Central and East European Studies

DE FACTO STATES IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE

Spring term 2016/17

Lecture: Mondays, 11am – 12noon, CEES seminar room
Seminar: Mondays, 12noon-1pm, CEES seminar room

Dr Adrian Florea
Lecturer in International Relations
School of Social and Political Sciences

9 Lilybank Gardens, Room #201
Office hours: Tuesdays 9:15 - 11:15
Email: adrian.florea@glasgow.ac.uk    Web: http://aflorea.weebly.com/
INTRODUCTION

**Short description**

This course examines the dynamics surrounding the emergence and survival of de facto states in the post-Soviet space (Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh). The course will also highlight the strategies that de facto state leaders employ to gain domestic and international legitimacy.

**Course content**

This course investigates the dynamics surrounding the emergence and survival of de facto states in the post-Soviet space (Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno-Karabakh). In the first part of the semester, the course will examine how the East European and Caucasian de facto states came about as the Soviet Union began to unravel, and will discuss the domestic and external forces that enable each of these entities to survive. The course will also highlight the strategies that de facto state leaders employ to gain domestic and international legitimacy. In the second part of the semester, the course will address larger questions about the fragmented nature of authority in the contemporary international system. More precisely, the discussion will focus on how effective nonstate actors such as de facto state are at replicating state functions (e.g., establishing a monopoly over the use of force in a given territory and providing public goods). Finally, the course will conclude with a look at the two ‘youngest’ separatist enclaves in Eastern Europe, the self-proclaimed Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk in Ukraine, and will contemplate the future of de facto states in the post-Soviet era.

**Dates**

**Week 1**: 9 January – Introduction; Research design issues  
**Week 2**: 16 January – General trends on de facto state emergence and survival  
**Week 3**: 23 January – De facto states in Moldova: Gagauzia and Transnistria  
**Week 4**: 30 January – De facto states in Georgia: Abkhazia, Ajaria, and South Ossetia  
**Week 5**: 6 February – De facto states in Azerbaijan: Nagorno-Karabakh  
**Week 6**: 13 February – Reading week  
**Week 7**: 20 February – Domestic politics of de facto states  
**Week 8**: 28 February – Foreign relations of de facto states*  
**Week 9**: 6 March – De facto statehood and fragmentation of authority in the international system  
**Week 10**: 13 March – De facto states in Eastern Ukraine: People’s Republics of Donestk and Luhansk  
**Week 11**: 20 March – The future of de facto states

*Please note that this class meets on a Tuesday.
**Aims**

The aims of the course are to:

- encourage an advanced knowledge of the breakaway entities in the former Soviet Union
- provide students with the intellectual tools to understand and analyse how the Soviet legacy impacts the internal politics of the Soviet successor states
- offer a comparative analysis of internal conflict outcomes in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova
- investigate from a multi-disciplinary perspective the factors that allow post-Soviet de facto states to survive
- explore various research approaches to the study of the post-Soviet de facto states, including qualitative, interpretive, and quantitative methods, macro- and micro-levels of analysis, cross- and sub-national designs
- evaluate current works on de facto states with respect to how theory and empirics are integrated
- expose students to the key concepts, theoretical traditions, and debates in the study of civil war and conflict resolution

**Intended learning outcomes**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- identify the key concepts, theories, and methods in the study of the post-Soviet de facto states
- assess the dominant theoretical frameworks on the emergence and survival of the post-Soviet de facto states
- evaluate the influence of domestic and foreign actors on the resilience of the post-Soviet de facto states
- apply existing theoretical approaches to the study of a particular de facto state
- assess how non state actors such as de facto states challenge conventional understandings of sovereignty, authority, and governance in the contemporary international system
- construct rigorous research designs (develop a theoretical argument, draw out implications, assemble and analyse relevant evidence, present the findings)

**Transferable skills:**

Through class discussions, essay preparation, and essay writing, students will be able to further develop a set of transferable skills, including:

