



# Pitt in Romania & Belgium

PS 1521: Eastern Europe in World Politics  
PS 1650: Processes of Identity Formation

Study Abroad  
Summer 2024

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Time/Location: Refer to the [redacted]

Student hours: Between May 1 and August 20, by appointment only. Please email me to schedule student hours.  
Advising hours: For academic advising, please schedule via [redacted], during the listed hours of availability.

Consultations: Each student must sign up for at least one slot during the period of July 5-15. **08:00 – 16:00 (Pittsburgh time), via Zoom.** See assignment requirement. To attend, [redacted].

## Course Descriptions

**PS 1521 – Eastern Europe in World Politics:** Since the nineteenth century, Eastern Europe has undergone one of the most breathtaking political and socioeconomic transformations. Imperial ambitions, contentious politics of *fin de siècle* European nationalisms, the destructiveness of both world wars, experiments with socialism, political revolutions, transitions to capitalist democracy, and European integration (re)shaped the lives of hundreds of millions of people across twenty countries. Moreover, the region continues influencing global politics, as a site of the major geopolitical contestation between the “West” and its challengers. Contextualized in regional history since 1848, and through immersive case study in contemporary Romania, this course explores a wide array of social, political, economic, and cultural processes across levels of analysis (i.e., local, national, regional, and global).

**PS 1650 – Processes of Identity Formation:** This course foregrounds theoretical perspectives on meaning-making about “selves”—that is, how do “selves” acquire identities? In the context of contemporary Romanian society, students will engage with commonly circulating, socially salient identity framings (related to nationality, religion, ethnicity/race, class, sex/gender, sexual orientation, etc.) and consider how they take shape and evolve through social interaction. We will examine social processes including self/other recognition, metaphor use, traumatization and healing, memory-making, institutionalization of narratives, and migration.

## Learning Objectives

**PS 1521 – Eastern Europe in World Politics:** After completing this course students will be expected to: (1) have broad knowledge of Eastern European politics from the early modern period until the present; (2) describe the region’s participation in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century global politics; (3) use factual and theoretical knowledge acquired in the class to explain in comparative perspective social, political, economic, and cultural processes in Romania; and (4) improve research, analytical, writing, and verbal presentation skills through the course assignments.

**PS 1650 – Processes of Identity Formation:** Students who complete this course will be empowered to (1) recognize common social, political, economic, and cultural narratives through which a variety of actors construct patterns of understanding about belonging to national, religious, ethnic, and gender identities; (2) apply theoretical concepts related to identity formation processes in Romania; (3) generate analyses about variations in identity construction in comparative perspective and across levels of analysis; and, (4) reflect on context-specific historical and contemporary factors that influence identity formation among diverse populations.

Okay, those are my learning objectives for y’all... What are yours? Please email me two paragraphs (one for each course) in which you detail what you hope to get out of each.

## Inclusive Learning and Sensitive Materials

Inclusion is crucial to a good study abroad experience. I explicitly encourage you to ensure that you include all members of our group in class discussions as well as extracurricular outings. If you see someone being excluded or struggling in any way, step up. Don’t make assumptions. Invite them to join you, make conversation, get to know them, ask how they’re feeling. The basic principle is to treat everyone as you’d like to be treated.

These courses serve all students, whatever their backgrounds, experiences, and ways of identifying. These classes are safe spaces in which to respectfully exchange ideas about the arguments presented in the course materials and by our interlocutors abroad. During the term, we will encounter a wide array of perspectives. You may personally disagree with some of them. In fact, you may disagree vehemently. Each person’s lived experiences inform how they analytically assess the world. Scholars’, activists’, policymakers’, etc. perspectives are also informed by their own backgrounds, experiences, and ways of identifying. With respect to the works we read, we should try to situate them in their historical and biographical contexts. This is even more important with people who are taking time out of their schedules to talk with us.

Note that some readings or interactions with people may be emotionally difficult on account of including descriptions of violence and experiences that evoke suffering. I do not assign readings or schedule meetings with the intent of upsetting you, nor do I like to gratuitously play “devil’s advocate.” I do, however, aim to give you an accurate picture of others’ experiences. If something from the readings or during our discussions with people abroad bothers you, please let me know how you’re feeling. Often, when something from class bothers you, I find myself feeling similarly, so please know you’re not alone. Often, too, I find that talking it out together can help.

I encourage and appreciate suggestions for how to improve the effectiveness of the courses for you personally or for others. As part of an effort to protect and cultivate the diversity students bring to the classroom and given the sensitive nature of some of the topics we cover, I propose we work towards an atmosphere of trust and safety in the “classroom” (especially when we’re on the road). As I’ve said, some of the material in these courses may evoke strong emotions. Please be respectful of others’ emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in or beyond the classroom, either by me or other students, makes you uncomfortable. With respect to one another and to our speakers, I ask you to be generous and kind in framing critiques, especially when disagreeing with another’s points of view.

