

CENFAD Professor Artemy Kalinovsky Introduces New Course on the War in Ukraine

By Ryan Langton

This semester, Dr. Artemy Kalinovsky, Professor of Integrative Knowledge in History and Political Science at Temple University and a CENFAD-affiliated faculty member, introduced a new course addressing the ongoing war in Ukraine. Cross listed as a History and Political Science course, “Russia’s Aggression in Ukraine and the World after February 24” took an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing the contexts, causes, and repercussions of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The course explored the problems of peace and security in the post-Cold War world, what observers around the world got right and wrong before and after Russia’s unprovoked attack on Ukraine, and the reasons why. “[The war in Ukraine] is a major conflict which has clearly transformed how many people think about security in the post-Cold War world,” explained Dr. Kalinovsky. “It seemed to me teaching last spring that students were looking for ways to better understand what was going on and for tools to be able to evaluate what they heard. My idea was to give students the tools to better understand what was going on – not just in terms of the battlefield or the relations between Russia and Ukraine, but also the national projects in these two countries that emerged after the USSR collapsed in 1991, the ways the war has affected (and been affected by) the European Union, as well as how this conflict is seen beyond Europe and the U.S.”



In addition to holding regular class meetings, Dr. Kalinovsky also partnered with CENFAD and the *Dissent in America Teach In* series organized by Dr. Ralph Young, Professor of History at Temple, to welcome several visiting speakers who gave public talks held in-person and over Zoom on the war in Ukraine. Dr. Serhii Plokhii, Professor of Ukrainian History at Harvard and a former CENFAD speaker, addressed the different ways nationalism and history influenced Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Dr. Olya Oliker, Program Director for Europe and Central Asia for Crisis Group, drew on her experience working at think tanks to discuss how analysts studied the war and crafted reports often used in wider media. To address misleading post-Cold War worldviews, the course welcomed Dr. Maksym Yakvlyev, Professor of Social Sciences at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Russian environmental activist and peace advocate Yevgeniya Chirikova visited Temple, as well, to talk about civil resistance to Vladimir Putin’s regime. In addition to these speakers, two faculty members from Temple,

Professor of Law Dr. J. Benton Heath and Professor of Political Science Mark Pollack, explored the role of sanctions and the possibilities of Ukraine joining the EU, respectively.

On March 2, CENFAD and Dr. Kalinovsky welcomed Dr. Alexander Vindman, a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel and former director for

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Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Russia on the National Security Council. Now a senior fellow at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a Hauser Leader at Harvard's Kennedy School, Dr. Vindman drew on his experience as a Political-Military Affairs Officer for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and an attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow to talk about the current military situation on the ground in Ukraine. He also examined broader perspectives on the diplomatic relationship between the United States and Ukraine, which is also the topic of his recently completed PhD dissertation at Johns Hopkins.

One of the major lessons students took away from the course was the problem of grappling with the ever-changing stream of information and analysis generated about the war in Ukraine. "I wanted students to think about how they learn about the war – how the war gets reported, why so many analysts seem to have gotten things wrong at different times, and so on," said Dr. Kalinovsky. This turned out to be a lesson he learned himself. "One of the surprising things about this course was how difficult it can be to find really good analysis that stands the test of the time. I've taught courses on contemporary foreign policy before, but I've never taught a course that would progress in real time, so to speak. That was also a challenge with putting together the syllabus – I knew that what I read in November could well be irrelevant by the time the course started in January."



Alexander Vindman (right) sits with Artemy Kalinovsky (left) during his visit to CENFAD