3 and 6 pages double spaced. It will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- a) do you develop a coherent *argument*? (i.e. are your opinions backed up with evidence, are you giving *reasons* why you hold a particular position?)
- b ) is your argument *well structured*? (i.e. do the different parts of the essay form a coherent whole? Has the essay been thoughtfully planned out?)
- c) is your essay *focused*? (i.e. does it seek to answer the question that is posed, or does it roam from the point?)
- d) does it follow the rules of academic *style*? (i.e. do you reference your sources appropriately?)

The essay is worth 20 points (10% of your grade for the course).

It should answer ONE of the following questions:

1. Is multi-ethnicity necessarily a threat to stability in the Ferghana Valley?
2. “Russia’s continued presence in Central Asia is more a reflection of the mutual dependency of Russia and the Central Asian states than it is of Russia’s imperial ambitions”
3. “Society cannot wait for nature to produce its benefits. We must extract those benefits from nature” (Khrushchev at the launch of the Virgin Lands campaign in 1954). What are some of the contemporary environmental legacies of this statement?
4. “A document is a witness, and like most witnesses it rarely begins to speak until one begins to question it” (Marc Bloch). How is this statement reflected in the historiography of Central Asia?

**Central Asian Politics and Society**  
**Final Paper for students taking the class for 68 points**

As stated in the syllabus, students taking the class for 68 points are expected to produce one 5-10 page term paper, worth 20% of your final grade, incorporating material from throughout the course. This is not intended to be a research paper, i.e. you are not being asked to find additional readings other than those in the course packet (though if you *do* wish to read additional material on a given topic, I am happy to advise on texts). However, since this is the only essay requirement for those taking the class for 68 points, you *are* expected to show knowledge of a range of texts that we have covered in the course: it is not enough to rely on the readings for only one or two of the weeks in writing your paper. The essay is due on **Monday May 21st** (note that this is later than it says in the syllabus), and will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- a) do you develop a coherent *argument*? (i.e. are your opinions backed up with evidence, are you giving *reasons* why you hold a particular position?)
- b ) is your argument *well structured*? (i.e. do the different parts of the essay form a coherent whole? Has the essay been thoughtfully planned out?)
- c) is your essay *focused*? (i.e. does it seek to answer the question that is posed, or does it roam from the point?)
- d) does your essay demonstrate knowledge of a *range* of texts covered? (i.e. can you get different texts from different sections of the course to “argue with one another”? Do you show the scope of your reading?)
- e) does it follow the rules of academic *style*? (i.e. do you reference your sources appropriately?)

Your essay should address one of the following questions:

1. “Rather than primordial nations slumbering [sleeping] for 74 years, waiting to be aroused by Gorbachev’s embrace, the nationalities of the USSR were constantly being shaped by the state-initiated transformation of the Soviet years” (Ronald Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, 1993, p. 160). What implications does this have for our understanding of the reasons for Soviet collapse?
2. “A strong president = a strong state” (President Nazarbaev’s re-election campaign slogan, January 1999). Does it? Discuss with reference to at least two Central Asian states.
3. Discuss the significance of *either* gender *or* nationality *or* Islam in the self-definition of one of more contemporary Central Asian state.
4. Assess the reasons for the similarities and differences between the five Central Asian states’ post-Soviet political and economic development.

### 3. Exam papers

#### Central Asian Politics and Society Mid-Term Exam Questions

**Instructions:** The following questions are intended to test your conceptual understanding of the texts we have read together and the ideas discussed in class. From the 11 questions listed below, **you are expected to answer 3**. The exam is intended to last the regular lesson time of 80 minutes, so it is recommended that you spend 20-25 minutes answering each question, and 10-15 minutes checking at the end. You are free to use a dictionary if you wish. Please note, however, that *I am not testing your level of English per se*. I would rather that you were adventurous in attempting to convey your ideas and engage with the question (even at the cost of linguistic faults) than sticking simply to tried and tested formulae.

