

# Socialist Control and Resistance Eastern Europe after 1945

EUS 3221 – Section 12EN

EUH 3930 – Section 8EN1

**Time:** Tuesday P4 (10.40am-11.30am)  
Thursday P4-5 (10.40am-12.20pm)\* - double period

**Locations:** Tuesday Turlington 1101  
Thursday Turlington 1101

## Instructor

Edit Nagy [edit@ufl.edu](mailto:edit@ufl.edu)  
352-294-7149 (voice)

**Office Hours:** Wednesday P4-5 (in-person or online)  
Thursday P2 (in-person or online)  
or by appointment  
online meeting link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/98858593490>

**Office Location:** Turlington Hall (TUR) 3307

## Course Description

“Socialist Control and Resistance – Eastern Europe after 1945” offers an in-depth exploration of the political, social, and cultural history of Central and Eastern Europe from the end of World War II through 1990. This course examines the rise and fall of communist ideology, both as a utopian theory and as an institutional practice, highlighting the complexities of life under authoritarian regimes, the resilience of the human spirit, and the ongoing struggle for freedom and justice.

As the world continues to grapple with the rise of authoritarianism, surveillance, and the suppression of dissent, understanding the history of socialist control and resistance in this region is more relevant than ever. Through an overview of daily life experiences behind the Iron Curtain—from the perspectives of both devoted communists and critics of the system—students will gain crucial insights into the challenges faced by those living under these regimes and the diverse forms of resistance that emerged in response.

## Course Objectives

In this course, you will delve into the political, social, and cultural history of Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War. You'll explore how socialist regimes sought to control every aspect of life, from politics to the arts, and how individuals and groups resisted this control, often at great personal risk. Through a mix of historical documents, literature, and personal testimonies, you will gain a deeper understanding of the following:

**The Structure of Socialist Regimes:** Learn how socialist governments were organized and how they maintained control over their populations.

**Mechanisms of Control:** Study the role of secret police, censorship, and propaganda in suppressing dissent.

**Forms of Resistance:** Discover the diverse ways in which people resisted, from underground movements

to mass protests and revolutions.

**Impact on Daily Life:** Understand how these historical dynamics affected everyday life, culture, and identity in the region.

**Legacy and Memory:** Reflect on how these histories continue to shape the politics and societies of Central and Eastern Europe today.

To examine these periods, we will discuss a variety of primary and secondary sources, including memoirs, photographs, films, music, and documentaries. Students are expected to evaluate and analyze the Cold War period in Eastern Europe, recognizing and understanding the similarities and differences within the socialist bloc and the “Western” societies.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you'll have a deep understanding of the forces that shaped Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War and how they continue to impact the region today. You'll be equipped to critically analyze historical events and their relevance to today's global issues, especially in terms of state control, resistance, and human rights.

**Content:** You'll learn about the major events and turning points in the history of Central and Eastern European countries after WWII. You'll understand the structure of communist governments, their relationship with the USSR, and the development of resistance movements. This knowledge will be assessed through reflection papers on movies and books, as well as a final assessment.

**Communication:** You'll enhance your ability to communicate effectively in groups and present material clearly, both individually and with others, using audio-visual aids when needed. Participation in small group discussions and presentations will help you improve these skills, and your participation grade will reflect how well you communicate during these tasks.

**Critical Thinking:** This course will push you to engage deeply with various sources and interpretations, helping you develop the ability to organize, prioritize, and present information effectively. You'll learn to define historical problems, find relevant evidence, and articulate your research in clear and convincing ways.

Your progress in these areas will be demonstrated through reflection papers throughout the semester

In 2024, as the world continues to face the challenges of authoritarianism, this course will offer valuable insights into how societies have resisted such regimes, providing you with knowledge and skills that are relevant both academically and in real life.

## Textbooks

Instructor's packet – all classroom materials (readings, visual materials, worksheets) will be uploaded on Canvas.

## Materials and Supplies Fees

There are no additional fees for this course.

