



**Prague, Czech Republic  
Study Center**

**Course Syllabus**

<b>Course Title:</b>	American Media's Impact on Post-Communist Czech Media
<b>Course Code:</b>	COMM 3004 PRAG
<b>Programs offering course:</b>	CES, CNMJ
<b>Language of instruction:</b>	English
<b>U.S. Semester Credits:</b>	3
<b>Contact Hours:</b>	45
<b>Term:</b>	Summer 2018
<b>Session:</b>	Session 3 (July 16 – August 12)

**Course Description**

This course will examine American cultural influence on European culture and how this developed after the end of World War II in Western Europe, and after 1989 in Central Europe. Special attention will be paid to the influence of American culture, specifically the American media model, on media in the Czech Republic after the fall of communism in 1989. The course will in this context focus on all aspects of the media, presenting specific examples. The course will also briefly cover the subject of life under communism in order to understand the contrast between the East and the West in Europe. Through studying literature, watching (parts of) films and documentaries and news items in both the United States and Europe, students will be challenged to answer questions such as:

- In what ways does American culture influence countries in Europe? Do we, in this context, speak of Americanization, American Imperialism, globalization or creolization?
- What falls under the definition of the American Media Model?
- How was American cultural influence tangible during communism?
- Has the American media model influenced the development of the media in the Czech Republic?
- Is (Central) European identity in danger because of the American influence?
- Is this a one-way influence, or is the American media influenced by European factors as well?

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students will have achieved the following:

- They will be able to understand and articulate American cultural influence in Europe, specifically in Central Europe after 1989.
- They will be able to demonstrate their knowledge about both the American and Czech media based on the literature they studied and the examples they have seen and discussed in class. And apply this knowledge in their own research for the course.



- They will be able to show and explain, in class discussions and in their work, the difference between the media in these two countries and the way this influences the way the news and facts are presented in both countries.
- They will be able to classify the news differently.

### **Course Prerequisites**

There are no formal prerequisites, however, students should be interested in the concept of American cultural influence, national identity and different ways news is presented based on cultural and historical backgrounds, and the importance of this.

### **Methods of Instruction**

The Summer School of this course will be informal and interactive, with a heavy emphasis on class participation and discussions. The material will be presented in class in the form of in class readings or short introductory presentations, followed by class discussions. There will also be field trips and in class showings of documentaries and movies.

### **Assessment and Final Grade**

1. Class participation: 20%
2. Homework/assignments: 15%
3. Group presentation: 20%
4. Short Essay: 20%
5. Final paper: 25%

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Participation**

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.



**Group presentation:** working in small groups (maximum of three persons), students will analyze and characterize the American media by studying the literature they have received up until that point, plus material (these can also be examples from the media) they gathered themselves, and create an American Media Model. The characteristics should be described during a 15- to- 20-minute presentation. Every person of the group is required to participate in the presentation.

**Short Essay:** students will write a short essay (750 words) describing Americanization in Europe and their views of this. Students are required to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the material covered in the course up until that point and present very clear views that are supported by class material.

**Final paper:** In 2000 words, students will discuss the impact of American Media is on Post-Communist Czech media and expand on whether they believe that the identity of the Czech media is in danger because of American influence. They should examine the extent of the American cultural influence and then describe the identity of the Czech media. They will be encouraged to express their own ideas and findings, based on the knowledge that they gained in this course.

### **CIEE Prague Class Participation Policy**

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Participation is valued as **meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom**, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. 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. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared, as directed, in advance of each class session. This includes valued or informed engagement in, for example, small group discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

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.

### **CIEE Prague Attendance Policy**

CIEE Prague attendance policy corresponds to that delineated in the participant contract. Specific details will be published in the semester syllabus.



**CIEE Academic Honesty Statement**

Presenting work of another person as one’s own, failure to acknowledge all sources used, using unauthorized assistance on exams, submitting the same paper in two classes, or submitting work one has already received credit for at another institution in order to fulfill CIEE course requirements is not tolerated. The penalty ranges from failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director should be consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

**Daily Schedule**

Day 1	<p>Introduction of the course. American Cultural Influence in Western Europe after 1945.</p> <p>Richard Pells “Not Like Us”; Chapter Six: “Transatlantic Misunderstandings: European Views of America”</p> <p>Documentary: ‘The Cola Conquest Part II’ Followed by in class assignment and discussion</p>
Day 2	<p>The American Media: characteristics</p> <p>Richard Pells “Not Like Us”; Chapter Eight: “Mass Culture: The American Transmission”, p. 204-212</p> <p>In class discussion followed by an assignment</p>
Day 3	<p>Group Presentations</p> <p>Followed by in class discussion about national identity</p>
Day 4	<p>Reading: Rob Kroes “If You’ve Seen One, You’ve Seen the Mall”; Chapter Nine: “Americanization, What Are We Talking About”</p> <p>Class discussion about the reading + written assignment</p>
Day 5	<p>Discussion about the essays.</p> <p>Introduction to life under communism. Short presentation plus part of documentary</p>
Day 6	<p>Visit to the Museum of Communism</p>
Day 7	<p>Showing of the movie ‘Goodbye Lenin’ or ‘Pelisky’</p> <p>Assignment followed by class discussion about the movie</p>
Day 8	<p>Introduction to Czechoslovakia after the Velvet Revolution</p> <p><b>Reading:</b> Robin Shepherd: “Czechoslovakia: the Velvet Revolution and Beyond”; Chapter Six: “Civilizing Society”</p>

	Plus: Characterizing the Czech media after 1989 <b>Reading:</b> Jakubowicz, K. "Post-Communist Media Development in Perspective" Written assignment + class discussion
Day 9	Visit to Radio Free Europe or Bloomberg News
Day 10	Analyzing the Czech Media  <b>Reading:</b> Jörg Becker "Between Censorship and Commercialization: Structural Changes in the Public Sphere in Eastern Europe"  Written assignment + class discussion  <i>Information about the final paper</i>
Day 11	Guest Lecture by Czech or Slovak journalist  <b>Reading:</b> Jan Culik "The Czech Media: A postcommunist model?"
Day 12	Wrap up class with discussion of the final papers and summary of the course.

### Course Materials

- Richard Pells, "Not Like Us"; Chapter Six: "Transatlantic Misunderstandings: European Views of America"
- Rob Kroes, "If You've Seen One, You've Seen the Mall"; Chapter Nine: "Americanization, What Are We Talking About"
- Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean, "American Cultural Studies: An Introduction to American Culture"; Chapter Ten: "The Transmission of America Culture"
- Jörg Becker, "Between Censorship and Commercialization: Structural Changes in the Public Sphere in Eastern Europe"
- Richard Pells, "Not Like Us"; Chapter Eight: "Mass Culture: The American Transmission", p. 204-212
- Jan Culik, "The Czech Media: A Post-Communist Model?"
- Jan Jiráček, Barbara Köpplová, "The Reality Show Called Democratization: Transformation of the Czech Media After 1989"
- K. Jakubowicz, "Post-Communist Media Development in Perspective"
- Angelika W. Wyka-Podkowka, "Twenty-Five Years after the Fall: From Communist Monopoly to Foreign Control over Local Owners: Media Ownership and Its Effects on Journalism in Central Europe"