CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

**Course title:** Vanishing Central Europe: Media, Culture and Backlash against Globalism  
**Course code:** COMM 3005 PRAG  
**Programs offering course:** Summer Communications, New Media, and Journalism  
**Language of instruction:** English  
**U.S. semester credits:** 3.00  
**Contact hours:** 45.00  
**Term:** Summer Session II 2020

**Course Description**

Over the past three decades, the powerful cultural, political and economic forces of globalism have transformed Central Europe. The media have also played a key role in the transformation. Recently, similarly to other regions in the world, Central Europe has been experiencing a backlash against globalism, and again, the media are playing a central role. This course examines the cultural and political concept of Central Europe and its transformation during the rise of globalism and the recent backlash. It explores globalization in its larger political and economic context. Special attention is paid to the transformation of the media due to digital communication and social media.

**Learning Objectives**

By completing this course, students will:

- evaluate the consequences of globalization in the media, culture, politics and economy during the post-cold war world;
- analyze the processes pertinent to Central European culture within the larger context of the rise of social media and populist politics;
- evaluate several communication models in the context of the rising digital/software economy;
- acquire the critical skills to frame the culture of Central Europe within the global context;
- combine critical and creative skills in order to develop their own models of understanding the subject matter.

**Course Prerequisites**

None

**Methods of Instruction**

The class incorporates lectures, analyses and discussions of the readings, videos and films, class exercises and field trips. Lectures are supplemented by power-point presentations. Seminar-style discussions form an especially important part of the course.

**Assessment and Final Grade**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Term Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Team Project Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Midterm Examination</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Final Examination</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**Course Requirements**

**Term Paper**

The Term Paper consists of about 1300-word long position explaining and defending its arguments while applying the theories gained from the course. It requires some external research but is not a research paper per se. The emphasis is on originality of thought, application of theory and the clarity of the exposition.
Team Project Presentation

The Team Project Presentation is a group power-point presentation or a report on a case study illustrating a concept covered in the course. Students will be working in small groups and will be assigned a team grade.

Midterm Examination

The Midterm Examination consists of short essay-like answers testing the knowledge of the theories presented in the course. The Midterm is a closed book/closed notes exam and is to be written by hand.

Final Examination

The Final Examination is comprehensive and consists of three essays written in class. Students will be able to choose from six topics and will be able to consult their notes, literature and Internet sources.

Class Participation

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

Attendance

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program.

If you will miss a class for any reason, notify the Program Coordinator and your instructor beforehand via Canvas. You are responsible for any materials covered in class during your absence, and except in the specific cases listed below, credit will not be granted for missed assessments.

Excessive absences will result in a notification letter, and finally a warning letter, sent to you and your home school, based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of course hours missed</th>
<th>Number of CIEE classes</th>
<th>Minimum penalty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 10%</td>
<td>One to Three 90-min. classes; or One 180-min. class</td>
<td>No penalty</td>
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<tr>
<td>10% - 20%</td>
<td>Four 90-min. classes</td>
<td>Written notification* to the student, followed by a warning letter to the student and home school; 3% reduction in the final grade</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five 90-min. classes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Two 180-min classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Six 90-min. classes; or Three 180-min. classes</td>
<td>Automatic course failure, and possible expulsion with notification to the home school</td>
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* The notification letters are intended to ensure that you are well advised in advance of any potential for failure or dismissal, so that you can take steps to avoid this.

As the table shows, **missing more than 20% of any class (e.g., due to undocumented illness, travel delays, flight cancellations, over-sleeping, etc.) results in automatic failure of the course.**

If you miss an assessment in class due to an absence, you will be able to make it up in the following instances:

- You provide a relevant doctor’s note from a local medical professional to your Program Coordinator within 24 hours of your absence (a scan or photograph sent via e-mail are acceptable)
- A CIEE staff member verifies that you were too ill to attend class.
- You provide evidence of a family emergency to your Program Coordinator.
- You have an approved absence related to the observance of a religious holiday from the Academic Director based on a request submitted before you arrived onsite.

Please note: Absences incurred due to documented illness, documented family emergency or the observance of a religious holiday approved before arrival onsite do not count towards the total of absences. Students may self-certify one absence due to illness without providing a doctor’s note as long as they notify the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of their absence by e-mail or a text message.
Other attendance-related policies

If you transfer from one CIEE class to another during the Add/Drop period, you will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of the new class provided you were marked present for the first session(s) of the original class.

If you are over 15 minutes late for a class, the instructor is required to mark you absent.

In case of class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips and make-up classes), always contact the Academic Department to decide the appropriate course of action.

Please remember to track your attendance on the Canvas Course Sites and report any errors in the record to the Academic Department within one week of the discrepancy date, as later claims may not be considered.

These attendance rules also apply to any required co-curricular excursion, activity, or event, and to for-credit internships.

CIEE staff does not manage absences at partner institutions providing direct enrollment classes (FAMU, ECES and FSV), but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1
Class:

Day 1 Central Europe: Cultural and Political Concept
Readings: Milan Kundera – The Tragedy of Central Europe
Václav Havel – The Need for Transcendence in the Postmodern World

Day 2 Rise of Globalism after Cold War
Reading: Thomas Friedman – Thanks for Being Late (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016)

Day 3 Rise of Globalism after Cold War 2
Reading: Thomas Friedman – Thanks for Being Late (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016)

Week 2
Class:

Day 4 Entering Global Era
Democratic Transformation and Economic Reform: Case of Czech Republic

Team Project Presentations

Day 5 Post-Gutenberg Age
Communications Environment Disruption
Readings: Clay Shirky – The Cognitive Surplus (excerpts from the book)
Jaron Lanier – Who Owns the Future (excerpts from the book)

Day 6 Age of Emotional Excess-How to Build and Keep Audience
Communications Environment Disruption

Midterm Exam

Week 3
Class:
Day 7 From Formal to Informal and Frivolous-Social Media Loopback

Communications Environment Disruption

Field Trip

Day 8 Collapse of Journalism Business Model

Reading: Jaron Lanier – Who Owns the Future (excerpts from the book)

Day 9 Collapse of Journalism Business Model: Czech Republic

Field Trip

Term Paper Due

Week 4

Class:

Day 10 Great Erasure: From Bohumil Hrabal to Costa Coffee

Film – Cutting it Short (Postřižiny) dir. by Jiří Menzel

Day 11 Backlash

Rise of Populists

Reading: Jacques Rupnik – The Specter Haunting Europe: Surging Illiberalism in the East (Journal of Democracy)

Day 12 Back to the USSR?

Spread of Pro-Kremlin Propaganda


Course Materials

Readings

4. Thomas Friedman – Thanks for Being Late (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016)
9. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/07/magazine/the-agency.html?_r=0
10. Film to be viewed in class: Cutting in Short by Jiri Menzel