HIST 2991/HIST 4991 From Kafka to Havel: Introduction into the History of Czech Lands in the 20th Century (Summer 2014)

Syllabus

Time of the course: Monday-Thursday, Time Period 1

Instructor: Pavel Szobi, Ph.D., pavel.szobi@vse.cz, office hours Monday-Thursday after the classes in the Summer Seminars office

Aims of the course:
The course is designed for foreign students and is supposed to be an introduction to the history and culture of the Czech lands. The aim of this course is an overall summary of the most memorable moments in Czech political, economic, and cultural history.

Learning outcomes and competences:
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to understand specifics of Czech political and economic development, as well as cultural life.

Attendance policy:
The attendance of all classes is obligatory with the exception of serious health issues. Each absence will reduce the student’s final grade by five (5) points. All absences are unexcused, unless a medical report is provided. A five-minute grace period is allowed before a student is marked “late.” (Leaving the class early will be considered a “late,” as well.) Three “late-s” make up one absence. After five absences the student will fail the class.

Course contents:

1st lecture

2nd lecture
Reading: Legend of Saint Wenceslas

3rd lecture
World War One and its impact on the changes within the Habsburg Empire. Czech political activism during the war years and founding of the Czechoslovak Republic.

4th lecture
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AT THE VITKOV MOUNTAIN
Discussion during the tour: Czech + Slovaks = Czechoslovaks? Ideas of Czechoslovakism and its results
Reading: Jan Rychlík, Czech History - Communism only postponed Czechoslovakia’s end

5th lecture

6th lecture
MUSEUM OF PRAGUE, 3D MOVIE ABOUT MEDIEVAL PRAGUE (meeting at metro station FLORENC at 9 am)

7th lecture
Economic crisis and the opposition of Czechoslovakia against the growing German hegemony.
Reading: Terje Englund, Czechs and Germans

8th lecture
Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia, Slovak Republic during the years 1939-1945. Movie presentation: “Shop on the shop on the main street”

9th lecture
MUSEUM OF “STAROPRAMEN” BREWERY, DEGUSTATION, METRO STATION “ANDĚL-MOSKEVSKÁ”

10th lecture

11th lecture

12th lecture

13th lecture
Reality of the real socialism: Movie presentation: “Panelstory”, “Sun, Hay and Strawberries”

14th lecture
Soviet Union during the Gorbachev era and Czechoslovak program of “Reconstructon and democratization”. Possibilities and limits of reforms in a totalitarian regime. Growing resistance in the population, impact of the development in Poland and Hungary on Czechoslovakia.
15th lecture
The horror of communism. Civil rights, political dissidents, opposition against dictatorship: Movie presentation: “Paper heads”

16th lecture
Velvet Revolution: The way to democracy, privatization and dissolution of the Czechoslovak state.
Reading: The Black Book of Communism: The Complex Management of the Past

Obligatory reading:
PÁNEK, J. -- TŮMA, O. A history of the Czech lands, Praha 2009
The book can be handed to the students after their arrival in Prague (price 10 USD/piece)

Recommended reading:
CIPKOWSKI, P. Revolution in Eastern Europe: understanding the collapse of communism in Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and the Soviet Union, New York 1991
DĚDEK, O. The Break-up of Czechoslovakia: an in-depth economic analysis, Avebury 1996
ENGLUND, E. B. - The Czechs in a nutshell, Praha 2004
KRUEGER, R. Czech, German, and noble: status and national identity in Habsburg Bohemia, Oxford 2009

Recommended Czech authors of fiction

Recommended educational and period movies
Power of Good: Nicholas Winton / Nicholas G. Winton - Siła lidskosti
The Shop on Mainstreet / Obchod na korze
The Lost World of Communism: The Kingdom of Forgetting
Paper Heads / Papierové hlavy
Citizen Havel / Občan Havel

Criteria for grading and grading standards
The grading will follow after a final test. The test will include questions from the lectures in the class, field trips and required reading, as well as a review, which shall be no less than one page long. The review shall be based on a scientific text or historical fiction text (journal paper, legend, fairytale). Before using it for the review, each text hast to be proven by the instructor.

Statement on Academic Integrity
Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the
following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available online at http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu/accountability.cfm

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services. Please visit: http://ods.uno.edu/

Classroom conduct:
Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. Courteous behavior and responses are expected. No form of harassment (verbal, sexual, or physical) will be allowed.