**Please :**

- a) indicate clearly which question you are answering.
- b) leave a margin around you work so that I can write comments on it
- c) write clearly!
- d) make sure that your name is on your exercise-book AND THE NUMBER OF POINTS FOR WHICH YOU ARE TAKING THE COURSE!!!

**GOOD LUCK!!!**

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1. “The global geographical framework in use today is essentially a cartographic celebration of European power” (Martin Lewis and Karen Wigen, *The Myth of Continents*, p. 189). Is it? Why, or why not?
2. “Since the early nineteenth century, Russian elites had sought to buttress their Europeanness through participation in the discourse of orientalism” (Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 50). What is meant by this “discourse of orientalism”, and what implications did it have for the way imperial Turkestan was governed?
3. Who were the Jadids, and what did they understand their role in society to be?

4. “A simple case of divide and rule”. Is this a fair way to characterize the 1924 national delimitation of Central Asia?
5. Why did the Bolshevik regime face particular problems of legitimacy in Central Asia?
6. Francine Hirsch describes Soviet policies towards Central Asia as being guided by a “state-sponsored evolutionism” (*Towards an Empire of Nations*, p. 209). What is meant by this term, and what does it imply about the Soviet transformation of Central Asia?
7. How has totalitarian theory characterised the Soviet experience, and in what way have its assumptions been challenged by revisionist historians?
8. Discuss the significance of **one** of the following social categories for comprehending Central Asia’s Soviet experience: gender, class, generation, nationality.
9. A period of “silent social revolution” (Moshe Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon*, p.4). Why does Lewin describe the era of Brezhnev’s rule in this way, and what is its significance for our understanding of subsequent Soviet developments?
10. “Revolution from above” or “revolution from below”. Which of these best captures the Soviet experience of *perestroika* between 1985 and 1991?
11. Discuss the meaning and significance of **four** of the following terms:
  - a) “*Rashidovshchina*”
  - b) “the class of 1937”
  - c) “war of laws”
  - d) “metageography”
  - e) “stagnation”
  - f) “*korenizatsiia*”
  - g) “surrogate proletariat”

**Central Asian Politics and Society**  
**Final Exam Questions**

**Instructions:** The following questions are intended to test your conceptual understanding of the texts we have read together and the ideas discussed in class. From the 11 questions listed below, **you are expected to answer 2**. The exam is intended to last the regular lesson time of 80 minutes, so it is recommended that you spend 30-35 minutes answering each question, and 10-15 minutes checking at the end. You are free to use a dictionary if you wish. Please note, however, that *I am not testing your level of English per se*. I would rather that you were adventurous in attempting to convey your ideas and engage with the question (even at the cost of linguistic faults) than sticking simply to tried and tested formulae.

**Please :**

- a) indicate clearly which question you are answering.**

- b) leave a margin around your work so that I can write comments on it
- c) write clearly!
- d) make sure that your name is on your exercise-book AND THE NUMBER OF POINTS FOR WHICH YOU ARE TAKING THE COURSE!!!

**GOOD LUCK!!!**

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1. What, according to its advocates, are the specific advantages of the “Uzbek model”?
2. “Kyrgyzstan’s ‘island of democracy’ has been all but washed away”. Has it?
3. “I do not need this [personality cult], but our state does... In the transition period in our state there must be one leader. Multiple centres of power would endanger anarchy” (Turkmenbashi in interview, 1995). Discuss with reference to Turkmenistan.
4. Is “economics” or “ethnicity” the more useful concept in helping to understand the potential for conflict in the Ferghana Valley?
5. Are Islam and civil society competing or complementary forces for change in contemporary Central Asia?
6. Is the discipline of geopolitics still useful for helping us to understand the relationship between Central Asian states and those of its neighbours?
7. Assess the significance of *either* globalization *or* demography *or* migration for the future development of one or more Central Asian state.
8. Discuss the meaning and significance of *four* of the following terms
  - a) “Reverse empire”
  - b) Leninabadis
  - c) The Great Game
  - d) Buffer state
  - e) Vital national interests
  - f) Anthropogenic desertification