The “classroom” is a space in which to be respectful of differences of gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation, race, culture, nationality, linguistic background, and immigration status. I therefore ask you to please watch your language; please avoid insensitive comments. I also want to note that class rosters are usually provided to instructors with your legal name. It is class policy that we will address you by the name(s) and pronoun(s) with which you are comfortable, so please let me know if the roster doesn’t correctly reflect you.

### **Abroad and On-Campus Resources**

Before departure, please check the CDC’s recommendations regarding health safety in [Romania](#) and [Belgium](#), including its “what to pack” list for [Romania](#) and [Belgium](#). Once in Romania or Belgium, if you are involved in or witness an emergency, **the Romanian and Belgium phone number for emergency services (ambulance, fire, and police) is 112**. Please familiarize yourself with the resources provided by the U.S. Embassy in Romania for [medical](#) and [legal assistance](#). The U.S. Embassy in Romania also keeps a list of selected [hospitals, clinics and physicians in major cities](#). The U.S. Embassy in Belgium’s assistance page is [here](#). I also encourage you to keep track of any U.S. State Department [travel advisories](#) for Romania (you can sign up to receive such alerts through the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#)).

**If you are feeling unwell during the program, let me know ASAP!** If you must absent from scheduled activities on account of illness, we will work out a plan to ensure you remain on track (this may include a make-up assignment). Depending on the severity of symptoms, it may be necessary to consult with a local physician. Additionally, if any activities conflict with religious events, illness, medical appointments, family obligations, etc., please let me know and we’ll work together ensure you keep up with academic requirements. If you’re not feeling well upon returning to Pittsburgh, please consider following up with the [Student Health Center](#) and/or the [Counseling Center](#).

If you require any accommodations, please register with [Disability Resources and Services](#) (DRS) as early as possible and also tell me that you have done so. DRS offers a lot of resources while we’re on campus. Please note, however, that being in a different physical and cultural environment may impact how you’re feeling and may change the symptoms that you may have otherwise found effective resources for addressing while on campus. This means that even if you’re not sure whether you might need regular DRS services, it’s a good idea to touch base with them to have a conversation about how studying abroad might affect your needs and academic experiences. I also know that you know yourself best and are uniquely suited to speak to how you’re doing, so I encourage you to let me know what’s going on whenever you’re facing any challenges. The more I know, the better I can help. No judgements.

### **Sexual Misconduct, Title IX, and Mandatory Reporting**

Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated. If you are experiencing sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, and stalking, please report it to me and I will connect you to the appropriate resources to support you. If you’d like to report sexual harassment, violence, or misconduct of any kind directly, I encourage you to reach out to the [Office of Sexual Harassment and Assault Response and Education \(SHARE\)](#).

University faculty and staff members are required to report all instances of sexual misconduct, including harassment and sexual violence to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. As your professor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me. An important exception to the reporting requirement exists for academic work. Disclosures about sexual misconduct that are shared as a relevant part of an academic project, classroom discussion, or course assignment, are not required to be disclosed to the University’s Title IX office.

When a report is made, individuals can expect to be contacted by the Title IX Office with information about resources and options related to safety, accommodations, process, and policy. This does not trigger actions without your approval. I encourage you to use the services and resources that may be most helpful to you. You can also report

directly to Office of Civil Rights and Title IX: +1 (412) 648-7860 (08:30 to 17:00 M-F) or via the Pitt Concern Connection at: [Make A Report](#). If you wish to make a confidential report, here are some options:

- **For immediate safety concerns while traveling, contact local authorities: 112 (emergency number in Romania and Belgium). Then, please let me know.**
- **For non-emergency problems while abroad, call International S.O.S.: +1 (215) 942-8478.**
- For immediate on-campus safety concerns, contact the Pitt Police: +1 (412) 624-2121.
- The Counseling Center: +1 (412) 648-7930 (08:30-17:00 M-F) or +1 (412) 648-7856 (after hours).
- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (community resource): +1 (866) 363-7273 (24:00/7).

### **Determination of Grades**

Who likes to give or receive grades? No one I've ever met. During this program, we'll be in constant contact, which creates a unique and collaborative learning environment. Because success in the program is predicated on trust (within our group and with our various interlocutors in Romania and Belgium), I've decided to encourage further trust-building by using an "un-grading" assessment method. That means that in these courses, you will determine your own grades using detailed criteria. My wager is that by giving you latitude to honestly reflect on your own contributions to the class you'll be more focused on producing quality work than stressing out about your letter grade.