- the ability to access and make effective use of bibliographical and electronic sources of knowledge and information
- the ability to analyse written texts and prepare, articulate, and defend reasoned answers to set questions
- written communication skills, conveying information and ideas fluently to form sustained arguments
- presentation skills, conveying information and ideas succinctly and effectively by using PowerPoint/Beamer/Prezi and handouts and by keeping within prescribed time-limits
- working collaboratively with others in order to reach and sustain convincing lines of argument
- self-motivation and time-management in order to meet specified deadlines
- experience of how to use empirical data to evaluate theoretical claims

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Seminars

The class is taught in ten 2-hour seminars, which are intended to bring together elements of lecturing and student participation. The content of weekly seminars will typically include a lecture on the week’s topic, followed by an in-depth discussion which will be informed by the required readings (see below) and the students’ independent study. The students’ active participation is an essential component of this course - the seminars are intended to be an interactive learning activity. At the same time, attendance at all seminars is necessary, and every absence will have to be notified to the course coordinator. For the University’s Student Absence Policy, please see: http://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_129312_en.pdf.

Assessment

a. Formative assessment: Class presentation

The formative component of assessment comprises an expectation that students will give an oral presentation on one of the required readings and submit presentation slides, which will then be made available on Moodle to all class participants. The presentation is not assessed. Presentation topics will be allocated in the first seminar. Each presentation of the respective reading should offer details on: the research question(s); the theory developed by the author(s); the methodology employed to answer the research question(s); the main findings; the limitations of the study. While you prepare for the presentation, bear in mind the quality of handout, presentation style (pace, volume, and time management), presentation’s content and contribution to the entire seminar. The presentation should be no longer than 10 minutes in length and should be evaluative and not simply a summary of the week’s reading. It must not be simply read out word for word, but be presented from notes while using props: the whiteboard, OHP, or PowerPoint/Beamer/Prezi. You should also submit a hard copy of your handout (i.e. the slides), including a brief bibliography, to the lecturer by email at least 24 hours prior to class.

b. Summative Assessment: Essay
The summative component comprises of a final essay (4000-5000 words), which will be due by 16.00 on Monday, 24 April 2017 (see below for the submission procedure). Well-crafted essays should show consistency of argument together with acknowledgement of rival arguments, clear structure, simple and direct writing, good punctuation, and evidence of wide reading. Students are required to write their essay in response to one of the following questions:

1. Some analysts have argued that, in order to accommodate the rising number of nonstate territorial actors, the international community needs to devise a new legal status in international politics, one akin to Palestine’s “non-member observer state” at the UN. Can this solution help resolve the intractable conflicts over de facto states? Is a second-tier status akin to Palestine’s “non-member observer state” a viable solution to the rising number of de facto states?

2. Are post-Soviet de facto states fleeting buffer enclaves caught in geopolitical wrangles or viable alternatives to nation-states in a fragmented international system? Illustrate with examples.

3. Some de facto states depend on criminal networks to accrue resources for providing public goods to the local population and to maintain mobilization against the government. Discuss the nexus between the presence of criminal networks and the survival of post-Soviet de facto states.

4. Can post-Soviet de facto states survive without Moscow’s military, political, and economic assistance? Looking at two examples of de facto states in the region, discuss whether this conjecture provides an accurate assessment of their situation.

5. To what extent are Russia’s relations with the West shaped by the post-Soviet de facto states?

6. What are the similarities and differences between the newly formed de facto states in eastern Ukraine (the self-declared Republics of Donestk and Luhansk) and their “senior” peers (Transnistria, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia)?

7. What are the main obstacles to the resolution of disputes over the post-Soviet de facto states and how can they be realistically overcome?

Essay submission procedure

Please refer to the SSPS Postgraduate Student Handbook – available on the SSPS Postgraduate Common Room Moodle – for further important information regarding assessment.

