

Illiberalism

Professor Lenka Bustikova Siroky

Course Description

This course will provide students with an advanced understanding of several interrelated topics that relate to illiberalism, authoritarianism, and social conservatism in Europe with an emphasis on Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). More than thirty years after the collapse of communism, many Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries reject core principles of liberal democracy, restrict freedom of the press, and use European funds to bolster autocratic and oligarchic interests. This course explores recent political developments in CEE, focusing mostly on the post-accession period. Why is it that many of the hopes associated with the enlargement in 2004 and afterward were not fulfilled? What are the sources of current illiberalism, and what are the implications for minority groups, European integration, and the global standing of the Western world vis-à-vis rising political alternatives? The regional scope of the course covers both the new member states and states in the European neighborhood, such as Ukraine, Russia, and countries in the Western Balkans.

Logistics

Illiberalism – EUS 4930 and POS 4931

Instructor: Lenka Bustikova

E-mail: lenka.bustikova@ufl.edu

Office: Center for European Studies, 3324 Turlington Hall

Office hours: Tuesdays, 3:30-4:30 or by appointment

Location: MATT 0015

Time: Fall 2024

Tuesday: 10:40-11:30

Thursday: 10:40-12:35

Course Objectives

The course objectives are to ensure that students acquire a good knowledge of key literature on illiberalism and democratic resilience in Europe.

The course will provide students with the following tools:

- The course offers a critical account of the roots of illiberalism in Central and Eastern Europe in the 21st century.

- It is open to undergraduates.
- It is intended for students who wish to advance their substantive knowledge of Europe or those who would like to proceed to graduate level. It is also suitable for students who seek employment in politics, public administration, journalism, or business.
- Students will develop an awareness of contemporary challenges to democratic pluralism and understand the relationship between illiberalism and executive over-reach. They will also develop a capacity to understand the inner logic of illiberalism and the variety of its manifestations, including media capture, contestation of ethnicity, salience of sexuality, and erosion of formal and informal norms of political contestation.
- Students will become familiar with a vibrant field of study and literature burgeoning in the past few years.
- Students will develop analytical, debating, and writing skills.

Course Assessment

A. Take home midterm – 50% of the grade.

Take home midterm will have a form of two take home essays. Possible topics will be provided ahead of time. The two essays must cite and engaged with the literature covered in the course. Each essay should be 6-9 pages long, double spaced, including bibliography. In total, you will write 12-18 pages (in two parts).

Students will receive detailed feedback on their submitted work and through class discussion.

B. Active, engaged, constructive class participation – 25% of the grade.

C. Final paper – 25% of the grade.

The final paper should be 7-10 pages long, on a relevant topic. Double-spaced, including bibliography.

Seminar Topics and Readings

The course evolves around several interrelated topics that explore illiberalism, authoritarianism, and social conservatism from different angles. The course explores the region from a comparative politics perspective, focusing on Central and Eastern Europe. After introducing the core concepts of the course, we will explore varieties of populism(s) emerging in the region, the dynamics of radicalization of mainstream parties, and the role of the European Union in restraining but also facilitating democratic backsliding. Although political parties are the major culprits of backsliding, citizen groups play an important role in determining political outcomes. Therefore, we will debate the role of civil society as a firewall against backsliding, as well as synergies

between church organizations and uncivil society groups in paving the way for aspiring illiberal leaders. Additional topics cover emerging research frontiers, such as anti-gender backlash, demographic bust, and the changing role of media. We will conclude with surveying new research on the political implications of the Covid-19 pandemic, and we will explore a garden variety of pro-Western and anti-Western foreign policy orientations in CEE. The final topic is devoted to the war in Ukraine and its implication for European security and cohesion.

