



University of
New Haven

Democracy in the Czech Republic

SECTION I: Course Overview

Course Code: POL366PRG

Subject Area(s): Political Science

Prerequisites: None

Language of Instruction: English

Additional Fees: See Below

Total Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A transition to democracy can be long and full of challenges. This course explores the stages of democratization in the Czech Republic, from the initial cracks in the authoritarian regime, to transition, consolidation, and democratic backsliding. Deconstructing the process of Czech democratization, this course provides an overview of conditions that may foster or impede the democratization process. The course considers i.a. the impact of various historical legacies, institutional choices, mode of economic transition as well as roles played by key political agents, civil society, and external conditionality exerted by the EU. The course draws on foundational literature on democratization as well as area-specific expertise on fourth-wave transitions and Europeanization. Introducing common democracy indexes, the course also puts the quality of Czech democracy into a broader comparative perspective.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Differentiate between the concepts of liberalization, democratic transition, democratic consolidation, and democratic backsliding.
- Analyze the constitutive and causal factors for democratization and democratic decline in the Czech Republic.
- Apply the theories of transition, consolidation, and erosion of democracy to an empirical analysis of Czech political developments.
- Compare and contrast the quality of Czech democracy with other countries using various democratization indexes.

ADDITIONAL COURSE FEES

This course requires payment of an additional fee to cover active learning components that are above and beyond typical course costs, such as site visits, entrance fees and other expenses. Please see the Course Overview online for further information.

SECTION II: Instructor & Course Details

INSTRUCTOR DETAILS

Name: TBA
Contact Information: TBA
Term: SEMESTER

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class will meet once weekly for 150 minutes each session. All students are expected to arrive on time and prepared for the day's class session.

CEA enforces a mandatory attendance policy. You are therefore expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions, including any field trips, site visits, guest lectures, etc. that are assigned by the instructor. The table below shows the number of class sessions you may miss before receiving a grade penalty.

ALLOWED ABSENCES – SEMESTER		
Courses Meeting X day(s) Per Week	Allowed Absence(s)	Automatic Failing Grade at X th absence
Courses meeting 1 day(s) per week	1 Absence	4 th Absence

For every additional absence beyond the allowed number, your final course grade will drop down to the subsequent letter grade (ex: A+ to A). As a student, you should understand that the grade penalties will apply if you are marked absent due to tardiness or leaving class early. In the table below, you will find the grade penalty associated with each excessive absence up to and including automatic course failure.

ATTENDANCE DOCKING PENALTIES				
Absence	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
Penalty	No Penalty	0.5 Grade Docked	1 Grade Docked	Automatic Failure
HIGHEST POSSIBLE GRADE AFTER ATTENDANCE PENALTIES				
Grade	A+	A	A-	F

CEA does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. As such, no documentation is required for missing class. Similarly, excessive absences, and the grade penalty associated with each, will not be excused even if you are able to provide documentation that shows the absence was beyond your control. You should

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therefore only miss class when truly needed as illness or other unavoidable factors may force you to miss a class session later on in the term.

GRADING & ASSESSMENT

The instructor will assess your progress towards the above-listed learning objectives by using the forms of assessment below. Each of these assessments is weighted and will count towards your final grade. The following section (Assessment Overview) will provide further details for each.

Class Participation	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Short Papers (2)	20%
Group Project	20%
Final Exam	25%

The instructor will calculate your course grades using the CEA Grading Scale shown below. As a CEA student, you should understand that credit transfer decisions—including earned grades for courses taken abroad—are ultimately made by your home institution.

CEA GRADING SCALE			
Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Percentage Range	Quality Points
A+	9.70 – 10.0	97.0 – 100%	4.00
A	9.40 – 9.69	94.0 – 96.9%	4.00
A-	9.00 – 9.39	90.0 – 93.9%	3.70
B+	8.70 – 8.99	87.0 – 89.9%	3.30
B	8.40 – 8.69	84.0 – 86.9%	3.00
B-	8.00 – 8.39	80.0 – 83.9%	2.70
C+	7.70 – 7.99	77.0 – 79.9%	2.30
C	7.40 – 7.69	74.0 – 76.9%	2.00
C-	7.00 – 7.39	70.0 – 73.9%	1.70
D	6.00 – 6.99	60.0 – 69.9%	1.00
F	0.00 – 5.99	0.00 – 59.9%	0.00
W	Withdrawal	N/A	0.00
INC	Incomplete	N/A	0.00

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief description of each form of assessment listed above. Your course instructor will provide further details and instructions during class time.

