Scope and Objectives of the Course

This seminar will examine comparatively the experience of states undergoing rapid economic, political, social and environmental change since the collapse of the Soviet Union. It will provide an interdisciplinary analysis of the progress made and challenges faced in post-socialist era Europe, Russia, and the Eurasian successor republics to the former Soviet Union. As such, it will examine the philosophical debates underlying international trade and business trends and policy, economic development and reform efforts, and the evolution of political and economic institutions. It will also examine the feasibility of alternative policy strategies in a changing and increasingly interdependent global economy. An important focus will be on the comparative analysis of natural resource challenges and conflicts, particularly as they relate to the energy-water nexus in Eurasia.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. For countries that face the challenge of “transition” both to democracy and a market economy, is there evidence of a superior strategy for the timing/sequencing of economic and political initiatives?

2. What is missing in the current debates on economic transition? Is there a “third way” or steady state/low growth option yet to be fully defined? Do the proponents and critics of market forces and state intervention alternatives (along with empirical studies of impact) offer prospects for fresh theoretical and policy development? Is rapid economic growth the only viable goal? Is globalization stalled?

3. Has the environmental degradation in post-Communist regimes threatened the “carrying capacity” of key countries and regions?
4. Is there validity in the proposition that resource rich countries mostly fall prey to a “resource curse”?  

5. Does global climate change threaten to exacerbate the environmental stress thus far experienced in Eurasian transition countries?  

6. Is there growing prospect for international conflict over increasingly scarce natural resources?  

7. Are there emerging technological solutions to some of the key environmental and resource challenges facing transition countries?  

Course Requirements:  

1. Each student in the seminar will be required to write a substantial research paper of at least 30 pages in length (typed and double spaced) and to give an oral presentation of his or her findings when the topic is discussed by the members of the seminar. The topic for the research paper will be selected, in consultation with the instructor, in line with the key questions above, for transition countries in Eastern Europe and Eurasia. In most instances, the papers will focus on one of the following country cases:  

   “Transition” states among the Successor Republics to the Former Soviet Union in Eurasia/Central Asia  
   (e.g., Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan)  

   “Transition” States in Eastern, Central and Southeast Europe  
   (e.g., Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech. Rep., Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia)  

   A brief description of the proposed research will be due on February 11, and a preliminary outline and bibliography of proposed sources for the paper is due on or before February 25. The final paper will be due on or before the last day of class, April 28.  

   An oral presentation of the preliminary findings of each paper must be made to the seminar in conjunction with the scheduled examination of the relevant topic below. Each presentation should be approximately 20-30 minutes in length to permit both full consideration of the paper's argument and adequate discussion by the seminar of assumptions, evidence and implications. Each student should prepare a written summary and outline of the presentation for distribution to all members of the seminar at the session prior to the session of the scheduled presentation. This summary should include a clear statement of the student's thesis and any supporting or background quantitative data. A prize will be awarded to the best presentation made to the seminar, based on a vote of its members.  

2. Students are expected to participate in class discussion of the topics listed on the syllabus, basing their participation on the assigned readings. As a consequence, reading
assignments must be completed prior to the class session for which they are listed. Each student will have at least two opportunities to serve as a formal discussant during the Seminar. Normally this will involve a "critical" response to an oral presentation made by a fellow student on his or her research paper (see above), but it might also involve an initial presentation and critique of readings for a session during the first half of the Seminar.

Students are asked to acquire the following books. As the attached assignments indicate, they will be read in their entirety:


Recommended Reading:

Daly, Herman, Beyond Growth: The Economics of Sustainable Development. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996; or

Jackson, Tim, Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet. London: Earthscan, 2009; or

Dietz, Rob and Dan O’Neill, Enough is Enough: Building A Sustainable Economy in A World of Finite Resources. San Francisco: Berrett-Koekler Publishers, 2013; or


In addition, a modest selection of articles and book chapters will be placed ON RESERVE or posted on the course Desire2Learn Website. Students are also asked to read a major newspaper with substantial international business and economic reporting daily. The first few minutes of each class will be devoted to breaking news relevant to economic and political trends in Southeastern Europe and Central Asia in particular, and to the course of democratization, economic liberalization and environmental rehabilitation/degradation more generally. The New York Times is available free daily at two prominent distribution points on the 3rd floor of Case Hall; The Wall Street Journal and a variety of foreign and domestic alternatives are available in the MSU Library, numerous bookshops and on the internet.

Recommended Readings:


3. Each student is also required to write three analytical book critiques, focusing in large part on the main texts for the course, but also making reference to some of the list of recommended texts above. These critiques should be at least 5 typed, double spaced pages each; they should summarize the major arguments of the book in about 2 pages and critically evaluate it in the remaining 3 pages with comparative references to at least one additional text each. The critiques are due on the final day that the book in question is covered in class, as indicated below on the reading assignments.