Topics:

Week 1 – Introduction to illiberalism: Theory: Illiberalism, authoritarianism, and democratic erosion

Week 2 – Illiberalism as populism: Populists in power: Social spending and executive over-reach

Week 3 – Illiberalism as far-right voting: Illiberal backlash: Radicalization of mainstream parties

Week 4 – Illiberalism and minority accommodation: Ethnic groups empowered

Week 5 – Illiberalism against the European Union

Week 6 – Illiberalism as failed imitation

Week 7 – Illiberalism as familialism: Sexual autonomy: (Un)civil society and churches

Week 8 – Illiberalism against immigration

Week 9 – Illiberalism and crisis: Pandemic politics: state capacity, vaccines, and conspiracies

Week 10 – Illiberalism in Ukraine

Week 11 – Illiberalism in Russia

Week 12– Take home exam

Week 13– Illiberalism as disfigured democracy

Week 14– Illiberalism final thoughts

Week 15– Thanksgiving

Week 16– Wrap-up

Required texts:

Lenka Bustikova. *Extreme Reactions*. 9781108710824

Nadia Urbinati. *Democracy Disfigured*. 9780674725133

Krastev and Holmes. *The Light that Failed*. 9780241345702

Ian Garner. *Generation Z*. 9781787389281

Michael Colbrone. *From the Fires of War*. 9783838215082

Fred Paxton. *Restrained Radicals*. 9781009379083

Grading Scale

UF standard grading scale

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Score	93.4- 100	90- 93.3	86.7- 89.9	83.4- 86.6	80- 83.3	76.7- 79.9	73.4- 76.6	70- 73.3	66.7- 69.9	63.4- 66.6	60- 63.3	0- 59.9

Regulations

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Prerequisites

While no formal requirements are necessary to take this course, some background in political science is useful. Basic knowledge regarding European history will also be useful. Awareness of current events will also aid students in gaining a more complete understanding of the course material.

Missed Exam

If a student misses a mid-term exam and has an official excuse, the instructor will provide a make-up exam, however the format may be different. If a student expects to miss an exam, he/she should approach the instructor immediately and ideally before the exam.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

The University of Florida is committed to providing academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, a student

should present his/her accommodation letter to me supporting a request for accommodations. The University encourages students with disabilities to follow these procedures as early as possible within the semester.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. In the cases of plagiarism, cheating and other misconducts such as submitting a paper purchased from an outside source, the University policy will be followed. If you are having difficulties understanding the assignment or completing it, please come to my office hours so we can discuss. Further information on limitations can be found in UF Student Conduct and Honor code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>)

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx> , ph. 392-1575. For emergencies contact the University Police Department: ph. 392-1111 or 9-1-1.

Campus Resources

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Dates

Topics:

Week 1 – Introduction to illiberalism: Theory: Illiberalism, authoritarianism, and democratic erosion
August 27 and 29

Week 2 – Illiberalism as populism: Populists in power: Social spending and executive over-reach
September 3 and 5

Week 3 – Illiberalism as far-right voting: Illiberal backlash: Radicalization of mainstream parties
August 27 and 29

Week 4 – Illiberalism and minority accommodation: Ethnic groups empowered
September 10 and 12

Week 5 – Illiberalism against the European Union
September 17 and 19

Week 6 – Illiberalism as failed imitation
September 24 and 26

Week 7 – Illiberalism as familialism: Sexual autonomy: (Un)civil society and churches
October 1 and 3

Week 8 – Illiberalism against immigration
October 8 and 10

Week 9 – Illiberalism and crisis: Pandemic politics: state capacity, vaccines, and conspiracies
October 15 and 16

Week 10 – Illiberalism in Ukraine
October 22 and 24

Week 11 – Illiberalism in Russia
October 29 and 31

Week 12– Take home exam
November 5 and 7

Week 13– Illiberalism as disfigured democracy
November 12 and 14

Week 14– Illiberalism final thoughts
November 19 and 22

Week 15– Thanksgiving

Week 16– Wrap-up
December 3

Detailed Schedule of Readings

This list is to act as a guide for material that could be covered as part of this course. Therefore, please note that this material may be subject to change.

a) must read

b) be aware that this exists

c) for illiberalism enthusiasts

Week 1 – Introduction to illiberalism: Theory: Illiberalism, authoritarianism, and democratic erosion

a)

Bermeo, Nancy. 2016. "On Democratic Backsliding." *Journal of Democracy* 27 (1): 5–19.