At two points (in the middle of June and at the end of July), I will disseminate forms that will ask you to score your own work. The assignment descriptions that follow constitute the primary criteria by which you'll score your own work. Please read them carefully and ask me to clarify if anything is ambiguous or requires further explanation. Other criteria that can inform your self-assessments include goals you set out at the start of the term and expectations we discuss together throughout the study abroad (note that I may communicate expectations in-person that complement what's in this syllabus and it's your responsibility to get this information, including if you have to miss for any reason the meeting during which we discuss it).

No one who shows up and does the work will get a failing grade in the class. An F grade is only possible if you don't show up, don't turn things in, and/or commit an academic integrity violation. While am confident that I won't have to resort to this because you're all great, please note that I reserve the right to assign my own grade in cases where a you don't submit a self-assessment or required assignments, consistently fail to show up for activities, outrageously (and in bad faith) deviate from the established criteria, or where there is evidence of an academic integrity violation.

The most important thing is your understanding of course content, and so, if you are concerned about your understanding of course materials and concepts, please be proactive and speak with me as early as possible. If you want to work on your writing, please consider contacting **The Writing Center**: <https://www.writingcenter.pitt.edu/>.

### **Academic Integrity and Conduct**

In these classes and beyond, you are expected to adhere to all policies and requirements of the University of Pittsburgh and to abide by all applicable (including Romanian and Belgian) laws and regulations. This includes, but is not limited to, the following duties: (1) not to seek an unfair advantage over other students, by giving or receiving unauthorized assistance during completion of academic requirements; (2) to always represent fact and self truthfully; (3) to respect the personal rights and personhood of all members of the Pitt community; (4) to avoid plagiarism; and (5) to refrain from using artificial intelligence tools to write materials on your behalf. It also means representing yourself and the University favorably. Please note that CANVAS has a tool called *TurnItIn* that allows instructors to see whether parts of papers are improperly lifted from other sources or were written using AI. Students agree that by taking these courses all submissions may be subject to submission to *TurnItIn* for the detection of plagiarism. *TurnItIn* will be used solely for the detection of plagiarism in papers. To learn more about plagiarism, please check out this resource: <https://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>. If you have questions about whether something qualifies as plagiarism, please talk with me before you turn in your assignment. If any student cheats, plagiarizes, or in any manner violates Pitt rules regarding appropriate academic conduct, the incident will be reported, and the relevant information will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies for appropriate action. If a violation of Pitt's rules of academic conduct is deemed to have taken place, the student may receive a **F on an assignment or for the[se] class[es]**. For Dietrich academic integrity resources please visit this link: <https://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policies-and-procedures/academic-integrity-code>.

### **Required Texts / Items**

1. Parvulescu, Anca, and Manuela Boatcă. *Creolizing the Modern: Transylvania Across Empires* (Cornell University Press, 2022).
2. Hitchins, Keith. *A Concise History of Romania* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Please read these two texts in their entirety before arriving in Bucharest on May 13. Read Parvulescu and Boatcă (2022) especially closely, as we will be referencing their work at key points during the trip. Also bring a clipboard, at least one large notepad, and a few pens/pencils (you'll need these for ethnographic fieldnotes and meeting notes).

### Assignments

To make it easier to keep track of everything, I've put all the assignments for both courses in this combined syllabus. The first thing you'll see here is a breakdown of which assignments count for which course. Further down, there is a more detailed discussion of each assignment's parameters. Please read these in detail before arriving in Bucharest, as doing so may inform what you pack (notepads and notebooks, pencils/pens, clipboards, electronic devices such as tablets or laptops on which you can read, etc.).

	<u>PS 1521: Eastern Europe in World Politics</u>	<u>PS 1650: Processes of Identity Formation</u>
<i>Participation (same for both courses)</i>	<b>25%</b> (active participation, discussion with speakers, and consistent engagement in all group activities)	<b>25%</b> (active participation, discussion with speakers, and consistent engagement in all group activities)
<i>Social media posts</i>	<b>10%</b> (5 original posts and 5 comments focusing on the Romanian state's or Romanian people's position relative to external entities)	<b>10%</b> (5 original posts and 5 comments focusing on national/ethnic, religious, linguistic, gender, sexual, and other forms of identity)
<i>Visual thinking exercises</i>	<b>10%</b> (at the Museum of Art Collections and the House of Europe Museum)	<b>10%</b> (at MNAR and the Brukenthal National Museum)
<i>Ethnographies of tourism</i>		<b>15%</b> (in Bran, Viscri, and Alba Iulia, plus a synthesis reflection on all three)
<i>Journal</i>		<b>15%</b> (2 entries per week for 5 weeks, plus one overarching personal reflection)
<i>Consultation</i>	<b>10%</b> (between July 5-15, via Zoom)	
<i>Analytical book reviews</i>	<b>25%</b> (one book of your choice—only one person can choose a particular book—from the PS 1521 list below and write an analytical book review)	<b>25%</b> (one book of your choice—only one person can choose a particular book—from the PS 1650 list below and write an analytical book review)
<i>Group podcast</i>	<b>20%</b> (co-produce a podcast)	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Participation

