

PRAGUE: THE TRAGEDIES AND TRIUMPHS OF A CITY AND ITS PEOPLE

TRAVEL SEMINAR TO PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

OFF-CAMPUS STUDY & EXCHANGES



Prague: The Tragedies and Triumphs of a City and Its People is a 1-credit, 300-level travel seminar (TX 301) that will take students to Prague, Czech Republic, from May 19 to 29, 2014. It is the companion course to **GO 326 Coasts of Bohemia: The Politics and History of the Czech Lands and People**.

WHY PRAGUE?

As cultural historian Richard Burton argues, “No European city’s intellectual and artistic life—not even Paris’—has been so thoroughly political as that of Prague, and not just under Communism, but from the very birth of the so-called Czech national revival in the early nineteenth century.” The city offers itself as a witness to the trials and tribulations of the Czech people over many centuries.

Our stay in Prague will accentuate and deepen the knowledge gained during the required semester-long companion course, **GO 326 Coasts of Bohemia: The Politics and History of the Czech Lands and People**. We will visit historic sites such as the Prague Castle and the National Museum to grapple with questions of Czech national identity and to witness the rich and diverse cultural streams of the city—you will see memorials and buildings from every one of the periods of Czech history. We will also attend the theater and the opera, and absorb the city’s rich architectural heritage.

We will also immerse ourselves in Prague's turbulent 20th century—particularly its experience under Nazism and communism. We will visit Terezin, the site of a Nazi concentration camp just north of Prague, the headquarters of Radio Free Europe, and the Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes. You will hear firsthand accounts of Prague's recent past: We will take a walking tour of the city with a prominent former anti-communist dissident, hear lectures from former dissidents and Czech statesmen, and confront the difficult political and moral questions posed by life in a totalitarian regime.

Our stay in the Czech Republic will highlight Prague's fascinating and difficult political history and its deep cultural richness. One of the most remarkable cities in Europe will be brought to life by the experiences and expertise of some truly outstanding individuals, as well as appropriate analytical texts and artistic works.

PRELIMINARY TRAVEL SCHEDULE *(Subject to change)*

May 19 (Mon.)	Flight from NYC area airport to Prague, Czech Republic
May 20 (Tue.)	Arrival in Prague Check in at hotel Orientation and tour of neighborhood Group dinner
May 21 (Wed.)	"The Heart of Historic Prague, I" Morning: Walking tour of Charles Bridge and Lesser Town Afternoon: Walking tour of Old Town Square, including Jan Hus Memorial Evening: Opera performance at Estates Theatre (built in 1783)
May 22 (Thurs.)	"The Heart of Historic Prague, II" Morning: Walking tour of Prague Castle and St. Vitus Cathedral Afternoon: Group lunch at Hradčany, walking tour of Jewish Quarter, including Kafka's House, Maisel and Pinkas synagogue, Old-New synagogue Evening: Group dinner and theater performance
May 23 (Fri.)	"Literary Prague and Vyšehrad Tour" Morning: Conversations with Barbara Day, author of <i>The Velvet Philosophers</i> and Tomáš Vrba, New York University, Prague Afternoon: Vyšehrad Castle and Gardens Evening: Theater performance
May 24 (Sat.)	"Prague and the Holocaust" Morning and afternoon: Day excursion to Terezin concentration camp Evening: Free time
May 25 (Sun.)	"Communist Prague" Morning: Visit to Institute for the Study of Totalitarian Regimes, Adam Hradilek, Oral History Project Afternoon: Visit to Libri Prohibiti (Samizdat library and archive), Jiří Gruntorád and Barbara Day Evening: Group dinner and discussion with Barbara Day
May 26 (Mon.)	"Dissident Prague" Morning: Walking tour of "Dissident Prague" with Jan Sokol, Vice Dean for International Relations, Charles University and former dissident Afternoon: Lunch with Jan Sokol, Visit to the Václav Havel Library Evening: Group Dinner with Pavel Bratinka or Alena Hromádková (former dissidents and Charter 77 signatories)
May 27 (Tue.)	"A New Czech Republic in the EU" Morning: Visit to Radio Free Europe headquarters Afternoon: Visit to European Affairs Section of the Czech Government at Nábřeží E. Beneše 4 Evening: Talk with Martin Palouš, former Czech Ambassador to the United States and to the United Nations
May 28 (Wed.)	"Prague Panorama" Morning: Visit to the Museum of the City of Prague Afternoon: Free time Evening: Vltava River Cruise with Dinner
May 29 (Thurs.)	Flight from Prague to NYC-area airport

FACULTY DIRECTORS

Kate Graney is an associate professor of government and faculty advisor for the Model European Union club. A political scientist whose area studies training is in Russia and the former Soviet Union, Graney is currently at work on a book about the concept of "Europe" as it relates to the former communist states, including the former Czechoslovakia. As such, she is well acquainted with both the historical and ideological legacies that help to shape contemporary Czech politics. She has traveled widely in Russia and Europe.

Flagg Taylor is an associate professor of government. Taylor founded and continues to facilitate the annual Constitution Day lecture series for the Government Department. He is the editor of *The Great Lie: Classic and Recent Appraisals of Ideology and Totalitarianism* and is currently writing a book on Czech anti-communist dissidents. The current project has led to extensive travel to Prague.

REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites for GO 326 are either GO 103, IA 101, HI 104, HI 105, or HI 106.

Students wishing to enroll in TX 301 must be concurrently enrolled in GO 326.

COSTS

The anticipated fee for the travel seminar to Prague, Czech Republic is \$3,300 (subject to fluctuation). This includes round-trip airfare from a NYC-area airport, ground transportation for program excursions, on-site accommodations (generally double occupancy), two meals per day, entrance and performance fees, local guides, cultural excursions, international medical insurance, Skidmore faculty on site, and the support of Skidmore's OCSE. The fee does not include transportation to and from the New York City area airport, passport and visa costs, or personal expenses.

Financial Aid is available for eligible students.

TO APPLY

Please apply by the following deadline: **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2013**

Applications are available on the OCSE Web site, www.skidmore.edu/ocse.

Applicants are required to submit a \$250 nonrefundable deposit at time of application to hold their space on the program (100% refundable if the student not accepted). This deposit will be applied to the program fee.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For details about cost and travel logistics, please contact:

LISA HOBBS
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For details about course content and academic requirements, please contact:

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For details on available financial aid, please contact:

Financial Aid Office
Starbuck Center 101
518-580-5750

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one corner of the earth all one’s lifetime”

—Mark Twain,
The Innocents Abroad (1869)
Chapter LXII



Creative Thought Matters

OCSE 2013–14

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