Bustikova, Lenka, and Petra Guasti. 2017. The Illiberal Turn or Swerve in Central Europe? *Politics and Governance*, 5:4, 166-176. <https://www.cogitatiopress.com/politicsandgovernance/article/view/1156>

Laruelle, M. (2022). Illiberalism: a conceptual introduction. *East European Politics*, 38(2), 303–327.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2022.2037079>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21599165.2022.2037079>

Orban, V. (2014). Viktor Orbán's speech at the XXV. Bálványos Free Summer University and Youth Camp, 26th July, 2014., Băile Tușnad (Tusnádfürdő). Csaba Tóth. July 29, 2014. The Budapest Beacon (October 13, 2013- April 13, 2018). Source: <https://budapestbeacon.com/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/>

<https://2015-2019.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-speech-at-the-25th-balvanyos-summer-free-university-and-student-camp>

b)

Krastev, Ivan, and Stephen Holmes. 2020. *The Light That Failed: Why the West is Losing the Fight for Democracy*. New York: Pegasus Books.

Urbinati, Nadia. 2014. *Democracy Disfigured: Opinion, Truth and the People*. Harvard University Press.

Zakaria, Fareed. (2003) 2007. *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (Revised Edition). New York: W. W. Norton & Company..... or his essay

c)

Collier, David, and Steven Levitsky. 1997. "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research." *World Politics* 49 (3) (April): 430–451.

Rupnik, J. 2016. Surging Illiberalism in the East. *Journal of Democracy*, 27, 4: 77–87.

Weyland, Kurt. 2017. Chapter 3. Populism. A political-strategic approach. In: Kaltwasser, Cristóbal Rovira, Paul A. Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds. *The Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford University Press, pages 48-72.

Zalan, E. 2016, January 8. How to build an illiberal democracy in the EU. *EU observer*. Retrieved from: <https://euobserver.com/political/131723>

Week 2 – Illiberalism as populism: Populists in power: Social spending and executive over-reach

a)

Mudde, Cas, and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser. "Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America." *Government and Opposition* 48.2 (2013): 147–174.

Weyland, Kurt. 2017. Chapter 3. Populism. A political-strategic approach. In: Kaltwasser, Cristóbal Rovira, Paul A. Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre Ostiguy, eds. *The Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford University Press, pages 48-72.

Urbinati, N. (2019). Political theory of populism. *Annual review of political science*, 22(1), 111-127. <https://www.annualreviews.org/content/journals/10.1146/annurev-polisci-050317-070753>

b)

Houghton, Tim, and Kevin Deegan-Krause. "Hurricane Season: Systems of Instability in Central and East European Party Politics." *East European Politics and Societies* 29, no. 1 (February 2015): 61–80.

Szikra, Dorottya. "Welfare for the wealthy: The social policy of the Orbán regime, 2010–2017." Budapest: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (2018).

Roberts, K. M. (1995). Neoliberalism and the transformation of populism in Latin America: the Peruvian case. *World politics*, 48(1), 82-116.

c)

Appel, Hilary. "How neoliberal reforms lose their partisan identity: Flat tax diffusion in Eastern Europe and Post-Soviet Eurasia." *Europe-Asia Studies* 70, no. 7 (2018): 1121-1142.

Korolczuk, Elżbieta, and Agnieszka Graff. 2018. "Gender as 'Ebola from Brussels': The Anticolonial Frame and the Rise of Illiberal Populism." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 43 (4): 797–821.

Graff, Agnieszka, and Elżbieta Korolczuk. *Anti-Gender Politics in the Populist Moment*. Taylor & Francis, 2022.

Mares, Isabela, and Lauren E. Young. "The Core Voter's Curse: Clientelistic Threats and Promises in Hungarian Elections." *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 11 (September 2018): 1441–71.

Week 3 – Illiberalism as far-right voting: Illiberal backlash: Radicalization of mainstream parties

a)

Vachudova, M. A. (2021). "Populism, Democracy, and Party System Change in Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 24: 471-498.

Pirro, A. L., & Stanley, B. (2022). Forging, bending, and breaking: Enacting the "Illiberal playbook" in Hungary and Poland. *Perspectives on Politics*, 20(1), 86-101.

Guasti, P., & Bustikova, L. (2023). Varieties of Illiberal Backlash in Central Europe. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 70(2), 130–142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10758216.2022.2156889>

b)

Bakke, Elisabeth, and Nick Sitter. "The EU's enfants terribles: Democratic backsliding in Central Europe since 2010." *Perspectives on Politics* 20, no. 1 (2022): 22-37.