Students must attend and participate in all meetings, site visits, events, etc. in the itinerary. Absences for medical reasons, family/friend emergencies, extraordinary circumstances, etc. will be excused (staying out late the night before or being hungover does not constitute a valid excuse), provided you discuss them with me and provide documentation. In general, I just want to ensure you're on track, so please communicate with me about what's going on. Please note that I may provide additional important information in person, including assignment and logistical instructions beyond what's written in the syllabus and itinerary. It is your responsibility to acquire this information when you're absent.

Throughout our travels, we'll meet with many locals and discuss key topics with them. Your affirmative engagement is crucial. That means that you should come to each session having carefully read assigned texts. Be prepared to discuss and offer your analysis. You should also come prepared with questions for speakers (it would be rude for folks who have taken time to speak with us to be met with silence).

Active participation is required to get an A+ for attendance. That means:

- Be an attentive listener;
- Do background research to prepare for activities and meetings;
- Maintain respectful body language/behavior (be mindful of yawns, stretching, slouching, noises, rustling, or informal composure) and appearance (this also means wear appropriate attire);
- Directly and regularly engage with guest speakers, classmates, and me (Do not use a cellphone or other electronic devices when we are in meetings. In most cases, doing so would be considered rude);
- Encourage equitable discussions (I will ask that each student limit themselves to one question until all others have had a chance to ask a question, then we'll start the count again as time permits);
- If you need to step out (e.g., to use the bathroom, if you're feeling anxiety, etc.) please do as quietly as possible to not disrupt the meeting. If you need to speak up to excuse yourself, please do so politely.
- Critically think about and connect themes we cover across contexts; and,
- Creatively apply theoretical concepts to other situations.

While what you do in your free time won't factor into your own final grade assessment, it can certainly dramatically impact the quality of your experience abroad. **During free time: please be safe and act in such a manner that you (and your family, the University, and your peers) will be proud.**

## Social media posts

Each student should create an Instagram account to use during the program. You do not have to publicly identify yourself in this account. If you prefer to use your personal account, that's okay too. From whichever account you use, each student should make 10 original posts that consist of a picture and caption. Each post must feature a caption (approx. 200 words) that explains the image shared, its significance, what various audiences should note about it, how it relates to course themes, etc. Captions should be thoughtful, formally written, and include sources whenever you're referencing someone else's idea and when there is direct tie-in to something we've read.

In total, five of your posts should focus on the Romanian state's or Romanian people's position relative to external entities (this will count towards your grade in PS 1521) and five should have to do with national/ethnic, religious, linguistic, gender, sexual, and other forms of identity and the processes that you see contributing to the evolution (this will count towards your grade in PS 1650). There can be some overlap across themes, but you should be explicit about which you see as more prominently on display. Additionally, pay attention to the following as you think about how to distribute your posts:

- Post regularly throughout our travels (ideally 2 posts per week—I'll remind you!);
- Post about things that we do as a group *and* about things that you experience in your free time;
- Duplicated content is prohibited, so coordinate with each other; and,
- Engage with a variety of vantage points, theoretical themes, and disciplines (you can post about politics, economics, archeology, music, visual arts, performance, architecture, culinary practices, religion, etc.).

In addition to your 10 original posts, each student should comment (approx. 100 words) on other student's post each week. Write your comments on the re-shared @Pitt in Romania version of your original post. Your comments should also be distributed across themes (5 that engage more with PS 1521 themes and 5 that engage more with PS 1650 themes). You should make a point of writing comments for folks whose posts have not yet gotten engagement from other students. Like original posts, comments should also be thoughtful, formally written, and include relevant sources. Comments should not just state that you "like" what the other person wrote. Engage kindly and analytically!

A few other things to keep in mind:

- Tag the [@Pitt in Romania](#) Instagram account for all posts and comments you're submitting for credit.
- Your posts will get re-shared by the [@Pitt in Romania](#) Instagram account. They may also be featured on the [@BeyondDracula](#) Instagram account. This means posts and comments are public.

