



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

Course Name:	Anthropology of Czech Society and Culture
Course Number:	ANTH 3001 PRAG
Programs offering course:	CES, CNMJ
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

Up to 1989, several Central and Eastern European countries belonging to the former socialist bloc had essentially the same political and economic system. These countries have since undergone what is perceived as a transformation from a totalitarian political system to democratic pluralism and from centrally planned economy to market economy. Nevertheless, there are considerable differences between the ways the transformation occurred in each of these countries. Following the work of L. Holy, among other scholars, we will investigate the specific ways in which Czech cultural meanings (in particular, the culturally constructed notion of the Czech identity/ies) affected life during communism, the Velvet Revolution in November 1989, and the political and economic transformation into a new social system. This course aims to introduce the historical as well as the contemporary issues of Czech society and culture from an anthropological perspective. Based on several ethnographic case studies, among other literary and visual sources, we will make connections between memory and history, narrative and experiences, change and continuity, the past and the present.

Learning Objectives

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

- recognize, describe, and analyze the most important events, symbols, and personalities in Czech history
- demonstrate how myths, symbols, and traditions make the identification of people as members of the Czech nation possible and how they create national consciousness
- describe the characteristics of life under the socialist system in the former Czechoslovakia, and explain how this system transformed into its present-day form and what kind of anthropological research it stimulated and why
- explain the recent changes that have taken place in Czech society and culture in relation to the process of Europeanization and globalization (traditions, consuming habits, food, family structure, the media, gender roles)
- analyze the construction and current situation of minority groups in the ethnically diverse social space of the Czech Republic



- compare/contrast the dilemmas of nationalism and emigration in life narratives of Czech emigrants.

Course Prerequisites

This course is open to anyone interested in Central Europe and its transitions.

Methods of Instruction

In addition to lectures, classes will include discussion stimulating critical thinking, and individual and group work depending on the topic. Classes will employ different material, such as academic readings, recent news relevant to the topic of the week, images, and short documentaries, and class excursions and guest teachers to contribute to experiential learning.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Home Preparation and Class Participation: 20%
2. Short Presentation based on Reading: 10%
3. Midterm exam: 25%
4. Final Oral Presentation: 15%
5. Research Essay: 30%

Course Requirements

Home preparation and participation: this will be crucial to both the student's success and the success of the class. Students are required to read the assigned texts prior to each class. Each class will begin with either questions about or summaries of the texts. Each week a student will have to prepare a short presentation on one assigned reading. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions through comments, questions, and answers.

CIEE Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.



Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor. If missing a class, the student is expected to catch up on the class content and to submit well-reflected and in-depth contributions to Canvas discussions on the particular topic or reflections to the instructor to ensure that his/her absence from the class will not significantly affect his/her participation grade. Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

Midterm Exam: An exam of one hour and a half where the student will have to choose two questions out of three. Each question will count for 50% and will be based on the material covered from week one to week five.

Final Research Essay: Each student will work on a research essay (3,000 words in length) from week six to the end of the course. The student will chose a topic related to the content of the course and seek an approval from the professor. The professor will be happy to help students during their work on the final research essay, supplying academic advice, help with the selection of sources, and methodology. This final essay will demonstrate the student's ability to interpret a topic of their choice, ask relevant questions, and defend their stance regarding the topic to the class.

Final oral presentation: On the last day of classes, students will have a 10-minute oral presentation in order to share details of their research essay with the rest of the class. During the presentation, the student has to be able to defend his/her project and be ready to answer any question from the professor related to the work done.

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and **all absences are treated equally regardless of reason** for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

Missing classes will lead to the following penalties:

90-minute semester classes:

<i>Number of 90-minute classes</i>	<i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i>	<i>Minimum penalty</i>
one to two 90-minute classes	up to 10%	no penalty



three 90-minute classes	10.1–15%	reduction of the final grade by 3%
four 90-minute classes	15.1–17%	reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning
five 90-minute classes	17.1–20%	reduction of the final grade by 7%; written warning
six and more 90-minute classes	more than 20%	automatic course failure and possible expulsion

180-minute semester classes:

<i>Number of 180-minute classes</i>	<i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i>	<i>Minimum penalty</i>
one 180-minute class	up to 10%	no penalty
two 180-minute classes	10.1–20%	reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning
three and more 180-minute classes	more than 20%	automatic course failure and possible expulsion

Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student’s home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

Missing more than 20% of the total class hours will lead to a **course failure**, and **potential program dismissal**. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

Late arrival to class will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. **Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.**

Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student’s presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, **make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances**, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor’s note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor’s notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however **the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.**



Should a truly **extraordinary situation** arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. **Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.**

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.

For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), **always contact the Academic Assistant** to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. **Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records.** In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant **within one week of the discrepancy date** to have it corrected. Later claims **will not** be considered.

CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are related to the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one's own.

The first principle is that final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an "open book" basis).

The second principle applies specifically to course work: the same written paper may not be submitted in two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.