## Evaluation of Grades

**Class Participation (10%):** Your class participation grade is based on regular attendance and active engagement in discussions. To do well, come to class prepared, having read all assigned materials, and ready to contribute to discussions. Attendance is mandatory and essential for your success on this course.

Exceptional participation—characterized by consistently being prepared, contributing thoughtfully to discussions, and demonstrating a high level of engagement with the course material—may lead to an upward adjustment of your final grade by one step (for example, from A- to A). On the other hand, two or more unexcused absences, three or more instances of tardiness, or leaving early three or more times may

result in a downward adjustment of your final grade by one step (for example, from B+ to B). I will not revise grades upwards to reward regular attendance.

Students are **also required to attend** one office hour meeting during the semester (preferably between **weeks 4 and 10**) to discuss their progress with the course instructor. Office hours can be attended in-person or virtually.

**Class Discussion** (15%) Active participation in class or after class discussions is essential for deepening your understanding of the course material. During these sessions, we will explore key concepts, analyze case studies, and engage in critical debates. You are expected to come prepared, having completed all assigned readings, and be ready to contribute thoughtfully to the conversation. Your participation will not only enhance your own learning but also enrich the educational experience of your peers.

**Reflection Papers/Essay (3) (3x15%)**

The course is divided into 3 sections (State Control-Opposition and Resistance-Normalization and Daily Life).

- Students are required to submit 3 review papers during the semester. Reflection papers should be submitted on a weekend when we finish the section.
- Each paper should summarize and reflect on the class lecture, discussions, posted articles and posted visual materials. In addition, students need to read a longer study/analysis from an expert OR read a novel or a memoir OR watch a movie or a documentary of the topic. Reading and visual material titles and access are available at the end of the syllabus.
- Written reminder for the submission deadline will be in the weekly "Announcement" (and it will be announced in class when the deadline is approaching)
- Detailed instruction - length of the paper and the rubric for the paper will be posted in "Assignments" approximately 2 weeks before the due date.

Assignments	Total Points	Percent of Grade
Class Participation – Attendance + office hour visit	15	10%
Class Participation - Discussion	30	15%
Reflection paper with Quiz - 1	15	25%
Reflection paper with Quiz - 2	15	25%
Reflection paper with Quiz - 3	15	25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Grading Scale**

A = 93.4-100%    B+ = 86.7-89.9%    C+ = 76.7-79.9%    D+ = 66.7-69.9%    E = 59% and below  
 A- = 90-93.3%    B = 83.4-86.6%    C = 73.4-76.6%    D = 63.4-66.6  
                           B- = 80-83.3%    C- = 70-73.3%    D- = 60-63.3

More information on grades and grading policies is here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

**Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy**

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

**Class attendance is expected.** If you miss class for medical reasons, religious holiday or for any other reason you consider valid, notify your instructor in advance.

**Unexcused absence** (each) will be lowered your final grade with one “notch” (ie. from an A to an A-)

**Excused absences** are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog and require appropriate document(s).

**Make-up Exam Policy:** Students who have been granted an excused absence and miss a scheduled exam (because of illness, mandatory religious obligations, or other unavoidable circumstances), must reschedule the make-up exam.

**Auditors** are requested to complete assignments and prepare for class as if they were registered as regular students. If an auditor does not fulfill these requirements, he/she will be asked to withdraw from the course.

## 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.

## E-mail Policy

University of Florida requires that you use your UF Gatorlink account for university (and class) related email communication. Please see <http://www.it.ufl.edu/policies/#email> to read more on this policy.

## Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/>.

## Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at a minimum, if at all.

## 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 specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

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 or TAs in this class.

## Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

## Canvas Privacy Policy

Our class sessions may be audio-visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image agree to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

## In-Class Recording Policy

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal education use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private 2 conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without the permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## Academic Resources

### **E-learning technical support:**

Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

### **Library support:**

Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call 866-281-6309 or email [ask@ufl.libanswers.com](mailto:ask@ufl.libanswers.com) for more information.