Determinants of Grades:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>- 40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Critique No. 1</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Critique No. 2</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Critique No. 3</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
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<td>(best 3 out of 4 opportunities)</td>
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<td>Classroom Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>As a Formal Discussant</td>
<td>- 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classical Trade Theory Quiz</td>
<td>- 5%</td>
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If class participation and the book critiques are adequate, there will be no final examination. As noted on the assignment list below, however, I am holding the final exam period available for an examination if one proves necessary. The grade on this exam will then replace a large portion of the participation grade at minimum. **Also, you are expected to participate actively in class discussion in a collegial manner. Class participation is measured by the frequency and quality of your thoughtful contributions to class discussion. You may use a laptop computer during class for class-related purposes only. Using computers or any other electronic devices for purposes not related to class (e.g. checking emails, Facebook, etc) will result in a significant reduction in your participation grade. If the problem persists, I will ban the use of computers in the classroom.**

Honors Credit:

Students enrolled in MC 492 may receive honors credit for the course. To receive honors credit, a student must complete an additional paper assignment selected in consultation with the instructor. Examples of an acceptable assignment would include: 1) a brief assessment/policy position paper regarding the role of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) in supporting economic transition and sustainable development; 2) an assessment of the impact of foreign assistance by a major donor country to a transition country; 3) an essay evaluating the merits of the resource curse argument with reference to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, or Turkmenistan.
No student whose cumulative grade is less than 3.5 in MC 492 will be eligible for honors credit.  

Academic Honesty:

MC 492 will be conducted according to the college's policies on academic honesty/dishonesty. If you need clarification on these policies, please speak with the instructor or the College's Director of Academic Affairs. Do keep in mind that “The Faculty Assembled (of James Madison College) recommend that in cases involving proven academic dishonesty, the student should receive, as a minimum, a 0.0 in the course and that a record of the circumstances, sanctions, and any appeal, be placed in the student’s confidential file.”

Topics and Assignments:

I. Introduction and Overview

1: January 12 - Course Introduction

   Required Reading: review MC 220, MC 221 and EC 340 notes
   Forewards to Jackson, Prosperity without Growth (pp. xi-xx)
   (on Angel and D2L course websites)

II. Theories, Perspectives and Ideologies

2: January 14 - Review of Mercantilism vs. Economic Liberalism

   Required Reading:
   Tomas M. Hult, David Gloss and David Frayer, Global Supply Chain Management, pp. 1-31

   Discussant________________

3: January 19 – How does the world economy work?

   Required Reading:
   Hult, pp. 33-68

   Discussant________________

CLASSICAL TRADE THEORY QUIZ DUE
4: January 21 – Global Supply Chain Infrastructure

Required Reading:
Hult, pp. 69-110

Discussant___________________

5: January 26 -  Logistics in Global Supply Chains

Required Reading:
Hult, pp. 111-140

Discussant:________________________

6: January 28 - Purchasing in Global Supply Chains

Required Reading:
Hult, pp. 141-168

Discussant________________________

7:  February 2 - Operations in Global Supply Chains

Required Reading:
Hult, pp. 169-193

Discussant________________________

8. Feb. 4 -- Assessing Global Supply Chain Management

Required Reading:
Hult, pp. 195-242

Discussant________________________
9. February 9 – How Much is Enough?

Required Reading:
- Oreskes, Naomi, and Erik Conway, The Collapse of Western Civilization: A View from the Future, Ch. 1
- Wagner, Gernot and Martin L. Weitzman, Climate Shock: The Economic Consequences of a Hotter Planet, Ch. 1&2

Recommended Reading:
- Rob Dietz and Dan O’Neill, Enough is Enough: Building A Sustainable Economy in a World of Finite Resources, pp. 3-55 (or Daly, Jackson, or Higgs)

Discussant____________________

HULT BOOK CRITIQUE DUE

10: February 11 – Strategies of Enough, Part 1

Required Reading:
- Oreskes and Conway, Ch. 2
- Wagner and Weitzman, Ch. 3&4

Recommended Reading:
- Dietz and O’Neill, pp. 59-97
  (or Daly, Jackson, or Higgs)

Discussant____________________

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED RESEARCH DUE

11: February 16– Strategies of Enough, Part 2

Required Reading:
- Oreskes and Conway, Ch. 3
- Wagner and Weitzman, Ch 5&6

Recommended Reading:
- Dietz and O’Neill, pp. 99-153
  (or Daly, or Jackson, or Higgs)

Discussant____________________

Library Visit – Orientation to Sources and Research Strategies
  Meet at Basement Instruction Room, Main Library
11: February 18 – Advancing the Economy of Enough

Required Reading:
- Oreskes and Conway, Epilogue
- Wagner and Weitzman, Ch. 7 and Epilogue

Recommended Reading:
- Dietz and O’Neill, pp. 157-206
- (or Daly, or Jackson, or Higgs)

Discussant_____________________

12: February 23– Climate Change and Conflict

Required Reading:
- James R. Lee, Climate Change and Armed Conflict, pp. 1-23
  (posted on Desire2Learn)

Discussant_____________________

ORESKES/CONWAY & WAGNER/WEITZMAN (OR OTHER) BOOK CRITIQUE DUE

13: February 25 -- Is there a Resource Curse?