- Essays are due by 16.00 on Monday, 24 April 2017.
- Marks will be deducted for late submissions (see the SSPS postgraduate handbook).
• All written work should be submitted to the CEES Postgraduate Office, 9 Lilybank Gardens.

• **Two copies** of all written work should be submitted. One will be returned to you with feedback and an indication of the expected mark. The second copy will be retained by CEES for scrutiny by the external examiner. It should be noted that the final mark for all assessed work is subject to confirmation by the external examiner.

• In addition to providing 2 hard copies, written assignments should be submitted to Urkund (academic writing enhancement tool and plagiarism software) via the assignment upload on the course Moodle. Instructions are available on the SSPS Postgraduate Common Room Moodle.

• The SSPS Postgraduate coursework coversheet should accompany both copies stating the name of the course, title/question number, your student number, word count and date. Your name should not be included. The coversheet is available on the SSPS Postgraduate Common Room Moodle.

• All essays should be word-processed and double spaced with a font size of no less than 12. Double sided printing is acceptable.

• Essays will be penalised if they are under or above the word limit by more than 15%. Please note that footnotes/endnotes are included in the word count. Bibliography and tables are not included.

• All essays must include a bibliography; any statistics, tables, and quotations from the books you consult must be referenced. CEES has produced a Guide to Referencing and Bibliographies which is available on Moodle.

*Plagiarism*

Plagiarism constitutes academic fraud and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person’s work as your own. The University states that plagiarism is “considered as an act of academic fraudulence and is an offence against University discipline”. The University Calendar sets out the procedure that a Head of Department must follow if plagiarism of assessed work is suspected. The presentation of someone else’s essay is obviously fraudulent, but the dividing line between your own work and that of your sources is less clear. The solution is always to acknowledge your sources and use quotations when repeating exactly what someone else has said. Generally, you should avoid excessive paraphrasing of others’ writings, even with acknowledgement; it does not demonstrate that you have understood the material you are reproducing. If in doubt, seek guidance. For more information about plagiarism, please refer to the School’s PG Student Handbook and [http://www.gla.ac.uk/plagiarism/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/plagiarism/).

*Guide to essay marking*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Excellent performance is characterised by most but necessarily all of the following: Clear, comprehensive answer that displays sound critical thinking and insights Relevant evidence and readings from the course, and perhaps beyond, are cited accurately with very few errors. All key points are addressed fully Originality, creativity, and independent judgement are present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Very good performance is characterised by most but not necessarily all of the following: Clear answer that fully addresses the key points Sound reasoning that displays a good understanding of the subject matter Relevant evidence and course readings are used with few errors Less critical thinking, originality, and insight than in an excellent performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Good performance is characterised by most but not necessarily all of the following: Answer displays a basic understanding of the subject matter Evidence of reading from course materials, but some points may not be fully relevant Little in the way of an argument or critical thinking Some errors may be present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance is characterised by most but not necessarily all of the following: Only a modest understanding of the subject matter is displayed Modest evidence of reading from course materials, with the inclusion of a few relevant points Many errors may be present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Weak performance is characterised by most but not necessarily all of the following: Failure to answer question, though there may be an answer to a similar question Little evidence of any understanding of the subject matter is displayed Significant errors may be present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Poor performance is characterised by most but not necessarily all of the following: Failure to answer question directly Very little evidence of any understanding of the subject matter is displayed Many significant errors are likely to be present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Very poor performance is characterised by most of the following: Failure to answer question No evidence of any understanding of the subject matter is displayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Absence of positive qualities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COURSE STRUCTURE

Readings and how to use the reading list

The readings for this class are listed under weekly topics below. You are expected to read ALL of the required readings **before** every seminar so that you can contribute to the in-class discussion. Additionally, you are expected to **post on the weekly discussion forum** one question on any of the required readings for the respective week at least 24 hours before class time. Seminar readings are taken from widely cited journal articles or books. **An electronic version of the required reading list is available online via Moodle.** For your class presentations and coursework, you will need to draw on the recommended readings which can be accessed through the Library webpage.