Lorenz, A., and Anders, L. H. (2020). *Illiberal Trends and Anti-EU Politics in East Central Europe*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Minkenberg, Michael. "From Pariah to Policy-Maker? The Radical Right in Europe, West and East: Between Margin and Mainstream." *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 21.1 (2013): 5–24

c)

Mudde, Cas. "The Far-Right Threat in the United States: A European Perspective." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 699.1 (2022): 101-115.

Pappas, Takis. "Populists in Power." *Journal of Democracy* 30.2 (2019): 70–84.

Graham, Matthew H., and Milan W. Svobik. "Democracy in America? Partisanship, polarization, and the robustness of support for democracy in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 114, no. 2 (2020): 392-409.

Bustikova, Lenka, and Petra Guasti. 2017. The Illiberal Turn or Swerve in Central Europe? *Politics and Governance*, 5:4, 166-176.

Enyedi, Z. (2020). Right-wing authoritarian innovations in Central and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics*, 36(3), 363-377.

Week 4 – Illiberalism and minority accommodation: Ethnic groups empowered

a)

Bustikova, Lenka. 2020. *Extreme Reactions: Radical Right Mobilization in Eastern Europe*. Cambridge University Press. (Introduction, Theory Chapter and Cross-National Chapter, pages 1-108)

b)

Barton Hronešová, Jessie. "Ethnopolitist denial and crime relativisation in Bosnian Republika Srpska." *East European Politics* 38, no. 1 (2022): 21-42.

- Minkenberg, M., A. Florian, Z. Végh, and M. Zobel. (2021). "Depleting democracy? The radical right's impact on minority politics in Eastern Europe." *International Political Science Review*, doi: 0192512120972883.
- Vachudova, Milada Anna. "Ethnopolitism and democratic backsliding in Central Europe." *East European Politics* 36, no. 3 (2020): 318-340.

c)

- Grzebalska, W., and Petó, A. (2018, May). The gendered modus operandi of the illiberal transformation in Hungary and Poland. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 68, pp. 164-172). Pergamon.
- Ov Cristian Norocel & Ionela Băluță (2021) Retrogressive Mobilization in the 2018 "Referendum for Family" in Romania, *Problems of Post-Communism*, DOI: 10.1080/10758216.2021.1987270
- Cinpoes, R., and Norocel, O. C. (2020). Nostalgic Nationalism, Welfare Chauvinism, and Migration Anxieties in Central and Eastern Europe. In *Nostalgia and Hope: Intersections between Politics of Culture, Welfare, and Migration in Europe* (pp. 51-65). Springer, Cham.
- Roggeband, C., and Krizsan, A. (2018). Reversing gender policy progress: patterns of backsliding in Central and Eastern European new democracies. *European Journal of Politics and Gender*, 1(3), 367-385.

Week 5 – Illiberalism against the European Union
September 19

a)

- Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2019). Grand theories of European integration in the twenty-first century. *Journal of European Public Policy*, 26(8), 1113–1133. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2019.1569711>
- Kopecký, P., & Mudde, C. (2002). The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe. *European Union Politics*, 3(3), 297-326.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116502003003002>

b) TBD

c) TBD

Week 6 – Illiberalism as failed imitation

a)

- Krastev, Ivan, and Stephen Holmes. 2020. *The Light That Failed: Why the West is Losing the Fight for Democracy*. New York: Pegasus Books. (selections)

b) TBD

c) TBD

Week 7 – Illiberalism as familialism: Sexual autonomy: (Un)civil society and churches

a)

- Michael Bernhard. (2020). What do we know about civil society and regime change thirty years after 1989? *East European Politics*, 36:3, 341-362.
- Greskovits, B. (2020). Rebuilding the Hungarian right through conquering civil society: The Civic Circles Movement. *East European Politics*, 36(2), 247-266.

Enyedi, Z. (2020). Right-wing authoritarian innovations in Central and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics*, 36(3), 363-377.

b)

Gould, J. A. and E. Moe. (2015). "Nationalism and the Struggle for LGBTQ Rights in Serbia, 1991–2014." *Problems of Post-Communism* 62 (5): 273-286.