### **Teaching Center:**

1317 Turlington Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

### **Writing Studio:**

Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138 | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

## Course Schedule

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### VPN setup

<https://it.clas.ufl.edu/kb/category/vpn/>

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*"Hard times create strong men. Strong men create good times.  
Good times create weak men. Weak men create hard times."*

\*Michael Hopf

### Week 1: **Introduction to course**

Mapping Central and Eastern Europe  
Timeline

Suggested Reading: Nikolai Barnov: *Central-Eastern Europe in the European Political and Historical-Geographical Context* (2018)

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### Week 2: **The Soviet model of the Communism**

Understanding the Soviet style Communism (Lenin and Stalin)

Reading: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: *The Communist Manifesto (1848)* – selected pages (Preamble; Chapter 1-Bourgeois and Proletarians)

Reading: Mohit Sen: *Lenin on the Socialist State* (1971)

Reading: Waldermar Gurian: *From Lenin to Stalin* (1950)

Documentary: *Heaven on Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism – Robert Owen and Marx&Engels* (2005)

Documentary: *Heaven on Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism – Lenin* (2005)

Documentary: *Communism's Man of Steel - Joseph Stalin* (2019)

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### Week 3: **Soviet Control in Eastern Europe (1) - Politics**

Eastern Europe under Stalin (1947-1953)

Communist Takeover – Terror in Communist States (Trials and Labor camps)

Reading: Ben Fowkes: *Eastern Europe 1945-1969-From Stalinism to Stagnation* (selected pages)

Reading: Richard K. Carlton (ed.): *Forced Labor in the People's Democracies* (selected pages)

Documentary: *Eastern Europe a Century of Trouble - Part 2: 1939-1953* (1991) - selected parts

Documentary: *Beyond torture: the gulag of Pitesti, Romania* (2007) - selected parts

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### Week 4: **Soviet Control in Eastern Europe (2) - Legitimation**

Communist Legal System (Constitutions and Codexes)

Reading: Soviet Constitution of 1936; Hungarian Constitution of 1949  
Reading: George V. Starolsolsky: *Basic Principles of Soviet Criminal Law* (1950)  
Reading: George C. Guins: *Constitutions of the Soviet Satellite* (1950)  
Reading: William Simons: *Constitutions of the Communist World* (1980) - selected pages  
Reading: John Quigley: *Socialist Law and Civil Law Tradition* (1989)

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**Week 5: Soviet Control in Eastern Europe (3) - Economy**

Socialist Economy – Nationalization-Collectivization (early years)

Reading: Anne Applebaum: *Iron Curtain-Crushing of Eastern Europe 1945-1956 – Economy* (2012)  
Reading: Ivan Berend T: *Central and Eastern Europe 1944-1948: Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery – Economy* (1996) - selected pages  
Documentary: TBA

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**Week 6: Soviet Control in Eastern Europe (4) - State Paternalism**

Building a New Society – The Privileged Class (Peasants and Workers)  
Propaganda

Reading: Katherine Lebow: *Public works, private lives in Nowa Huta* (2001)  
Documentary: *Nova Huta – The Labyrinth of Memory* (2009) – directed by Marcin Kapron  
Movie: *Man of Marble* (1976) – directed by Andrzej Wajda

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**Review Paper/Essay (1)**

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**Week 7: Resistance in Eastern Europe (1) - Workers**

Tensions, Rebellions and Revolutions in Eastern Europe after Stalin

Reading: Jeffrey Kopstein: *Chipping Away at the State: Workers' Resistance and the Demise of East Germany* (2002)  
Reading: H.L. Stille: *East German Uprising* (1953)  
Reading: Csaba Bekes: *Cold War, Détente and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution* (2002)  
Documentary: *The East German People's Uprising* (N/A) – directed: unknown (selected parts)  
Documentary: *Freedom Fury* (2006) – directed by Colin Keith Grey (selected parts)  
Digital Archives: 1953 East German Uprising; 1956 Polish and Hungarian Crisis – Wilson Center