Class Participation (10%): Student participation is mandatory for all courses taken at a CEA Study Center. The instructor will use the rubric below when determining your participation grade. All students should understand that attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively toward the participation grade.

CLASS PARTICIPATION GRADING RUBRIC	
Student Participation Level	Grade
You make major & original contributions that spark discussion, offering critical comments clearly based on readings, research, & theoretical course topics.	A+ (10.0 – 9.70)
You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings & independent research.	A/A- (9.69 – 9.00)
You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	B+/B (8.99 – 8.40)
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	B-/C+ (8.39 – 7.70)
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	C/C- (7.69 – 7.00)
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject. You are not prepared for class and/or discussion of course readings.	D (6.99 – 6.00)
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion. You are consistently unprepared for class and/or discussion of the course readings.	F (5.99 – 0.00)

Midterm Exam (25%): The midterm exam will consist of seven short answer questions; of which you will select five to answer. The exam will be based on the course readings, lectures, discussions, and activities.

Short Papers (20%): You will have two short papers due throughout the course. These papers will answer a question that we will pose based on relevant AICAP activities. These papers should be cogent and analytical and should connect your first-hand observations and findings attained through the AICAP activities with relevant terminology, themes and topics covered in our course material, readings and class discussions. Further instructions and resources for this assignment will be provided during class.

Group Project (20%): In small groups, you will research a selected democratization index to understand its basic parameters and general assessment criteria. You will research the available democratization scores for the Czech Republic and put these into context of Czech political developments we have studied. You will compare your findings for the Czech Republic with the democratization scores of your group's selected country. You will present your research, analysis, and findings to class in a group presentation supported by a PowerPoint presentation summarizing your research, analysis and findings

Final Exam (25%): The exam will be cumulative and will be in essay format. You will be presented with three essay prompts; of which you will select two to answer. A study guide will be distributed to assist you in your studies.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES (AICAP)

CEA courses are designed to include a variety of experiential learning activities that will take you out of the classroom and allow you to explore your local, host city. These activities may include field studies, guest lectures and/or activities offered through our Academically Integrated Cultural Activities Program (AICAP). Please check the Forms of Assessment section to find out if AICAP activities are related to any specific form of assessment. The following experiential learning activities are recommended for this course:

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- Museum of Communism
- Meeting a Czech Political Party Representative

REQUIRED READINGS

Reading assignments for this course will come from the required text(s) and/or the selected reading(s) listed below. All required readings—whether assigned from the text or assigned as a selected reading—must be completed according to the due date assigned by the course instructor.

- I. REQUIRED TEXT(S):** You may purchase the required text(s) prior to departure or upon program arrival. The required text(s) are listed below:

Agnew, H. *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (1st Edition). Stanford: Hoover Press, 2013, pp. 472.

- II. SELECTED READING(S):** The selected readings for this course are listed below. You will not need to purchase these readings; the instructor will provide these selected readings to you in class (either in paper or electronic format).

Bustikova, L., Guasti P. *The Illiberal Turn of Sverve in Central Europe?* *Politics and Governance* 5(4), 2017, 10 pp.

Dahl, R. *On democracy*. (2nd Edition). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998, 217 pp.

Ekiert, G. *Eastern Europe's Post-Communist Transformations*. *World Politics Review*, March 2012, available at www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/11749/eastern-europes-postcommunist-transformations

Foa, R.S., Mounk Y. *The Signs of Deconsolidation*. *Journal of Democracy* 28(1), 2007, 10 pp.

Grabbe, H. (1st Edition). *The EU's Transformative Power: Europeanization through Conditionality in Central and Eastern Europe*. Palgrave, McMillan, 2006, 231 pp.

Linz, J., Stepan A. *Problems of democratic transition and consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, 479 pp.

Lucan, L.W., Levitsky, S. *Linkage, Leverage and the Post-Communist Divide*. *East European Politics & Societies* 21(1), 2007, 18 pp.

McFaul, M. *The Fourth Wave of Democracy and Dictatorship: Noncooperative Transitions In the Postcommunist World*. *World Politics* 54(2), 2002, 32 pp.

Norris, P. *Is Western Democracy Backsliding? Diagnosing the Risks*. *Journal of Democracy*, April 2017, 27 pp.

Pehe, J. *Judging Prague's Democratic Difficulties: The Quality of Czech Democracy*, Special Report available at www.indexforcensorship.org, 2014, 5 pp.

Sorensen, G. *Democracy and Democratization: Processes and Prospects in a Changing World*. (3rd Edition). Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2008, 224 pp.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

The recommended reading(s) and/or text(s) for this course are below. These recommended readings are not mandatory, but they will assist you with research and understanding course content.