Laruelle, Marlene. "A grassroots conservatism? Taking a fine-grained view of conservative attitudes among Russians." *East European Politics* (2022): 1-21.

Chambers, Simone and Jeffrey Kopstein. 2001. Bad Civil Society. *Political Theory*, 29(6): 837-865.

O'Dwyer, C. (2018). The benefits of backlash: EU accession and the organization of LGBT activism in post-communist Poland and the Czech Republic. *East European Politics and Societies*, 32(4), 892-923.

c)

Berman, Sheri. 1997. 'Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic.' *World Politics* 49(3): 401-429.

Grzymała-Busse, A. (2015). *Nations under God: How churches use moral authority to influence policy*. Princeton University Press.

you can also read her World Politics article. Grzymala-Busse, A. (2016). Weapons of the Meek: How Churches Influence Public Policy. *World Politics*, 68(1), 1-36. doi:10.1017/S0043887115000301

Orban, V. (2014). Viktor Orbán's speech at the XXV. Bálványos Free Summer University and Youth Camp, 26th July, 2014., Băile Tușnad (Tusnádfürdő). Csaba Tóth. July 29, 2014. The Budapest Beacon (October 13, 2013- April 13, 2018). Source: <https://budapestbeacon.com/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/>

Week 8 – Illiberalism against immigration

a)

Fred Paxton. *Restrained Radicals*. 9781009379083 (selections)

b) TBD

c) TBD

Week 9 – Illiberalism and crisis: Pandemic politics: state capacity, vaccines, and conspiracies

a)

Special Issue, *East European Politics*. 2022. East Central Europe in the COVID-19 crisis; edited by Dorothee Bohle and Edgars Eihmanis. (selections)

b)

Dorothee Bohle & Edgars Eihmanis (2022) East Central Europe in the COVID-19 crisis, *East European Politics*, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21599165.2022.2122051>
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21599165.2022.2122051>
<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/fjcs21/38/4>

Guasti, P. (2020). The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Central and Eastern Europe: The Rise of Autocracy and Democratic Resilience. *Democratic Theory*, 7(2), 47-60.

c)

- Aktürk, Ş., & Lika, I. (2022). Varieties of Resilience and Side Effects of Disobedience: Cross-National Patterns of Survival during the Coronavirus Pandemic. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 69(1), 1-13.
- Anghel, Veronika. and Jones, Erik. 2022. "Riders on the Storm: The politics of disruption in Italy and Romania during the pandemic." *East European Politics*. (special issue)
- Bohle, Dorothea., Medve-Balint, G., Scepanovic, V., Toplisek, A. (2022). Varieties of authoritarian capitalisms? The Covid-19 response of Eastern Europe's right-wing nationalists. *East European Politics*. (special issue)
- Chaisty, Paul, Christopher J. Gerry, and Stephen Whitefield. 2021. "The buck stops elsewhere: authoritarian resilience and the politics of responsibility for COVID-19 in Russia." *Post-Soviet Affairs* (2021): 1-20.
- Maerz, Seraphine F., Anna Lührmann, Jean Lachapelle, and Amanda B. Edgell. 2020. "Worth the sacrifice? Illiberal and authoritarian practices during Covid-19." *Illiberal and Authoritarian Practices during Covid-19* (September). V-Dem Working Paper 110.
- Martin, József Péter. (2021). How Hungary's Viktor Orban is using Covid to enrich his cronies and clientele. February 3. Source: <https://capx.co/how-hungarys-viktor-orban-is-using-covid-to-enrich-his-cronies-and-clientele/>
- Matuszak, Piotr, Bartosz Totleben, and Dawid Piątek. (2022). Political alignment and the allocation of the COVID-19 response funds-evidence from municipalities in Poland. *Economics and Business Review*, 8(1), 50-71.
- Naczyk, M. 2022. The Sputnik V moment: Biotech, biowarfare and COVID-19 vaccine development in Russia and in former Soviet satellite states. *East European Politics*. (special issue)
- Radnitz, Scott. 2021. *Revealing schemes: the politics of conspiracy in Russia and the post-Soviet region*. Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press.