Required Reading:
- Mehmet Gurses. “State-sponsored Development, Oil and Democratization.” Democratization. 16: 3 (June 2009) 508-29 (on D2L)

Recommended Reading:
- Humphreys, Macartan, Jeffrey D. Sachs & Joseph E. Stiglitz, eds. Escaping the Resource Curse.
- Pauline Jones Luong and Erika Weinthal, Oil is Not a Curse

Discussant_____________________

PRELIMINARY OUTLINE AND BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR RESEARCH PAPER DUE
14. March 1 – Driven to Depletion -- Earth Wars?

Required Reading:
Klare, Michael, The Race for What’s Left: The Global Scramble for the World’s Last Resources, Ch. 1

Recommended Reading:
Hiscock, Earth Wars, Ch. 1 and 2

Discussant_______________________________

15: March 3 – Offshore Oil and Gas

Required Reading:
Klare, Ch. 2

Recommended Reading:
Hiscock, Ch. 3 and 4

Discussant_______________________________

SPRING BREAK - March 7-11

16: March 15 – The War for Energy – Invading the Arctic

Required Reading:
Klare, Ch. 3

Recommended Reading:
Hiscock, Ch. 5-8

Discussant_______________________________

17: March 17 - Tar Sands, Shale Gas, and Other Unconventional Hydrocarbons

Required Reading:
Klare, Ch. 4

Recommended Reading:
Hiscock, Ch. 9 and 10

Discussant_______________________________

18: March 22 – Mining and Rare Raw Materials

Required Reading:
Klare, Ch. 5 and 6

Recommended Reading:
Hiscock, Ch. 11-13

Discussant_______________________________
19: March 24 – Land Grabs and The Future of Earth Wars

Required Reading:
   Klare, Ch. 7 and 8
Recommended Reading:
   Hiscock, Ch. 14 and 15

Paper:
Discussant______________________________

KLARE BOOK CRITIQUE DUE

20: March 29 - The Water-Food-Energy-Climate Nexus

Required Reading:
   Brahma Chellaney, Water, Peace, and War, pp. xi-57
Recommended Reading:
   World Economic Forum, Water Security: The Water-Food-
   Energy-Climate Nexus, Intro and Ch. 1

Paper:
Discussant______________________________

21: March 31 – Water and Energy

Required Reading:
   Chellaney, War, Peace, and War, pp. 59-118.
Recommended Reading:
   WEF, Ch. 2 and 3

Paper:
Discussant______________________________

Paper:
Discussant______________________________

22: April 5 -- National Security, Cities and People

Required Reading:
   Chellaney, War, Peace, and War, pp. 119-174.
Recommended Reading:
   WEF, Ch. 4-6

Paper:
Discussant______________________________
23: April 7 - Business and Finance
   Required Reading:
       Chellaney, War, Peace, and War, pp. 175-242.
   Recommended Reading:
       WEF, Ch. 7 -9

   Paper:
       Discussant________________________________________

24: April 12 - The Way Forward
   Required Reading:
       Chellaney, War, Peace, and War, pp. 243-300.
   Recommended Reading:
       WEF, Ch 10 and 11

   Paper: 
       Discussant________
   Paper: 
       Discussant_______________________

CHELLANEY BOOK CRITIQUE DUE

25: April 14 – Energy/Water Conflict in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

   Paper: 
       Discussant ______

   Required Reading:

26: April 19 – Pollution of the Great River Systems of Russia and Eurasia
   Required Reading:

   **Paper:**

   Discussant ___________

27: April 21 – The Role of China
   Required Reading:
      China’s Policies and Actions for Addressing Climate Change. 
      Beijing. November 2011.  (On Angel)

   **Paper:**

   Discussant______________________________

28: April 26 – The Role of India
   Required Reading:
      Selections from K.J. Joy, ed. Water Conflicts in India: A 
      Million Revolts in the Making.  (on Angel)

   **Paper:**

   Discussant__________

29: April 28 - Summary and Conclusion
   Required Reading:

   **RESEARCH PAPERS DUE**

   **FINAL EXAMINATION** – Mon. May 2, 12:45-2:45pm