- Write your posts for a transnational audience that might not have political science or Romania expertise.
- If the subject of your photo is human (discernable from a large crowd), you must have their documented consent to post the picture. All activities we undertake during the program could inform what you post on Instagram, and I encourage you to be creative. If you're not sure whether something would make for a good post, consult with me.

### **Visual thinking exercises** [at MNAR, Museum of Art Collections, Brukenthal National Museum, and House of Europe Museum]

We will conduct several visual thinking exercises using of a collaborative learning technique called visual thinking strategies (VTS). By foregrounding open-ended generative dialogue in a small group setting, VTS allows all participants to partake in the knowledge production process. The goal of VTS is not to uncover objective truths or get at the original intent of the artist, author, or curator. Rather, it is to creatively explore possible interpretations together.

At each site, we will start with approx. 3 whole-class discussions. We'll look at a particular art piece or museum object. During the whole-class discussions, I'll serve as the "facilitator" and students will serve as "discussants". The facilitator should start the discussion by asking discussants to take a moment to examine the image or object. After discussants have a chance to do so, the facilitator should ask open-ended question, such as "what is going on in this [image, object, etc.]?" As discussants take turn observing parts of the image or object, the facilitator should actively listen, encourage the entire groups' active and equitable participation, paraphrase discussants' observations back to the group, and draw out any patterns of observations or connections across multiple discussants. The facilitator should gently invite each discussant to justify their answers by asking open-ended follow-up questions, such as "what do you see that makes you say that?" The facilitator should also regularly ask the group "what more can we observe here?" Museums are inherently political spaces whose curatorial choices influence how audiences understand and contextualize images and objects. It's therefore also relevant to discuss what you think the image or object is communicating or the possible effects of its presence within a specific institutional setting (e.g., why might there be a replica of Trajan's column in a museum in Bucharest?).

After we have our approx. 3 whole-class discussions, I'll assign students to groups of four. I'll give each group printout to keep track of the images and objects you examine, as well as who is serving as facilitator for each. Within the groups each student will serve in the role of facilitator at least twice at each site of visit (that means you'll have to look at 8 images or objects together). When it's your turn to facilitate, you get to choose the subject (i.e., image or object) on which the group will focus. The facilitator has the responsibility of keeping the conversation going, encouraging equitable participation within the group by asking discussants to speak up, and must decide when the conversation has run its course. Typically, a good discussion might last approx. 15 minutes, but you can also go beyond that if you're really captivated by an image or object (that means that this exercise should last about two and a half hours in each site).

The role of the facilitator is not to provide the "correct answers." In fact, there are no single right answers in VTS (...only well-justified responses). Moreover—and this is crucial—facilitators must be neutral. Facilitators should not offer their own judgment or "correct" interpretations made by members of the group. A useful tactic for facilitators might be to use conditional language for framing questions or paraphrasing observations (as in this very sentence, for instance). Hang tight until you're no longer the facilitator, at which point you can share your thoughts.

When you're not a facilitator, you're a discussant! Discussants should actively listen to each other and to the facilitator, adding to the conversation where appropriate. Discussants should also be mindful of others' contributions and, if contributions are not equitable, discussants should respectfully cede the floor so that everyone's voice is heard. Have fun with this!

### **Ethnographies of tourism** [while visiting Bran, Viscri, and Alba Iulia].

At the enumerated sites, each student will conduct individual participant-observations focused on how people (tourists themselves, tour guides, vendors, museum staff, restaurant workers, parking attendants, etc.) navigate spaces that have strong tourism economies. This exercise will consist of taking ethnographic fieldnotes that examine social relations within a space and context of a student's choosing. You'll have about two hours to do this at each site. **Bring a clipboard and large notepad.**

Each student should identify an interesting issue to explore (this is something that you might develop as you observe others). For this exercise, the issue you identify does not have to be entirely groundbreaking. Rather, it could involve exploring the relation among customers and servers/owners in a café, how tourists try to navigate a museum entrance, interactions among vendors of products sold primarily to tourists, how tourists and tour guides behave when entering or exiting a tour bus, etc. Interesting observations can be drawn from just about any mundane situation. In other words, this exercise offers you an opportunity to be creative with the problem and context you decide to explore. Keep in mind that you may have easier access to some of these spaces than others (you can interact with shop staff easier than you can board another group's tour bus) and being able to participate in the action might give you some insights for your observation (it might also create biases given your own positionality...).

