Prague as a Living History

**Lecturers:**

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**Office Hours:** upon request

**OUTLINE OF THE COURSE:**

This course, consisting mostly of excursions, will introduce students to the history of the Czech Republic and of its capital Prague while also showing the development of its urban structure and main social functions. On this single—and beautiful—example students should gain a deeper understanding of the particularities and intricacies of urban life as it evolved through the centuries. After an introductory lecture in the classroom, most of the time shall be spent walking through the town, visiting historical sites, churches, museums and galleries, as well as other places of interest. Students should gain an ability to look at historical buildings and art objects, to discern their style, age and provenience as well as to connect them with the historical and contemporary social functions. Other excursions will be devoted to interesting places, showing recent and contemporary life-style of Prague inhabitants, including social periphery.

**BASIC READING:**


Please read early in the semester!

**Further reading:**


**GRADING POLICY:**

40% - tests; 30% - essay; 20% - presentation; 10% - class participation

**UPCES Non-Discrimination/Harassment Policy**

The UPCES program in Prague promotes a diverse learning environment where the dignity, worth, and differences of each individual are valued and respected. Discrimination and harassment, whether based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or other legally protected characteristic, are repugnant and completely inconsistent with our objectives. Retaliation against individuals for raising good faith claims of harassment and/or discrimination is prohibited.

**UPCES Diversity Policy**

UPCES fully embraces diversity and strives to create a safe and welcoming environment for students from all backgrounds. Prague is a wonderfully diverse community and UPCES is no different. All students should feel at home while studying abroad and UPCES will do its utmost to make sure that becomes a reality. Although unique challenges may arise, we believe that students from all walks of life will encounter wonderful opportunities for enrichment as they explore a new culture while studying abroad.
WEEKLY PROGRAM:

WEEK 1

UPCES Orientation Lecture Series

WEEK 2

How Statues Speak: Charles Bridge and Beyond

Reading:
Václav CÍLEK, Prague Between History and Dreams, Bloomington 2004, pp. 3-8, 32-33.

WEEK 3

The Castle: Power and defense, security and luxury

Reading:

Presentations:
St Vitus’ Cathedral (Katedrála sv. Víta)
Queen Anne’s Summerhouse – Belvedere (Letohrádek královny Anny)
Old Royal Palace [from outside] (Starý královský palác)

WEEK 4

Vyšehrad Castle: Legends and memory

Reading:

Presentations:
Church of St. Peter and Paul (Chrám sv. Petra a Pavla)
Vyšehrad Cemetery (Vyšehradský hřbitov, Slavín)

WEEK 5

Medieval Town of Prague: Prosperity and revolution

Reading:
Václav CÍLEK, Prague Between History and Dreams, Bloomington 2004, pp. 52-53.

Presentations:
Bethlehem Chapel (Betlémská kaple)
The Astronomical Clock at the Old Town Hall (Staroměský orloj) • The Týn Yard (Ungelt) and the Church of our Lady (Týnský chrám)
WEEK 6

Prague as Heavenly Jerusalem: The New Town of Charles IV

Reading:

Presentations:
The Church of St Charlemagne (Karlov)
The Slavonic Monastery Emmaus (Klášter Na Slovanech, Emauzy)

WEEK 7


WEEK 8

Baroque Devotion in the Landscape: Loreto and the Infant Jesus

Reading:

Presentations:
Church of Our Lady Victorious (Pražské Jezulátko)
The Loreto (Loreta)

WEEK 9

Expanding the City: Vinohrady Hundred Years Ago

Reading:

Presentations:
The “Art Nouveau” in Prague
St Wenceslas’ Church in Vršovice (Kostel sv. Václava)

WEEK 10

Prefab Housing: Prague’s suburbs in the era of “Real Socialism”

Reading:

Presentations:
Palace of Culture (now Prague Congress Centre); Prague Metro
WEEK 11

**Modern Architecture:** from “Art Nouveau” to the Dancing House

**Reading:**

**Presentations:**
The old and the new building of the National Theatre (Národní divadlo, Nová scéna)
The Dancing House (Tančící dům)

WEEK 12

Prague’s Present and Future (classroom presentation) Karlin: Transformation of a Neighborhood

**Reading:**
Prague Institute of Planning and Development. Basic information, Prague: IPR, 2015

WEEK 13

Final Test, Evaluation, Closing Discussion

**GUIDELINES:**

**Required reading**
For each walking tour, please read the texts listed above. It is also useful to go through the reading recommended for the given period (see below), especially for those presenting papers.

**On-site presentation**

length: ca. 5 minutes
address especially following questions:
• When was the monument (historical building, church etc.) built?
• To which architectural style does it belong?
• What other events in its history are worth mentioning?
• What do you personally find interesting about the site? - It is recommended to visit the site in advance. - Preference is given to speaking, not reading the presentation.
• NB. Please e-mail your notes or the outline of your paper to the respective professor in advance.

**Midterm test (WEEK 7)**

• tests students’ orientation in pre-modern Central-European/Czech history gained from Petr ČORNEJ, Great Stories in Czech History, Praha 2005, pp. 1-143
• includes questions concerning the readings assigned for classes held so far

**Final Test (WEEK 13)**

• a combined multiple choice / short answers test focusing on Czech/Prague history and architectural styles; the test sheet contains images
• to prepare for the test, please review the required readings and the PowerPoint presentation of styles & chronology
Final essay (due WEEK 13)

• choose a chapter/article from “Recommended reading” (below) dealing with a period that appealed to you
• summarize and comment the reading and explain what you find interesting about the period/event/style/site etc.; try to find connections to what you were able to see in Prague with your own eyes
• search for other Prague buildings and historical sites from the same period, that we did not visit on walking tours; take pictures of those sites (whole and/or detail), include those pictures in your essay and comment on them extensively
• indicate all used sources in footnotes or in the bibliography
- length: ca. 1200 words / 6 images;
- form: electronic (e.g. pdf, doc)
• NB. Please upload the essay to the e-learning website or e-mail it to the respective professor by the end of the Final Exam Week at the latest.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Early Origins: Mythology and Romanesque Art

Middle Ages I: Gothic Prague and Charles IV

Middle Ages II: Hussites and Early Reformation in Prague

Trans-Alpine Renaissance and Rudolf II

Counter-Reformation and Baroque Culture

National Revival and Nineteenth-century Historicism

Modern Styles (Art Nouveau, Cubism, Functionalism)

Socialist Architecture

Contemporary Architecture and Urban Planning

FURTHER READING:

Be sure you are aware of the UPCES Academic Integrity Policy and the Code of Conduct that you signed prior to your arrival.
If you want to read the policies again, please stop by the UPCES office.