Maxim Bratersky:
Post-Soviet Eurasia and SCO: Society, Politics, Integration (8 ECTS)

General course information:
This course is designed for students in the international Master’s program with concentrations in Political Science and International Relations. This mandatory course is taught in the second half of the academic year. The total lecture time for the course is 30 hours and 8 hours of seminars. The final evaluation will be based on the research project carried out by the student.

Prerequisites: The course does not have specific prerequisites though certain knowledge of Soviet History and International Relations, as well as Geography of Eurasia will be a plus.

The READING for the course is provided in a READER. Besides, some materials will be distributed via e-mail.

The class will meet twice a week. Typically, there will be structured discussions of the material covered in the corresponding section. Attendance and participation in the classes and discussion session are required.

Note: political developments in Eurasia are quite rapid, so that scholarly publications often don't catch up. Changes will be included only under the category recommended literature.

Course objectives:
To create a systematized conception of the current and future conditions of international relations in the post-soviet arena, to describe the external strategy of the main regional players, to analyze the dynamics of developments in the sub-regions of Eurasia, to analyze the most acute international political problems of the region.

Course goals:
As a result of study, the student should have:
- Knowledge: of goals and tasks of international relations in the eastern part of Eurasia from 1990 to the present; of the foreign policy strategies of the main players in the region.
- Ability: to use statistical data and academic, reference, and historical literature on the given theme to analyze conflicting situations in the region, foreign policy initiatives and economic interests of the main countries, and prospective future development of the region as a whole.
- Awareness: a conception of current problems facing the Asian part of the post-Soviet space and neighboring states, including those problems under discussion that call forth opposition among the main participants, and possible methods of their resolution.
- Skills: to critically evaluate analytical and scientific materials on the given issues.

Methods of evaluation:
a) Continuous: examination of students during the course of lectures; return to the given material;
b) Final: test (with account of previous observations and appearance in lectures as in seminars).

The student's independent work: assimilation of the theoretical material and information received in the course of the lectures, learning the works of domestic and foreign authors on the given problems, preparation for an essay on a chosen theme. The course concludes with an essay describing the results of students' research.

Final grade is calculated from grades for:
- Essay—0.7;
- Lecture attendance—0.3;

For each of the above aspects of evaluation the student receives, correspondingly, on a 10-point scale:
- For essay—0.7 x Q1;
- For lecture attendance—0.3 x Q2;

where Q1, Q2 are grades on a 10-point scale.

Course syllabus:

TOPIC 1 – THE CHANGING GEOPOLITICS OF POST-SOVIET EURASIA

Lecture 1 – Russia's Search for A New International Identity

Lecture 2 – The Rise of the New States and Their International Orientation
Lecture 3 (4) – American, European and Chinese Policies in Eurasia

Seminar 5– Prospects for the Post-Soviet Space

TOPIC 2 – THE EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL REGIMES

Lecture 6 – Whither the Russian Political System?

Lecture 7– Orange Revolutions and Post-Revolutionary Reaction: Georgia and Ukraine
Crisis of the neopatrimonial regimes. “Color revolutions” in the post-Soviet space – the “fourth wave of democratization”? The ups and downs of democracy in Russia: from electoral democracy to “managed democracy”. Post-revolutionary stabilization and development of a more balanced stance in domestic and foreign policy. The epoch of rationalism. Georgia’s unresolved destiny. The failure of nationalism in attempting to keep multi-ethnic states together.

Lecture 8 – How Solid Are the Authoritarian Regimes?

Lecture 9 – The Phenomenon of Unrecognized States
Seminar 10 – The Prospects for Democracy in the CIS States

TOPIC 3 – PATTERNS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Lecture 11 – Attempts at Economic Modernization and Its Obstacles

Lecture 12 – The Energy Factor in Eurasia: Domestic and International Dimensions

Lecture 13. The Caspian and Central Asia – Knots of Problems

Seminar 14 – Economic and Social Prospects for Russia and the New States

TOPIC 4. THE NATURE OF THE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

Lecture 15 – Russian/Soviet Strategic Culture(s) and Threat Perceptions

Lecture 16 – Ethnic Conflicts
trafficking and resource-based conflicts. Russian participation in conflict resolution under CIS auspices.

**Lecture 17 – Islamist Radicalism, Terrorism and Other New Threats**

**Lecture 18 – Russia and the States of Concern**

**Concluding Seminar 19 : The Future of Eurasia.**

**Finals**

**Suggested Research Topics:**
1. Security regimes in Eurasia.
2. Major problems facing Caspian countries.
3. Political order in the countries of Central Asia, their foreign policy strategies.
4. Goals of external players in the Caspian region.
5. Conflicts in the Caucasus.
6. Political perspectives of SCO.
7. Western part of Post-Soviet Space: Political vectors of Byelorussia and Ukraine.
8. Evolution of Russian – Chinese relations.
10. Eurasia in world politics.
12. Economic perspectives of SCO.
13. Iran in the policies of Eurasian nations.
14. Political aspects of energy transportation in Eurasia.
15. Policies of transportation corridors in Eurasia.