Week 10 – Illiberalism in Ukraine

(a)

Michael Colbrone. *From the Fires of War*. 9783838215082 (selections)

Putin, V. Article of the President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin. July 12, 2021. "On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians." Source: <https://www.prlib.ru/en/article-vladimir-putin-historical-unity-russians-and-ukrainians>

(b)

Onuch, Olga. (2022). Why Ukrainians Are Rallying Around Democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 33(4), 37-46. doi:10.1353/jod.2022.0045

Umland, A. (2019). Irregular militias and radical nationalism in post-Euromaidan Ukraine: the prehistory and emergence of the "Azov" battalion in 2014. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 31(1), 105-131.

(c)

Mark von Hagen. (1995). Does Ukraine Have a History? *Slavic Review*, 54(3), 658-673. doi:10.2307/2501741

Kulyk, V. (2022). Is Ukraine a Multiethnic Country? *Slavic Review*, 81(2), 299-323. doi:10.1017/slr.2022.152 <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/slavic-review/article/abs/is-ukraine-a-multiethnic-country/F7A4132353341BF9B48D47BAB733981D>

Olga Onuch, Henry E. Hale & Gwendolyn Sasse (2018) Studying identity in Ukraine, *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 34:2-3, 79-83, DOI: 10.1080/1060586X.2018.1451241

Week 11 – Illiberalism in Russia

Ian Garner. *Generation Z*. 9781787389281 (selections)

Week 12– Take home exam

Week 13– Illiberalism as disfigured democracy

Urbinati, Nadia. 2014. *Democracy Disfigured: Opinion, Truth and the People*. Harvard University Press.
(selections)

Week 14– Illiberalism final thoughts

Week 15– Thanksgiving

Week 16– Wrap-up

Detailed Topics

This list is to act as a guide for material that could be covered as part of this course. Therefore, please note that this material may be subject to change.

Seminar Topics:

Week 1 – Introduction to illiberalism: Theory: Illiberalism, authoritarianism, and democratic erosion

a) What is illiberalism? Illiberalism as an ideology. The relationship between illiberalism and (1) conservatism, (2) nativism, and (3) populism.

b) Illiberalism as a strategy. The relationship between illiberalism and (1) authoritarianism, and (2) democratic erosion.

Questions:

What is the difference between illiberalism and radical right-wing populism?

Is illiberalism anti-democratic?

Discussion topics

What is illiberalism?

What is the difference between illiberalism and populism?

What is the difference between illiberalism and nativism?

What is the difference between illiberalism and social conservatism?

What is the relationship between illiberalism and democratic erosion?

Week 2 – Illiberalism as populism: Populists in power: Social spending and executive over-reach

- a) What can Europe learn from Latin America? Weak voter attachments and economic insecurity.
- b) The illiberal playbook. Family policies, clientelism, and targeted spending.

Questions:

Is populism in "Eastern Europe" a case of exclusionary or inclusionary populism?

Populists in power often increase financial support for families with children and target gender equality. Why?

Discussion topics

What is the difference between exclusionary and inclusionary populism?

What is the long-term political impact of neoliberal reforms in Eastern Europe?

Is populism in Eastern Europe "western" or "southern"?

Is populism in Eastern Europe "programmatic" or "clientelistic"?

What is the political purpose of anti-gender politics?

Week 3 – Illiberalism as far-right voting: Illiberal backlash: Radicalization of mainstream parties

- a) Fidesz, PiS, and Smer: Radicalization of mainstream parties in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia.
- b) Parties in power and backsliding: Erosion of formal institutions, violations of unwritten norms, and the power of the purse.

Questions:

Describe the process of mainstream party radicalization.

Under which conditions mainstream party radicalization leads to democratic decay?

Discussion topics

Is democratic decay irreversible?

What is the role of identity politics in mainstream party radicalization?

What are the grievances that contribute to (illiberal) backlash?

Poland and Hungary were once the golden children of democratization. What happened?

Week 4 – Illiberalism and minority accommodation: Ethnic groups empowered

- a) Accommodation of minorities and backlash.
- b) Demographic bust. "Discovering" (im)migration as an electoral issue.

Questions:

What is the relationship between minority accommodation and radical right voting?

