GOVERNMENT 1246, SPRING 2001
SUGGESTED ESSAY TOPICS

- The essay should be about 15 pages of length, double-spaced, standard font.
- The essay should rely on the assigned readings for the course and, if necessary, a limited amount of additional reading (no more than can be done in one full working day).
- In your essay, discussion of the suggested theoretical issues can be applied to individual countries, sets or pairs of countries, or all of the states of the FSU. In any case, your essay should contain discussion of an empirical case.

The topics below are suggestions only:

1. Discussion and analysis, based on course readings, of the variation in political and/or economic outcomes in FSU states ten years after the end of the USSR. Focus can be on specific aspects of economic or political reform in selected countries, or on overall trends in all or many FSU states.

2. Discussion of Central Asian exceptionalism in the former USSR. Does such a pattern exist, and if so why?

3. Comparison of approaches to national identity found in Laitin's Identity in Formation to those in the Smith, Allworth, and Law volume.

4. Comparison of approaches to ethnic conflict found in the readings from Fearon and Latin, Smith et al., Rubin, and Lieven.

5. Discussion of the meaning of the state in the post-Soviet context.

6. Discussion of the development and status of the CIS and its institutions.

7. Comparison of approaches to institutional design and reform found in Offe, Carey, and Ordeshook and Shvetsova readings.

8. Discussion and analysis of trends in elections over the last 10 years in FSU states. See in particular, the OSCE web page <http://www.osce.org/odihr/elecrep.htm>.

9. Discussion and analysis of the obstacles to the development of civil society and/or social movement in the FSU states.

10. Discussion of social and/or political conditions which make economic reform possible.

Feel free to propose something different; but be sure to discuss it with me.