COURSE DESCRIPTION

I. COURSE DATA

1. Code number: 7NK40NBK77M
2. Title of the course (in Hungarian): Közép- és Délkelet-Európa története. Függés, függetlenség, integráció
3. Title of the course (in English): Central and (South-)Eastern Europe: From Dependence to Independence and Integration
4. Number of lessons: 2 / 0
5. Credit value: 3
6. Frequency the course is launched at: Spring semester
7. Language of the course: English
8. Pre-study requirements:
9. Type of the course: Compulsory
10. Person/Institute responsible: Institute for International Studies
11. Name of the person responsible: Géza Jeszenszky
12. Course content:
The course explains the historical road East-Central Europe has covered since mediaeval origins through foreign dependence to real independence and integration with Western Europe. It shows the roots of present tensions and conflicts as well as the patterns of cooperation, ending with the challenges of the present.

Between Western Europe, the fifteen older members of the European Union and Russia (to-day) there are twenty (including Kosovo, with Greece 21) independent, sovereign states, with a population approaching 200 million. Sometimes aptly called „the heart of Europe,” this region has figured prominently in international affairs: both world wars broke out there (partly due to the conflicting territorial claims of its peoples), and the origins of the Cold War also lie in the imposition of Soviet Communism on the whole region. The peaceful dismantling of Marxist authoritarianism in Poland and Hungary in 1989 led to the fall of all the communist dominoes and the emergence of vibrant new democracies. Largely having completed the painful transition (“shock therapy”), the majority of the formerly communist-dominated countries have become members of NATO and the European Union, so they are allies and are becoming integrated into Western Europe.

The lectures and discussions would place the nationalist/ethnic tensions and conflicts resulting from the diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious composition of the former Communist Bloc countries in the context of history and contemporary politics

13. Mid-term study requirements:
An approx. 1200 word (8000 character) long book review (preferably from the list of recommended readings) is to be turned in by March 11.
An essay is to be submitted by April 15, entitled: “If Hitler Had Not Attacked Poland. An Alternative History of Central Europe”

14. End-term study requirements:
oral examination (colloquy)

15. Assessment method:
Attendance and active participation in the class lectures (10 per cent of final grade). The book review will count 20 , and the essay another 20 per cent of grade. Knowledge of required reading and the contents of the lectures will be assessed in a final oral examination (60 per cent of final grade).

16. Literature:
Compulsory readings:

Recommended readings:

Davies, Norman, Heart of Europe, a Short History of Poland, Oxford University Press, 1984.
Garton Ash, Timothy: The Magic Lantern. The Revolution of ’89... (New York, 1993)
II. COURSE PROGRAMME  (DETAILS ON CONTENT AND REQUIREMENTS)

18. Course description:
I. Historical background up to the 19th century:
1. The changing borders of Europe in history. From Charlemagne’s Carolingian Empire to the Post-Communist „New Europe.” Is there a „third,” Central Europe between East and West?
2. The emergence of Christian East-Central Europe. The rivalry of „the two Romes,” Byzantium and the Papacy for influence in the eastern border region. Kievian Rus and the impact of the Great Schism. The „national dynasties” (Piast, Przemysl, Árpád). The Mongol Invasion. The rise of Poland and Lithuania to become the largest state of Europe. Muscovy „gathering” Russia and moving West.
3. Reformation and Counter-Reformation. The „second serfdom.” Three centuries of warfare and the absorption of East-Central Europe by four Empires: the Ottomans, the Habsburgs, Russia, and Prussia.

II. Towards Independence
5. The First World War: its causes and consequences. The victory of the Bolsheviks in Russia and their attempt at world revolution. The Paris Peace Conference and the peace treaties create “a New Europe”
6. The triumph of economic and political nationalism. The “Little Entente” and the “cordon sanitaire.” The impact of the Great Depression: the rise of authoritarianism

III. The Loss of Independence
7. The Nazi and Soviet conquest. Between resistance and collaboration. The attempt to exterminate the Jews. Was Yalta a betrayal?
8. Revolutions or Communist takeovers? Internal and external forces in the post-war transformation
10. The growth of diversity in the Soviet Bloc. From détente to “annus mirabilis.” The fall of the communist dominoes

IV. Independence and Integration
11. Independence restored or born. The break-up of the involuntary federations. The pains of the transition to democracy and the market economy
12. The drive for integration. The enlargement of NATO and the European Union
13. Success stories and setbacks. Scenarios for the future

19. Competency description:
Although practically all the countries of this region aspire for membership in the European Union, but their history and traditions still makes for many differences compared to Western Europe. The aim of the course is to make the students aware of both the differences and the similarities, in order to be able to utilize this special knowledge in their future career.

20. Individual student assignments:
An approx. 1200 word (8000 character) long book review (preferably from the list of recommended readings) is to be turned in by March 11.
An essay is to be submitted by April 15, entitled: “If Hitler Had Not Attacked Poland. An Alternative History of Central Europe”

21. Course participation:
Understanding the complex story of Central Europe (beyond names and dates) requires regular attendance. The lectures will be interspersed with thought-provoking questions, and the answers may not be found in the textbooks. At the end of the term outlines for the lectures will be available, and that may help those who missed some of the classes for acceptable reasons.

22. Mid-term assessment:
Occasionally short tests will examine how well the students understood the issues presented. The book review will be a kind of mid-term, and its grade could be a warning.
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