Is the logic of backlash against ethnic minorities similar to the logic of backlash against sexual minorities (LGBTQ groups and abortion rights)?

Discussion topics

Eastern Europe is a dying region with low birth rates and high out-migration. How is this fact related to illiberal backlash?

What is the relationship between in-migration (immigration) and illiberal backlash?

What are politicized minorities? How does the process of minority politicization contribute to illiberal backlash?

Week 5 – Illiberalism against the European Union

TBD

Week 6 – Illiberalism as failed imitation

TBD

Week 7 – Illiberalism as familialism: Sexual autonomy: (Un)civil society and churches

- a) Illiberalism and uncivil society.
- b) Sexual autonomy, gender violence, and LGBTQ as a new political cleavage.

Questions:

What is “uncivil society”? Is “uncivil society” illiberal?

Describe the process in which religious beliefs are weaponized by illiberal leaders.

Discussion topics

Are citizens “illiberal” if they hold conservative views on LGBTQ issues?

Can LGBTQ advocacy contribute to illiberal backlash?

What is the political logic of targeting abortion rights and LGBTQ rights?

Week 8 – Illiberalism against immigration

TBD

Week 9 – Illiberalism and crisis: Pandemic politics: state capacity, vaccines, and conspiracies

- a) Who was “best in Covid”? Executive over-reach during the pandemic.
- b) Pandemic conspiracies, vaccine hesitancy, and polarization.

Questions:

Did democracies decay during the pandemic?

Describe the relationship between executive over-reach and the pandemic.

Discussion topics

What were the opportunities created by the pandemic for democratic decay?

Ten years from now, is Covid going to be covered in political science textbooks as a seminal event (comparable to 2008 financial meltdown or 2015 refugee crisis)?

Week 10 – Illiberalism in Ukraine

- a) Ukrainian civic nationalism. Security challenges in Europe. East/West discord.
- b) Ukrainian refugees in Europe. Public support for Putin. Belarus at the crossroads.

Questions:

Describe civic nationalism in Ukraine.

What are the sources of pro-democratic attitudes in Ukraine?

Discussion topics

Azov

Week 11 – Illiberalism in Russia

TBD

Week 12– Take home exam

Week 13– Illiberalism as disfigured democracy

TBD

Week 14– Illiberalism final thoughts

Week 15 – Thanksgiving

Week 16 – Wrap-up

Draft mid-term exam questions

Note: You will get three of these questions on the list and you will select two for your take home mid-term exams, questions might be slightly modified for the exam.

1. – Describe three strategies that illiberal leaders use to undermine democracies.
2. – What are the elements of extreme right-wing propaganda that can be considered illiberal?

3. – Is populism in "Eastern Europe" a case of exclusionary or inclusionary populism?
4. – What is the role of identity politics in mainstream party radicalization?
5. – What is the relationship between minority accommodation and radical right voting?
6. – Is "uncivil society" illiberal?
7. – Under which conditions one would expect religious beliefs to be weaponized by illiberal leaders?
8. – tbd
9. – What were the opportunities created by the Covid pandemic for democratic decay?
10. – Is Ukrainian civic nationalism liberal or illiberal?
11. tbd
12. tbd
13. tbd
14. tbd
15. tbd

All readings

Required

Lenka Bustikova. *Extreme Reactions*. 9781108710824
Nadia Urbinati. *Democracy Disfigured*. 9780674725133
Krause and Holmes. *The Light that Failed*. 9780241345702
Ian Garner. *Generation Z*. 9781787389281
Michael Colborne. *From the Fires of War*. 9783838215082
Fred Paxton. *Restrained Radicals*. 9781009379083

General works and background reading

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Additional resources

<https://www.illiberalism.org>

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/category/eu-politics-2/>

Ivan Krastev - Stephen Holmes: The Light that Failed. A Reckoning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjpERlyuz80>

Extraordinary speech by Giorgia Meloni on UN Global Compact in Italian parliament

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-3-IN3bA9w>

Marine Le Pen explains why nationalism is important

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNpI9wKnE8Q>

Polish MP: 'For me, multiculturalism is not a value' | UpFront (Headliner)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccOp0I8ZPho>

EU Debate | Nigel Farage MEP | Opposition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tT3FBdnufc>