

International Relations/Political Science

Academic year 2019-2020

Security Fundamentals in the Post-Soviet Space

RI-SP101 - Autumn - 3 ECTS

Course Description

The post-soviet area is mercurial, politically and ethnically diverse, and enormously large extending from Asia to Europe. International community has repeatedly attempted to influence and manage the security processes in the area however its success has been rather meager and hardly measurable. The course is a cross-disciplinary field of study that invites participants to learn big about the security and military issues in the post-soviet countries. It offers unique and practice-based approach to provide a disciplined and methodological review of conflicts, insurgency, military reforms, defence cooperation and regional military build-up.

It asks why and in what forms the actors be involved in conflicts and cooperation; it compares and evaluates the nature and patterns of security developments in political settings, from the level of the state through the regional security system. It explores inter alia the Russian military reforms and its impact on regional security; trends of jihadism in the post-soviet space; conflicts in Ukraine and Caucasus region; geopolitical maneuvers in Central Asia.

The course fundamentally applies a methodology of security (occasionally military) and conflict analysis.

> PROFESSOR

[Grazvydas Jasutis](#)

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

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[Office hours](#)

Syllabus

Teaching method

Classes are in the seminar-format. The course is entirely based on participatory approach and it is applied in various forms throughout the classes. Each class will start with a short lecture (20 minutes or less) to provide students with basic information. This will be followed by a discussion to support, reinforce, and expand upon the information presented in the short lecture. A part of the class will be simulations to reproduce the processes, events, and circumstances of the discussed subject. It will

include individual and collective exercises, case studies, role playing, and behavior modeling. The reading before the class is mandatory and the participants may well be asked to come up with relevant examples or provide well-structured argumentation referring to the assigned academic literature. During the course, I will bring my personal experience in the post-soviet countries and will refer to the Russian sources to illustrate different angles of the issues and fill up the gaps in academic literature.

Grading

Class participation will count for 30% of your grade for the class. A particular attention will be given to your active participation in the class discussions, ability to come up with relevant examples, ability to refer to assigned academic literature, critical thinking and well-structured argumentation.

Seminar paper (up to 2.000 words) will count for 50% of your grade. The topic is supposed to be discussed with the instructor. The paper is due on

Take home exam (3 pages) will count for 20% of your grade. One question pertaining to post-soviet security is handed out on ... and returned on via e-mail. This will cover a broad range of issues and will require holistic understanding and well-structured argumentation referring to concrete examples in order to properly respond.

Course structure

Week 1: Introduction to the post-soviet space: geographical, geopolitical and strategic challenges

Academic requirements. Soviet "heritage" in the security policy. Major challenges and issues. Diversity of security developments in the post-soviet space.

Readings: none

Week 2: Russia's role in shaping and adapting security agenda in the post-soviet countries

Why Russia matters? Russia's military reform: plans vs dreams. NATO enlargement in the post-soviet space and Russian response (Collective Security Treaty Organization). Regional military build-up in the Baltic region.

Readings:

Haas, Marcel de. Russia's foreign security policy in the 21st century : Putin, Medvedev and beyond. London ; New York : Routledge 2010 ; p. 15-82

Thornton, Rod. Military modernization and the Russian ground forces. Published Carlisle, PA : Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2011. 1-47 p.

Corum, James S. The security concerns of the Baltic states as NATO allies. Carlisle, PA : Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, 2013. p. 1-40

Nikitina, Yulia. The Collective Security Treaty Organization Through the Looking Glass. Problems of Post-Communism, 5/1/2012, Volume 59, Issue 3, p. 41-52

Week 3: Ukraine at crossroads: between survival and integration

The dynamics of Ukrainian foreign and security policy. Military assessment on the ground. Interests of regional and global stakeholders in Ukraine. Commonalities and differences of Crimea and Donbass.

Readings:

Sergei, Markedonov. The Crimean Question (2015)/ <https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/sergei-markedonov/crimean-%E2%80%98question%E2%80%99>

Dragneva, Rilka; Wolczuk, Kataryna. Ukraine between the EU and Russia : the integration challenge. Basingstoke ; New York, NY : Palgrave 2015. p. 100-122

Week 4: Wars in the Caucasus region: game with no winners (October 26, at 12.15-14.15)

Conflicts in Georgia. Arms race between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Engagement of international actors in the Caucasus region.

Readings:

Frederic Coene, The Caucasus: an introduction. New York: Routledge, 2010. p. 139-169.

Report of Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia', September 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/30_09_09_iiffmgc_report.pdf

Grazvydas Jasutis, Yoko Hirose. Analyzing the Upsurge of Violence and Mediation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict. // International Journal of Security & Development. 3(1):23 2014

5 Days of War Full Movie, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUGLk3X9FB4>; for Russian speakers - Август. Восьмого, available on-line

Week 5: Terrorism in the post-soviet space and its linkage to global jihadist movements

Terroristic organizations in the post-soviet space (primarily in North Caucasus and Central Asia). Their affiliation with al-Qaeda and ISIS. Case study of Chechnya.

Readings:

Emil, Souleimanov, An Endless War: The Russian-Chechen Conflict in Perspective. Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften; 1 edition January 5, 2007. p. 71-93

Stephen J. Blank (editor). Russia's homegrown insurgency: jihad in the North Caucasus. Published Carlisle, PA : Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012. p. 121-149

Moore, Cerwyn. Combating terrorism in Russia and Uzbekistan, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, 01 June 2007, Vol.20(2), p.303-323

Week 6: Who rules the rule in Central Asia; Russian, American and Chinese game and security interests

National security policies in Central Asia. Strategic interests of Russia, US and China in Central Asia. Assessment of security dilemma in Central Asia.

Readings:

Cooley, Alexander. Great games, local rules: the new Power contest in Central Asia. Oxford University Press, 2012 (Chapter 1 "The New Great Power Contest" and Chapter 2 "Local Rules: How CA regimes survive), available on-line

Matveeva, Anna. Russia's changing security role in Central Asia. European Security, 2013, Volume 22, Issue 4, p. 478-499

Week 7: Forecasting in the post-soviet space and concluding remarks

Based on simulation.

Readings: none