Eugene Huskey  
The Unknown Asia: Politics and Society on the Russian, Chinese and Middle Eastern Borderlands (Political Science 338C)  
Syllabus for the course offered in Fall 2000  
Stetson University  
Dept. of Political Science

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In the vast heartland of Asia lie cultures and political systems that have attracted little attention in East or West. Occupying territories along the Silk Road, which was once controlled by Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, the countries of Central, or Inner, Asia are just awakening from centuries of domination by the great states and civilizations that surrounded them.

The primary focus of the course is on the creation of new states in Central Asia in the wake of communism’s collapse. After surveying the cultural, historical, and geographical landscape of the region, the course will analyze in detail the international and domestic factors shaping political and economic development in five countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan and the Turkic regions in Western China will also receive attention. In the cauldron of political change in Central Asia one finds a fascinating, and volatile, mix of Islamic revivalism, ethnic and linguistic pluralism, communist legacies, a demographic explosion, and a struggle over natural resources, most notably oil and water. The course challenges students to master the basic literature on this fascinating region while engaging the critical debates over the prospects and policy choices that face Central Asian leaders and societies.

Student progress in the course will be assessed on the following basis:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
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I am available in my office Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 11:00 to 12:15 and Tuesday and Thursday from 10:45 to 11:30. Students are encouraged to make an appointment if these times are inconvenient. You may also contact me by e-mail (ehuskey@stetson.edu) or phone (x7576).

The following books should be purchased in the bookstore:

Dawisha and Parrott, *Conflict, Cleavage and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*  
Poliakov, *Everyday Islam*  
Calming the Ferghana Valley  
Rashid, *Taliban*

Other readings may be found on reserve in the library and, where an * appears, online.
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I. THE HEARTLAND OR THE FRONTIER?

1. Geography

Readings: Map exercise; M. Hauner, *What is Asia to Us?*, pp. 135-146; 216-237.

2. History


3. Demography and Ethnography


4. Religion


II. THE RISE AND FALL OF COMMUNISM IN CENTRAL ASIA

1. The 20-Year Revolution


2. Sovietized (and Russified) Central Asia


3. The Reluctant Transition to Statehood

III. COMPARING FIVE REGIMES IN TRANSITION

1. Conceptualizing Postcommunist Politics


2. Kazakhstan

Readings: Dawisha and Parrott, pp. 201-241.

3. Kyrgyzstan


4. Uzbekistan


5. Turkmenistan

Readings: Dawisha and Parrott, pp. 312-359.

6. Tajikistan

Readings: Dawisha and Parrott, pp. 277-311.

7. Elections and Political Development

MIDTERM

IV. INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCES ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
   A NEW GREAT GAME?

1. The Politics of Oil


2. The Taliban and the Politics of Islam


4. Competing Approaches to National Security: Unilateral, Bilateral and Collective


V. DOMESTIC CHALLENGES

1. The Politics of Water, Land, and the Environment

2. Women and Gender


3. Youth and Unemployment


4. Crime, Drugs, and Corruption


5. The Politics of Language and Identity


VI. THE UNKNOWN ASIA: CRITIQUING THE WESTERN LITERATURE


**FINAL EXAMINATION**
Monday, December 11, 4:00-6:00pm