The purpose of ethnographic research is to get at shared social meaning – the actions you are observing are entry points to this shared social meaning (pay particular attention to how the spaces and interactions you're observing are replete with ritualistic symbolic action). Some spaces (such as public bathrooms, for example) are heavily regulated social spaces. Other spaces are less regulated but still sites where norms and rules are visible (if you look closely). Consequently, you are using others' behavior and action (and your own to some degree) to arrive at insights about social meaning circulating among people within that context. Some questions to think about as you observe others (and yourself as you interact with others):

- What do certain behaviors and actions appear to mean to the individuals involved?
- How do individuals' and groups' social positionality, background, socio-economic status, customs, languages, etc. affect how they behave and influence how others perceive them?
- How do you, as the observer, affect what you're observing? What biases influence your data collection?
- What are you seeing versus what might you not be seeing because of your positionality?
- How do your observations shift depending on whether you're participating in or observing tourism?

Note that this is not meant as rigorous data collection for an actual research project (although you are welcome to use it as such). Rather you get to practice taking ethnographic fieldnotes. Later, you'll create a compelling narrative from the raw data. These fieldnotes will be used as basis for a short essay (no more than 1,500 words), due after you return to the United States. In your essay you should synthesize a narrative that summarizes what you observed, describes your experience as a researcher, reflects on what would have been different if this had taken place in another setting (by this I do not mean "it would have been sunnier"... instead, reflect on language issues, access to individuals and situations, your role as a conspicuous outsider, cultural semiotics, etc.), considers whether (and how) using other data collection techniques would have resulted in a different narrative.

To familiarize yourself with participant-observation best practices, these resources will help (*recommended*):

- Prader, Ellen. "Seeing with an Ethnographic Sensibility," in *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research and the Interpretative Turn*, edited by Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, pp. 194-208. Routledge, 2015.
- Shehata, Samer. "Ethnography, Identity, and the Production of Knowledge," *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research and the Interpretative Turn*, edited by Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea, pp. 209-227. Routledge, 2015.
- Zieman, Gail A. "Participant Observation," in *Action Research Methods: Plain and Simple*, edited by Sheri R. Klein, pp. 49-67. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

## Journal

As we spend time in Romania and Belgium, you should keep a journal comprised of ten max. 600-word entries (Arial 10 pt. font, 1-inch margins, single spaced). Your entries should be concise but detailed, building on your experiences during the trip. They should be evenly distributed across the weeks we spend abroad; reference site visits, discussions with various actors, etc.; and directly engage with course concepts, including but not limited to: self/other recognition; metaphor use; traumatization/healing; memory-making and revision; institutionalization of narratives; migration; political resistance; contested social meanings; etc.

Entries should combine your personal observations with academically rigorous analysis. You should include appropriate citations from academic sources that help you make sense of the phenomena and observations you describe. These entries are a great place for you to relate what we discuss during the study abroad to your other substantive, geographic, or methodological interests (e.g., if you're interested in Cold War



geopolitics, you can use a few of your journal entries to think about connections between that and various topics we discuss during the study abroad).

Your final journal submission should include the 10 entries as well as one max. 1,000-word (Arial 10 pt. font, 1-inch margins, single spaced) personal reflection about how you interpret that which you witnessed, interacted with, and learned about during the entirety of the program. Your personal reflection can also touch on how the program shapes your view of identity formation in *other* socio-political, economic, and cultural contexts, including in the United States (clarify what travels well across context and what doesn't).

Note: you can submit some or all your journal entries (including the final reflection) in video, rather than, in written form. This is not a trap! I recognize that some folks learn better by explaining things orally and so this is at your discretion. If you choose to submit video entries, you should mention (rather than cite) relevant sources and maintain an academic demeanor in your discussion. You should also try to ensure that your entries are of comparable length and rigor as a written entry would be. For reference, a 600-word written piece might translate to approximately 6 minutes of time, depending on your speaking pace.

## Consultation

During the dates of July 5-15, each student must schedule a ~45-minute meeting with me. Please note that during this period, I will still be in Romania (which is why the hours of availability skew early in Eastern US time). I know some folks will be working, which is why I'll make myself available on weekends as well as weekdays during that period. You can [redacted]; please do so at your earliest convenience.

You should come prepared to discuss the books you're reading for your book reviews (*see below*) as well as your progress on the assignments you're working on. I may ask you to summarize what you've put together so far or to express how you're feeling about the program after having returned to the United States. The purpose of this consultation is not for me to quiz you, but rather to give us an opportunity to reflect on your experience as a whole and to brainstorm together more insights that might help you progress towards completing your book reviews and podcast.

I really look forward to these one-on-one discussions!

## Analytical Book Reviews

After you return the US, you'll have to read a bit more (forgive me) ... but you get choices! Choose something that interests you! Each student should pick one book for each of the following lists (two books total). I will circulate a sign-up sheet on June 14 to ensure that there isn't overlap (if there's another relevant book that you want to propose for yourself to review, you can consult with me about it no later than July 1). You will be responsible for reading the books you choose in their entirety and writing separate book reviews for each. Book reviews must be max. 1,500 words each (Arial 10 pt. font, 1-inch margins, single spaced). Your book reviews should critically engage with each of the author(s)'s main arguments.

