This course focuses on the concept of borderlands as it has been applied to modern Eastern European and Eurasian history. Scholars have used the term to describe the cultural, religious, and linguistic heterogeneity of the region, an inheritance of the empires that dominated the area up until the First World War. Other scholars focus on borderlands as spaces of violence, where nationalist rivalries are taken to extreme.

HIST 5306 will introduce students to the major theoretical debates and recent scholarship on borderlands in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, with an emphasis on how research methods and analytical frameworks might be applied to other geographical areas.

Course Goals

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity with recent scholarship in the field of borderland studies in Eastern Europe and Eurasia
- Convey a working knowledge of the central methodologies and analytical frameworks related to the topic
- Analyze "spatialized" social relationships created by borders and in borderlands
- Make comparisons to borderlands in other geographical and historical contexts
All required texts are available for purchase at the UTEP bookstore.


Course Requirements

All course requirements must be completed in order to pass the course.

Students are expected to attend all class meetings, do the course readings, and actively participate in class discussion. Students are permitted one absence over the course of the term. Subsequent absences will result in a reduction of your participation grade. If you anticipate having to miss more than one class, please meet with me. Chronic attendance problems may result in failure of the course.

We will begin each class meeting with a brief roundtable discussion, meaning that each of you should come prepared to speak for about two minutes on the day’s readings. Your comments should do one of the following: a) you can pose an analytical question that relates to the day’s reading; b) you can make a remark on something you found particularly significant, surprising, or confusing; c) you can make a connection between that day’s reading and something we discussed earlier in the semester.

During the semester, each of you will have a chance to lead discussion for the first half of the seminar. In anticipation, you will write a 250-500-word introduction to the day’s topic and readings, in which you map out some of the key questions and ideas the class should address. The introduction should be emailed to the seminar members at least 48 hours prior to the class meeting time.

The course is divided into four topics, from which you will choose two, and write a 5 to 7-page (1,500-2,000 words) essay on each. These are analytical/historiographical essays in which you will summarize and critique authors’ arguments and methodologies, discuss similarities and divergences in the scholarship, and/or consider the ways in which the frameworks and methodologies might be applied in another geographical context. In addition to the assigned readings, the topic response papers should incorporate an additional monograph on the topic. **Due dates:** Topic I: Feb. 24; Topic II: Mar. 23; Topic III: April 14; Topic IV: May 4

Students will research a borderland community in Eastern Europe/Eurasia and write a paper that describes the community (demographics, geography, economy, politics) and discusses a historical issue that has impacted that community. Papers should be 16 to 20 pages (4,000 to 5,000 words). Further details will be distributed later on in the semester. **Due date:** May 15
January 27 **Introductions: Eastern Europe as Borderland**


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**TOPIC I: BORDERLANDS & EMPIRE**

February 3 **Eastern European Variants of Imperialism**


February 10 **Imperial Expansion**


February 17 **Imperial Contraction**

**TOPIC II: NATIONAL IDENTITY & BORDERLANDS**

February 24 National Indifference


March 2 Everyday Ethnicity


March 9 Historiographical Approaches to National Identity


**TOPIC III: POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES & BORDERLANDS**

March 23 Borderlands or Bloodlands?


March 30 Internationalism and Borderlands


April 6 Fascism, Sexuality, and Borderlands

April 13 Relocating a Borderland


April 20 Environmental History in the Borderlands


April 27 Creating a Borderland


May 4 Memory and Belonging in the Borderlands