Havel, V. 1978. *The Power of the Powerless*. *International Journal of Politics*, 1979, pp. 80.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In order to ensure your success abroad, CEA has provided the academic resources listed below. In addition to these resources, each CEA Study Center provides students with a physical library and study areas for group work. The Academic Affairs Office at each CEA Study Center also compiles a bank of detailed information regarding libraries, documentation centers, research institutes, and archival materials located in the host city.

- **UNH Online Library:** As a CEA student, you will be given access to the online library of CEA's School of Record, the University of New Haven (UNH). You can use this online library to access databases and additional resources while performing research abroad. You may access the UNH online library [here](#) or through your MyCEA Account. You must comply with UNH Policies regarding library usage.
- **CEAClassroom – Moodle:** CEA instructors use Moodle, an interactive virtual learning environment. This web-based platform provides you with constant and direct access to the course syllabus, daily schedule of class lectures and assignments, non-textbook required readings, and additional resources. Moodle includes the normal array of forums, up-loadable and downloadable databases, wikis, and related academic support designed for helping you achieve the learning objectives listed in this syllabus.

During the first week of class, CEA academic staff and/or faculty will help you navigate through the many functions and resources Moodle provides. While you may print a hard copy version of the syllabus, you should always check Moodle for the most up-to-date information regarding this course. The instructor will use Moodle to make announcements and updates to the course and/or syllabus. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have access to all Moodle materials and that you monitor Moodle on a daily basis in case there are any changes made to course assignments or scheduling.

To access Moodle: Please log-in to your MyCEA account using your normal username and password. Click on the "While You're Abroad Tab" and make sure you are under the "Academics" sub-menu. There you will see a link above your schedule that says "View Online Courses" select this link to be taken to your Moodle environment.

- **Online Reference & Research Tools:** The course instructor has identified the resources below to assist you with understanding course topics. You are encouraged to explore these and other avenues of research including the databases available via the UNH online library.

www.journalofdemocracy.org

COURSE CALENDAR
Democracy in the Czech Republic

SESSION	TOPICS	ACTIVITY	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
1	<p style="text-align: center;">Course Introduction: Review Syllabus, Classroom Policies</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Democracy: What and Why?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Course Overview Lecture & Discussion</p>	Dahl chapters 4 and 5
2	<p style="text-align: center;">Foundations of Democratic Theory</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture & Discussion</p>	Linz & Stepan, chapter 1 Sorensen, chapter 2
3	<p style="text-align: center;">First Czechoslovak State: Political Agents, Institutions & Principles</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture & Discussion</p>	Agnew, chapters 11 and 12
4	<p style="text-align: center;">Czech Totalitarian Legacies & Dissent: Communism, Liberalization, Normalization</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture & Discussion <i>Nuclear Fallout Shelter</i></p>	Agnew, chapters 13 and 14
5	<p style="text-align: center;">AICAP Activity: Museum of Communism</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Museum of Communism</i></p>	Work on short paper 1
6	<p style="text-align: center;">Transitions to Democracy in Central Europe: Actors, Factors, Patterns</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Lecture & Discussion</p>	McFaul Ekiert Short paper 1 due Prepare for midterm exam
7	MIDTERM EXAM		

8	From Velvet Revolution to EU Membership	Lecture & Discussion <i>Tracing the Velvet Revolution</i>	Agnew, chapters 15 and 16
9	AICAP Activity: Meeting a Czech Political Party Representative	<i>Chamber of Deputies</i>	Work on short paper 2
10	External Actors and Democratic Conditionality	Lecture & Discussion	Grabbe, chapter 2 Way & Levitsky Short paper 2 due
11	Czech Democracy After EU Accession	Lecture & Discussion <i>Evropsky Dum</i>	Bustikova & Guasti Pehe Group project assigned
12	What now? Democratic Backsliding?	Lecture & Discussion <i>Center for Integration of Foreigners</i>	Foa & Mounk Norris Work on group project
13	Quality of Czech Democracy: Measures and Comparisons	In-class Group Presentation & Discussion	—
14	Review Session	In-class Review & Discussion	Prepare for final exam
15	FINAL EXAM		

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SECTION III: CEA Academic Policies

The policies listed in this section outline general expectations for CEA students. You should carefully review these policies to ensure success in your courses and during your time abroad. Furthermore, as a participant in the CEA program, you are expected to review and understand all CEA Student Policies, including the academic policies outlined on our website. CEA reserves the right to change, update, revise, or amend existing policies and/or procedures at any time. For the most up to date policies, please review the policies on our website.

Class & Instructor Policies can be found [here](#)

General Academic Policies can be found [here](#)