Book reviews are neither summaries nor op-eds. You should *analyze* at least some of these enumerated issues (this list is not exhaustive, and you can creatively reflect on other issues yet—we can talk about the directions you're going during our consultation [*see above*]):

- How the text's arguments hang together;
- The degree to which there are tensions within the text or between that text and others we've encountered (e.g., Hitchins; Parvulescu and Boatcă; Petrescu; etc.);
- How differently positioned audiences might receive the text's claims;
- Whether the texts contain unstated assumptions that influence its conclusions;
- The degree to which author(s)'s chosen methodologies and use of evidence justify their claims;
- What's is at stake in the text beyond what the author(s)'s explicitly articulate; and/or,
- To what future possibilities are the book's main arguments calling us? etc.

### PS 1521: Eastern Europe in World Politics

Anghel, Remus Gabriel. *Romanians in Western Europe: Migration, Status Dilemmas, and Transnational Connections*. Lexington Books, 2013.

### PS 1650: Processes of Identity Formation

Beissinger, Margaret, Speranța Rădulescu, and Anca Giurchescu (eds.). *Manele in Romania: Cultural*

- Case, Holly. *Between States: The Transylvanian Question and the European Idea During World War II*. Stanford Univ. Press, 2009.
- Cercel, Cristian. *Romania and the Quest for European Identity: Philo-Germanism without Germans*. Routledge, 2019.
- Cinpoș, Radu. *Nationalism and Identity in Romania: A History of Extreme Politics from the Birth of the State to EU Accession*. Tauris, 2010.
- Gagy, Agnes. *The Political Economy of Middle Class Politics and the Global Crisis in Eastern Europe: The Case of Hungary and Romania*. Springer, 2021.
- Gallagher, Tom. *Romania and the European Union: How the Weak Vanquished the Strong*. Manchester Univ. Press, 2013.
- Light, Duncan. *The Dracula Dilemma: Tourism, Identity and the State in Romania*. Routledge, 2012.
- Martin, Mircea, Christian Moraru, and Andrei Terian (ed.). *Romanian Literature as World Literature*. Bloomsbury, 2018.
- McMahon, Patrice C. *Taming Ethnic Hatred: Ethnic Cooperation and Transnational Networks in Eastern Europe*. Syracuse Univ. Press, 2007.
- Papadimitriou, Dimitris, and David Phinmore. *Romania and the European Union: From Marginalization to Membership*. Routledge, 2008.
- Preda, Caterina. *Art and Politics under Modern Dictatorships: A Comparison of Chile and Romania*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Rădvan, Laurențiu. *At Europe's Borders: Medieval Towns in the Romanian Principalities*. Brill, 2010.
- Solonari, Vladimir. *A Satellite Empire: Romanian Rule in Southwestern Ukraine, 1941-1944*. Cornell Univ. Press, 2019.
- Szeman, Ioana. *Staging Citizenship: Roma, Performance and Belonging in EU Romania*. Berghahn Books, 2018.
- Vaduva, Sebastian. *Between Globalization and Integration: The Europeanization of Romania*. Springer, 2016.
- Vincze, Enikő, Norbert Petrovici, Cristina Raț, and Giovanni Picker (eds.). *Racialized Labour in Romania: Spaces of Marginality at the Periphery of Global Capitalism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.
- Expression and Social Meaning in Balkan Popular Music*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.
- Boia, Lucian. *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness*. Central European Univ. Press, 2001.
- Brubaker, Rogers, Margit Feischmidt, Jon Fox, Liana Grancea. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*. Princeton University Press, 2018.
- Bucur, Maria, and Mihaela Miroiu. *Birth of Democratic Citizenship: Women and Power in Modern Romania*. Indiana Univ. Press, 2018.
- Câmpeanu, Claudia N. *Capitalism and Ethnicity: Heritage Tourism and Post-Socialist Transformations in a Transylvanian Town*. Lambert Academic Publishing, 2012.
- Davis, R. Chris. *Hungarian Religion, Romanian Blood: A Minority's Struggle for National Belonging, 1920–1945*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2019.
- Dorondel, Stefan. *Disrupted Landscapes: State, Peasants and the Politics of Land in Postsocialist Romania*. Berghahn Books, 2016.
- Engelbrigt, Ada I. *Exploring Gypsiness: Power, Exchange and Interdependence in a Transylvanian Village*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007.
- Grama, Emanuela. *Socialist Heritage: The Politics of Past and Place in Romania*. Indiana Univ. Press, 2019.
- Massino, Jill. *Ambiguous Transitions: Gender, the State, and Everyday Life in Socialist and Postsocialist Romania*. Berghahn Books, 2019.
- Mitu, Sorin. *National Identity of Romanians in Transylvania*. Central European Press, 2001.
- Nicolescu, Gabriela. *The Porous Museum: The Politics of Art, Rupture and Recycling in Modern Romania*. Bloomsbury, 2023.
- Pusca, Anca Mihaela. *Revolution, Democratic Transition and Disillusionment: The Case of Romania*. Manchester Univ. Press, 2008.
- Stan, Lavinia, and Lucian Turcescu. *Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Romania*. Oxford Univ. Press, 2007.
- Trandafoiu, Ruxandra. *Diaspora Online: Identity Politics and Romanian Migrants*. Berghahn Books, 2013.
- Trencényi, Balázs, et al. (eds.). *Nation-Building and Contested Identities: Romanian and Hungarian Case Studies*. Regio Books/Polirom, 2001.

