

Information list of a subject

University: Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts (BISLA)	
Faculty: BISLA	
Subject code P-324	Subject name: Capstone Course: Slovakia and the Others
<p>Type, scope, and method of educational activities: One weekly meetings of 120 minutes, amounting to 28 contact hours total in the form of a lecture and seminar.</p> <p>A capstone course is a core course that provides students in their final semester the opportunity to integrate their learning to help address issues a particular discipline or profession faces. Students will work in teams on topics related to identified challenges facing Slovakia and Central Europe, internally and in global context. Students will work with large databases of social, political, cultural, and economic data, learning to find relevant data and to interpret them to tell the story of the Slovak trajectory since 1989.</p>	
Number of credits: 4 ECTS	
Suggested semester: Final year of studies, Spring semester	
Level of studies: 1	
Conditional previous subjects: none	
<p>Requirements for the course:</p> <p>Course evaluation (%): A – excellent: 100-93%, B – very good: 92-84%, C – good: 83-74%, D – satisfactory: 73-63%, E – sufficient: 62-51%, Fx – fail: 50-0%.</p> <p>Passing the course assumes that student was not absent at more than 2 class sessions. Late arrival is marked as a “tardie”. Three tardies equal one absence. Missing more than 15 minutes of the class is considered an absence.</p> <p>Learning opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback from instructor, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o You will receive guidance and feedback from the instructor, particularly on data collection and interpretation, - Feedback from classmates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Team work is an important skill, requiring collaboration, flexibility, empathy, inclusion. You will be expected to evaluate the work of your colleagues. You will be expected to provide structured written feedback on the presentations made by your colleagues and in return, you will receive feedback from others. 	
<p>Learning outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to compare and contrast the political systems, social structures, and international relations of Slovakia with other countries in Central Europe and the European Union. • Identify and analyze the role of Slovakia within the broader context of Central Europe and the European Union, including its historical, cultural, and political significance. 	

- Evaluate the challenges and issues faced by Slovakia and the European Union in today's global context.
- Formulate well-reasoned arguments and opinions based on an advanced level of understanding of the key theories and concepts in political science, sociology, international relations, and philosophy.
- Apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios by analyzing and proposing potential solutions to contemporary political, social, and international issues.
- Construct well-structured and coherent written and oral presentations that effectively communicate complex ideas related to the fields covered in undergraduate studies at BISLA
- Develop skills of argumentation through in-class debates and leading discussion with experts from the field
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of political science, sociology, international relations, and philosophy, and their interconnectedness in addressing the challenges of today's society.
- Enhance analytical skills, problem-solving skills, and skill of team work through implementation of semester-long group projects
- Be able to locate data in large databases, interpret them, and utilize in written work and presentations.
- Social reality as a specific reality. Social reality and social sciences. Understanding social reality. Analysis and interpretation of data.

Brief outline of the course:

Week 1-2: Introduction, overview of the course

- Identification of key challenges facing our time by the class
- Overview of key relevant theories and concepts and literature
- Discussion on the relevance and importance of connecting theory with practice

Week 3-7: Challenges and Issues facing Slovak Republic and Central Europe

- Focus on Slovakia's political system, social structures, and international relations in light of the identified topics
- Comparison with other countries in Central Europe and the European Union
- Analysis of commonalities and differences

Week 8-11: Challenges and Issues in Today's Global Context

- Week 8: Reading Week
- ***Presentations of collected data***
- Examination of contemporary challenges faced by Slovakia and the European Union
- Discussion on the impact of globalization, technology, and socio-political changes

Week 12-14:

- In class debates
- Situating findings in theoretical frameworks acquired during the undergraduate studies

Week 15: *Final presentations of projects to the school audience*

Recommended readings:

- Timothy Snyder: On Tyranny, 21 Lessons for 21st Century
- Berger (Peter?)
- Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt: How Democracies Die (2020)
- Hans Rosling: Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World – and Why Things Are Better Than You Think (2018)
- András Bozóki: Rolling Transition and the Role of Intellectuals: The Case of Hungary (2022)
- Carlos Garcia Rivero: Democracy Fatigue, An East European Epidemy (2023)
- Peter Trawny: Krize pravdy (2023)
- Mansfield
- Hannah Arendt: Truth and Politics
- Official Reports on data sources

DATABASES

Democracy Index

Civic Society Index

Eurobarometer

Corruption Perception Index

Index of Public Integrity

Transparency Index

Corruption Risk Forecast

Polity Index

World Bank DataBank

Additional sources:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/DEMO_GIND__custom_7680622/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=edacacb0-acad-4876-859f-9549d766826b

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/statistical-themes>

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=GDP_per_capita,_consumption_per_capita_and_price_level_indices#Content

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/nama_10_pc/default/table?lang=en

<https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/06/energy-transition-index-top-countries-2024/>

<https://www.globsec.org/what-we-do/press-releases/globsecs-grid-transition-index-2024-netherlands-romania-and-poland-among>

<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/screen/home>

<https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/human-development-index#/indicies/HDI>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Human_Development_Index

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Economist_Democracy_Index

<https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores>

<https://www.idea.int/democracytracker/gsod-indices>

Language of the course: English

Notes:

Evaluation

- Stage 1 presentations – selecting relevant data, feedback for other presentations (individual) (15%)
- Stage 2 presentations (15%)
- Final Presentation of the research project (15%)
- Reflections of guest lectures and course readings (25%)
- Active and informed participation in class--Preparation for seminars, reading background materials, taking part in class activities and peer review (20%)

Total number of evaluated students:

A	B	C	D	E	FX
(percentage of students who got A)	(percentage of students who got B)	(percentage of students who got C)	(percentage of students who got D)	(percentage of students who got E)	(percentage of students who got FX)

Instructor: prof. Iveta Radičová

Date of the last change: 18.2.2025

Approved: doc. Samuel Abrahám