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**Week 8: Resistance in Eastern Europe (2) - Individuals**

Escaping from Reality  
Reading: *A Brief History of the Berlin Crisis of 1961*  
Documentary: *Walled In!* (2010) – DW

Movie: *The Tunnel* (2001) – directed by Ronald Suso Richter  
Movie: *The Silent Revolution* (2018) – directed by Peter Fazekas

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**Week 9:        Resistance in Eastern Europe (3) - Reformers**

Socialism with a Human Face

Reading: Mark Kramer: *The Changing Pattern of Soviet-East European Relations 1953-1968* (in: *The Cambridge History of Communism-vol.2*)

Reading: Kieran Williams: *The Prague spring and its aftermath* (1997)

Documentary: *Prague Spring* (1999) – directed by Gina Kovacs and Christian Vinkeloe

Documentary:

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**Week 10:       Resistance in Eastern Europe (4) - Youth**

The Power of Music

Reading: T.Ryback: *Rock around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (chapter 5-6)

Documentary: *Beats the Freedom* (2010) – directed by L. Gnoinski, W. Slota

Documentary: *How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin* (2009) – directed by L.Woodhead (YouTube or ask Instructor's copy)

Documentary: *Radio Revolution* (2009)

Movie: *Stilyagi* (2008) – directed by Valery Todorovsky

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**Week 11:       Resistance in Eastern Europe (5) - Opposition and Underground**

Organized oppositions in Poland (KOR and Solidarity) and in Czechoslovakia (Charta 77)

Reading: H. Gordon Skilling: *Background to the Study of Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe*

Reading: D. Pollack-J.Weilgosh: *Dissident and Opposition in Communist Eastern Europe* (chapter 11)

Reading: G Johnston: *What was the Samizdat?*

Documentary: *Polish Transformation* (2011) – Social Film Institute

Documentary: *K.O.R* (2009) – directed by Johanna Grudzinska

Movie: *Man of Iron* (1981) - directed by Andrzej Wajda

Movie: *Blind Chance* (1987) – directed by Krzysztof Kieslowski

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**Review Paper/Essay (2)**

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**Week 12:       Normalization - Everyday life (1) - The Women**

Women Emancipation

Read: Zsafia Eszter Toth: *Shifting Identities* in: *Labor in Postwar Central Eastern Europe* (2005) pp. 75-92

Documentary: *Budapest Retro* (2003) – directed by Gabor Zsigmond Papp – Selected clips –



Women of Pest  
Movie: TBA

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**Week 13:      Normalization - Everyday life (2) - Family Relationships**

Reading: V. Chekalin: *The Family and Family Relationships Under Socialism* (2014)  
Reading: David Crowley and Susan E. Reid: *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (2002) (selected pages)  
Documentary: TBA  
Movie: TBA

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**Week 14:      Normalization - Everyday life (3) - Education, Culture and Entertainment**

Guided Values - Waiting for a Communist Superman  
Reading: *Flirting with Television in Socialism. Proletarian Morality and the Lust for Abundance*  
Reading: Ben Lewis - *Hammer and Tickle: A History of Communism Told Through Communist Jokes* (selected pages)  
Documentary: *Hammer and Tickle* (2006) – directed by Ben Lewis

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**Week 15:      Normalization - Everyday life (4) - Consumerism**

Shopping during Communism - Shortage  
Reading: David Crowley and Susan E. Reid: *Pleasures in Socialism, Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc* (2012) (selected pages) TBA  
David Crowley and Susan E. Reid: *Style and socialism: modernity and material culture in post-war Eastern Europe* (2000) (selected pages)  
Documentary: *Budapest Retro* (1999) – directed by Gabor Zsigmond Papp – Selected clips  
*Trabant: The Cool couple from the Cold War* (2007) – directed by T. Goffin

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**Review Paper/Essay (3)**

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