The third principle is that any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another's work or including information told to



you by another person. The general rule is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Weekly Schedule

<p>Week 1</p>	<p>Introduction to the Czech Republic Class I: Geographical, cultural and historical overview of the “Czech lands” since its origins to the present</p> <p>Class II: What does it means to be Czech?</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> - Holy (1999), 54-71</p>
<p>Week 2</p>	<p>Myth and Symbols Class I: The importance of myth, traditions and symbols in the creation of national Czech consciousness throughout history: past and present.</p> <p>Class II: Special focus on the 100 anniversary of the birth of Czechoslovakia</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> - Holy (1999), 33-54 - Hobswann and Range (1992), 263-309.</p>
<p>Week 3</p>	<p>The legacy of socialism. Collective memories& life stories Class I: Explore the relation between autobiography and the history of the Czech nation. What defined the Socialist system? How was this system transformed into its present-day form? And, what anthropological research has it stimulated?</p> <p>Class II: Field trip to the National Gallery in Prague (Trade Fair Palace in Holesovice). Koudelka: Invasion 1968 Topic discussion: Museums and exhibitions as sites of memory in contemporary European societies and nation building.</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Haukanes (2005), 160-169 - Halbwachs (1992), 1-20
Week 4	<p>Democracy and the political process</p> <p>Class I: The construction of Czech citizenship in the new state.</p> <p>Class II: Explore the dynamics of the notion of “citizenship” in Czech Republic from a totalitarian system to a democratic one.</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Palous (1995), 141-164
Week 5	<p>Family & State</p> <p>Class I: The important role of family relations in the maintenance of socialist system and in the revival of civil society in the 1980s.</p> <p>Class II: Analysis of family histories.</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - True (2003), 55-73. - Nash (2005), 53-63
Week 6 Midterm Exam Period	<p>Class I</p> <p>Review for the exam. Please, bring any questions. Doc. <i>Marcela</i> by Helena Trestiková, 2007. (Analysis of the first 25 m)</p> <p>Class II: Midterm Exam</p>
Week 7 Midterm Exam Period	<p>Property and housing</p> <p>Class I: Explore some of the strategies that have been used by families in order to maintain properties and housing in post-socialist system.</p> <p>Class II: Analysis of different case studies in the city of Prague.</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Šmídová (2000), 89-123.
Week 8	<p>Globalization & mass consumption</p> <p>Class I: Explore the role of culture industries, especially American popular culture in global capitalism.</p>

	<p>Class II: We will see how patterns of consuming and daily habits are changing in Czech society.</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> True (2003), 103-117</p>
Week 9	<p>Food, consumption and health</p> <p>Class I: Food in historical and cultural context and as symbol of national Czech identity.</p> <p>Class II: Analysis of case studies (rural & urban)</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> - Haukanes (2003), 77-82</p>
Week 10	<p>Change and Gender in the Workplace</p> <p>Class I: Monday, November 26 12:15 - 13:45 Jan Hornát: "1918, 1938, 1948 & 1968: Significant "Eights" in Czech History and their Reflection in the US" (instead of the regular Monday class)</p> <p>Class II: Explore some of the changes that have impacted women in the workplace. Case study: ethnographic fieldwork that took place in the city of Brno in 2002-2003</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> -Passmore (2005), 114-124 - Večerník (2006), 1219-1240</p>
Week 11	<p>Mass Media and Shared Culture</p> <p>Class I: Monday: Film-doc analysis: Český sen by Vít Klusák and Filip Remunda, Prague, 2004</p> <p>Class II: Mass media (television, radio and the press) as the main means of communication of shared Czech culture.</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> -True (2003), 117-130.</p>
Week 12	<p>Minority Groups in the Czech Society</p>

	<p>Class I: Explore the formation of social identity of minority groups in the ethnically diverse social space of the Czech Republic. Special attention to the Roma case.</p> <p>Class II: Guest lecturer. L. Kopecká: “Russian minority in the Czech Republic”</p> <p><u>Required reading:</u> - Szaló and Hamar (2006), 245-265.</p> <p>Research Essay due.</p>
Final Exam Week	<p>Class I: Concluding remarks & Oral presentations</p> <p>Required reading: - Havel, Vaclav <i>The Power of the Powerless</i></p> <p>Class II Oral presentations.</p>

Course Materials

Dragovic, J. (1995). *Citizenship East and West*. Kegan Paul International, Geneva.

Haukanes, H. (2003). “Ambivalent Traditions: Transforming Gender Symbols and Food Practices in the Czech Republic,” *Anthropology of East Europe*, 21, 77-82

Havel, V (1985). *The Power of the Powerless*. Routledge.

Hobswann, E and Range, T. (1992) *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press, 263-309.

Holy, L (1999). *The Little Czech and the Great Czech Nation. National Identity and the Post-Communist Social Transformation*. Cambridge University Press

Nash, R (2005). “Old Entitlements and New Dependencies. Family versus State in the Czech Republic” *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 53-63.

Palouš, M. (1995). “Questions of Czech Citizenship” in A. Liebich, D. Warnier and Dragovic, J. *Citizenship East and West*. Geneva: Kegan Paul International, 141-164.

Passmore, B. H. (2005). “Same People, Same System: Change and Continuity in a Moravian Toy Factory.” *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 114-124.

Sirovátka, T et al. (2006). *The Challenges of Social Inclusion. Minorities and Marginalised Groups in Czech Society*. Barrister&Principal.



Šmídová, O. (2000). "Housing Stories: Family Strategies Related to the Property Maintenance and Transfer" in *Our Lives as Database. Doing a Sociology of Ourselves: Czech Social Transitions in Autobiographical Research Dialogues*. Prague: Charles University in Prague, 89-123.

True, J. (2003). *Gender, Globalization, and Postsocialism. The Czech Republic after Communism*. Columbia University Press.

Vecernik, J (2006). "Work Values and Job Attitudes in the CZ". *Czech Sociological Review*, 1219-1240.

In addition to the above readings, the following ones are also highly recommended:

Agnew, H. (2004). *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown*. Hoover Press.

Kolarová, K & Sokolová V. (2007). *Gender & Generation*. Prague: Litteraria Pragensia.