

# **Undergraduate Program in Central European Studies**

CERGE-EI and the School of Humanities at Charles University

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## **CZECH-SLOVAK RELATIONS**

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### **OUTLINE OF THE COURSE:**

The course aims at a detailed exploration of complicated relations Czech and Slovak nations underwent in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. From difficult ways of finding allies in Austro-Hungarian Empire through to pre-war arrangements that would lead to the foundation of the first republic up to the split of both republics in 1993 we will explore what unites and distances the only two nations in the Eastern and Central Europe that were able to find a common path, walk along it and finally divide without a mildest form of violence or animosity. The course, while building on historical data and documents, is not a real history course. Rather, it offers intellectual and cultural background to the union, its progress and decay.

The course should also shed light on how Czechoslovakia differed from other Central European countries, what made it a leading democracy and economic power in 20s and 30s of the last century, a collaborator during the WWII and the target of a communist experiment after the war. Importantly, we will also follow a gradual unfolding of emancipation tendencies of Slovak nation that, according to majority opinion, ultimately led to the devolution. However, challenges to this view will also be considered and critical views of these tendencies fully assessed. On the way from the conception of the idea of Czecho-slovak proximity to the common existence as two independent states in the unified Europe, we will not only confront political speeches and actions, but will also observe cultural exchanges between two nations, economic integration, handling of minorities and the social welfare of citizens. At the same time, we will carefully evaluate the prospect of the Czecho-slovak project at each stage of its development and confront it with situation in surrounding countries. The course should attempt to answer the question how successful and why this (un)finished project was.

## **GRADING POLICY:**

Assignments for this course consist of a midterm (25% of the grade) and the final exam (25%), the research paper (30%) and your class participation (20%). As for the exams, midterm will be an in-class essay, the final is a special format home-take. Both are covering topic discussed during the term. Research paper should present your original approach to a topic of your choice, but your choice requires a prior approval of the instructor. You have time till the mid-term to choose the topic and the instructor will be glad to discuss all the details and even help you to search out for the relevant literature. The paper is due to the last day of the term.

You are expected to attend all classes. If you are about to miss a class, prior e-mail notification is expected, but generally no more than one absence is tolerated. Because intellectual history can't be learnt passively, but only by reevaluation and a critical discussion of your own opinions, active participation is highly desirable and students might be asked to express themselves.

The final paper should be approximately eight to ten pages long (min. 10 000 characters without space) , double-spaced. It is crucial that you submit your final paper on time; a penalty for late submission will be assessed at 10% of the paper grade per day past due. Needless to say, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

## **REQUIRED READINGS:**

COURSE PACKET contains all reading required reading material and some additional resources

Available on-line via the CERGE-EI web site at [HTTP://www.cerge-ei.cz/upces\\_data/](http://www.cerge-ei.cz/upces_data/) [Log-in is **upces** and password is **spring2002**]; hard copies are available in the CERGE-EI and Jinonice libraries].

## **WEEK:**

## **TOPICS:**

- 1 Opening class**
- 2 Prehistory of Czechs and Slovaks**
- 3 National awakening and the search for common roots**
- 4 Steps toward the statehood**
- 5 The first republic**
- 6 Mid-term exam**
- 7 WWII and post-war years**
- 8 The life under communism**
- 9 Federation and liberalization**
- 10 The Split**
- 11 Czech and Slovak relations today**
- 12 Final exam due and good bye**

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

- J. Prochazka, Bohemia's claim for freedom, London, 1945  
L.Brackett, Democracy in Czechoslovakia, London, 1944  
V. Clementis, Panslavism, Past and Present, London 1943  
R.W. Seton-Watson, Slovakia Then and Now, London 1931