## Group Podcast

I will assign you to groups of three in mid-June. Together with your partners, you will be responsible for creating a synthesized analysis of your main take-aways from all the books you've read, all the journal entries you submitted, all the social media posts you've composed, all the ethnographic field-notes you've taken, all the places we visited, all the activities we undertook, and all the people with whom we spoke. The format of your submission should be a recorded Zoom conversation (have your cameras on for this please) of approx. one hour in length during which you essentially create a podcast episode dedicated to 3-4 subjects of your collective choosing. This means you'll have to talk with each other before making your recording to determine your subjects together. You'll also have to come up with your individual talking points, draft interesting discussion questions for each other (not about dates, names, and places, but rather about big ideas, social processes, and cultural practices), and prepare for potential talking points that your partners develop. It would be very difficult to just wing this.

No less than 20 minutes of your podcast should explicitly engage with Romania’s role within the European Union, the Romanian diaspora, its geopolitical position, Eastern Europe’s broader transition from the Soviet sphere of influence, the construction of the “East/West” divide, and/or other topics closely related to PS 1521. These are just some examples. Be creative. I invite you to consult with me if you’re unsure.

You should synthesize across multiple texts, your experience as a Pitt student in Romania and Belgium, sites we visited and activities we did abroad, conversations we had with folks, etc. as appropriate to have an interesting and fun discussion from which we can all learn. I will share the podcasts you produce with everyone in the class, so that we can all learn from each other, which means they’ll be quasi-public. If groups would like (by unanimous consent) to volunteer their podcast for even more public dissemination (for example, sharing with Beyond Dracula, the Pitt Global Experiences Office, or perhaps even to have a screening in the Romanian Nationality Room in the Fall), please let me know (this is by no means required).

A note about group assignments: I know they can sometimes cause some stress because they require coordination of schedules and managing differences in learning styles, personalities, etc. The reason I’m assigning this as a group activity is that I think it will be useful to (1) have a conversation with others who have gone through similar experiences about your time abroad after you’ve had a little bit of time for individual reflection; and (2) because I hope that the program will create long-term bonds within our group.

### Deadlines

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Due date</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Social media posts	End of program	Complete abroad
Visual thinking exercises	End of program	Complete abroad
Participation self-assessment	June 20, 2024	Same for both classes
Ethnographies of tourism	July 1, 2024**	Complete fieldnotes abroad and narrative after return to US. Submit fieldnotes (can be photos of handwritten notes) and narrative.
Journal	July 1, 2024**	Complete 10 entries abroad; complete summary reflection after return to US.
Consultation	July 15, 2024	Meeting should be between July 4 and 15.
Analytical Book Reviews	July 20, 2024	This is as much an exercise in time management as in analytical writing.
Group Podcast	August 1, 2024	You’ll have to discuss with your partners before recording the deliverable version.
Your final grade assessment	August 2, 2024	Remember, you will determine your final grade using the criteria articulated in these long assignment descriptions. <u>I’ll post on CANVAS the form you can use.</u>

If you need extra time on assignments whose deadlines are marked [\*\*], please email me and we can discuss an alternative deadline. All other deadlines are strict, barring exceptional and documented unforeseen circumstances.

### Schedule of Activities

[redacted]. Note that our schedule is subject to change based on events “on-the-ground”, so please refer to the schedule for updates. We will discuss details related to wake-up / breakfast / hotel check-out times (as well as when you’ll have free time) as we approach the days in question. I know that a schedule that might change may be a source of anxiety. Believe me: I feel that quite acutely. Whatever changes might get thrust upon us by circumstance, we will get through them together.