Please note that the majority of journals articles are available online, even if a hyperlink is not included. The easiest way to find them is to Google the title and follow the link to the journal’s webpage. To gain access to the full text, you will need to be on campus or to log in with your GUID password (if you don’t know it, ask at the Library). In some cases, you may need to access the articles via the Library page. If you are off campus, you might need VPN access.

**NB:** The course pack uploaded on Moodle has been compiled to facilitate access to all of the required readings. However, because of copyright issues, generally, we can only provide one chapter per book. If more than one chapter is listed in the reading list, it is your responsibility to borrow the book from the library for further reading.

Students should use Moodle for access to seminar notes and other additional resources, including unpublished readings. Please note that copyright of these pieces, unless otherwise stated, remains with the author/s of the piece.

**Don’t limit yourselves to the reading list.** If you have difficulty getting hold of any of the items listed, you are expected to use your initiative and look for other appropriate material or to contact the lecturer. You are also encouraged to make use of the internet and newspapers to gain relevant information and keep up with current affairs.

Finally, you are also encouraged to browse the following academic journals, which include relevant articles on the different weekly topics. In most cases, electronic issues can be consulted on the Library website: *Communist and Post-Communist Studies; Ethnopolitics; East European Politics; East European Quarterly; Eurasian Geography and Economics; Europe-Asia Studies; International Affairs; Journal of Eurasian Studies; Nationalities Papers; Nations and Nationalism; Post-Soviet Affairs; Problems of Post-Communism; Survival; World Politics.*
**Week 1 (9/1): Introduction; Issues of research design**

Module 1 offers an introduction to the course, and discusses the core elements of social science research design.

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


**Week 2 (16/1): General trends on de facto state emergence and survival**

This module investigates general trends behind the emergence and survival of de facto states in the post-WWII international system.

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


**Week 3 (23/1): De facto states in Moldova: Gagauzia and Transnistria**

This module examines the different trajectories – survival and reintegration into the parent state – of Transnistria and Gagauzia, two de facto states that emerged in Moldova after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**

Week 4 (30/1): De facto states in Georgia: Abkhazia, Ajaria, and South Ossetia

This module discusses three de facto states that emerged in Georgia in the early 1990s: Abkhazia, Ajaria, and South Ossetia.

**Required readings:**


**Recommended readings:**

Week 5 (6/2): De facto states in Azerbaijan: Nagorno-Karabakh

This module looks at the circumstances surrounding the de facto separation of Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan in the early 1990s.

Required readings:


Recommended readings:


Week 6 (13/2): Reading week

Week 7 (20/2): Domestic politics of de facto states

This module examines the domestic factors that allow de facto states to survive.

Required readings:

Recommended readings:


**Week 8 (28/2)**: *Foreign relations of de facto states*

This module investigates the processes through which de facto states aim to attain international legitimacy as well as the efforts that parent states undertake to delegitimize the breakaway entities on the international arena.

**Required readings:**


*Please note that this class meets on a Tuesday.

Recommended readings:


Week 9 (6/3): De facto statehood and fragmentation of authority in the international system

This module discusses how de facto states challenge the structure of authority in the contemporary international system.

Required readings:

Recommended readings:


Week 10 (13/3): De facto states in Eastern Ukraine: People’s Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk

This module examines the circumstances surrounding the emergence of the ‘youngest’ de facto states in the post-Soviet space: People’s Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk.

Required readings:

- Weaver, C. 2014. Ukraine’s Rebel Republics. *The Financial Times*. Available at: [http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/9f27da90-7b3f-11e4-87d4-00144feabde0.html](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/9f27da90-7b3f-11e4-87d4-00144feabde0.html)

Recommended readings:

Week 11 (20/3): The future of de facto states

This module analyses the future of de facto states in an international system that remains adverse to nonstate territorial actors.

Required readings:


Recommended readings:


