

# Colleen Wood, PhD

*Human Rights, Civil Society, and Social Media in Eurasia*

Columbia University, Department of Political Science

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## Education

### **Columbia University**

Ph.D. in Political Science

2022

*Dissertation: "Going Viral During a Pandemic: Civil Society and Social Media in Kazakhstan"*

M.A. in Political Science

2019

### **Georgetown University**

B.S.F.S. in International Affairs, *Magna Cum Laude*

2014

## Teaching Experience

### **Columbia University**

Popular Culture and International Politics (*Fall 2022*)

- Designed an advanced undergraduate seminar for 15 students in the Political Science department on culture and international relations

### **City University of New York**

Theories of International Relations (*Fall 2022*)

- Designed a Master's level seminar for 13 students in City College's Colin Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership overviewing major topics in international relations

Research Skills in Political Science (*Fall 2020*)

- Designed the first undergraduate research methods course for the Political Science department at Baruch College, surveying qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis
- Prepared course materials and graded assignments for 20 students. Received an average evaluation rating of 4.8 out of 5

Nationalism and Ethnic Politics (*Summer 2020*)

- Designed an undergraduate seminar for City College of New York about nationalism, conducted 12 sessions in 4 weeks
- Prepared course materials and graded assignments for 20 students. Received an average evaluation rating of 4.6 out of 5

### **U.S. Foreign Service Institute**

Visiting Lecturer

*September 2021 - present*

- Prepared materials for quarterly lectures on border politics of Central Asia and led 1-hour class for 4-20 US foreign policy professionals

## **Concordia Language Villages**

Russian Language Teacher and Leadership Staff

*June 2010 - August 2020*

- Oversaw curriculum design and implementation from 2013-2017 for an immersive Russian-language summer camp with between 80-130 students, age 7-18. Embodied the mission of inspiring courageous global citizenship through language proficiency
- From 2013-2017, managed between 15-30 staff members' teaching and cultural workshops, coached staff from the US and former Soviet Union on developing activities appropriate for middle and high school students, designed simulation activities to explain the fundamentals of international relations, patterns of labor migration, and climate change
- In 2020, collaborated with the camp dean to pivot to virtual language instruction; created innovative educational resources and programming, including videos, online games, and interactive reading guides

## **Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning**

Lead Teaching Fellow

*August 2019 - May 2020*

- Designed and led two pedagogical workshops attended by graduate students in social science departments
- Coached graduate students in my department on pedagogical best practices and innovations in classroom management and communication

## **Research and Writing**

### **Academic Articles**

"Keeping Receipts: Lessons on Civic Engagement in Autocratic States from Kazakh Advocacy for Xinjiang." *Central Asian Affairs* (2022): 94-118.

"The Mobilizing Potential of Communication Networks in Central Asia," with Jasmin Dall'Agnola. *Central Asian Affairs* (2022): 1-15.

"Teaching the Hidden Curriculum in Political Science," *PS: Political Science and Politics* (2021).  
With Elena Barham.

"Listening and its Limits: Reflections on Fieldwork In/On Kyrgyzstan," in *Fielding Positionalities: Reflections from the Post-Soviet Space*, ed. Jasmin Dall'Agnola. Forthcoming 2022.

"Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Comparing the Effect of Legal and Financial Restrictions on Civil Society in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan." (Forthcoming at *International Labor and Working-Class History*).

### **Working Papers**

"Potemkin Schools: Reassessing Theories of Education, Language, and Identity in Kyrgyzstan." (Winner of 2019 Doctoral Student Paper Award from Association of the Study for Nationalities)

"On the Run: Prospective Candidate Behavior in Hybrid Authoritarian Regimes." With Alexis Lerner (US Naval Academy).

"In the Eye of the Receiver: Analyzing Turkey's Foreign Policy Ambitions in Central Asia." With Gözde Böcü (University of Toronto).

### **Book reviews**

"Slow Anti-Americanism" by Edward Schatz. (Forthcoming in *Central Asian Affairs*).

"Blood Ties and the Native Son: Poetics of Patronage in Kyrgyzstan" by Aksana Ismailbekova. *Europe-Asia Studies* 75, 9 (2019).

### **Public Scholarship (Selected)**

"Central Asians in Russia pressured to join Moscow's Fight in Ukraine," [Moscow Times](#), March 2022. With Sher Khashimov.

"Facing severe repression, Russians are turning to anti-war graffiti." [Waging Non-Violence](#), March 2022. With Alexis Lerner.

"Kazakhstan's Bloody January," [New Lines Magazine](#), March 2022. With Sher Khashimov.

"More than Just Grains of Rice: Shedding Light on Community and Precarity in Kyrgyzstan's Batken Province," [The Diplomat](#), March 2022.

"Human rights and civil liberties in Kazakhstan: A matter of efficiency?" [Foreign Policy Center](#), July 2021.

"Local Council Elections a Big Test for Kyrgyzstan's Gender Quota Law," [The Diplomat](#), April 2021.

"Election officials annulled Kyrgyzstan's October election. Here's why," [Washington Post \(Monkey Cage\)](#), October 2020. with Jennifer Brick Murtazashvili.

"Is This the Beginning of Kyrgyzstan's Next Revolution?" [Foreign Policy](#), October 2020.

"Fed Up Kyrgyz Forge Ahead with Online Protests," [The Diplomat](#), May 2020.

### **Invited Talks**

- 2022 Roundtable on "Crisis in Kazakhstan: Protests, Regime Stability, and Regional Security," at the [Harriman Institute](#), January 26.
- "Human Rights in Kyrgyzstan." University of Southern California, May 11.
- 2021 "Retreating Rights: Examining the pressure on human rights in Kazakhstan," Round table at the Foreign Policy Centre, September 15.
- "Digital Resources for Researching Central Asia" at the panel "CASPIANA: Digital Toolbox for Students and Scholars of Central Asia and South Caucasus," Davis Center at Harvard University,

May 20.

Chair for roundtable "Women's Activism in Central Asia," Eurasian, East and Central European Studies Women Academic Forum, March 9.

Discussant for Edward Schatz's book talk "Slow Anti-Americanism" at the [Harriman Institute, February 24.](#)

Panelist for UMass Amherst Ethnography Collective's panel "Graduate Research and Digital Ethnography," February 17.

2020 "Domestic Institutions and Political Unrest in Kyrgyzstan" at the panel "Unrest in Kyrgyzstan: Popular Uprisings in the 21st Century," Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies at Indiana University, November 13.

"Institutional Design in Official and Activist Narratives in Kyrgyzstan" at the round table "The power of conflicts and protests in Central Asia: comparative analysis," CABAR.asia and Institute for War and Peace Reporting, November 5.

"The Importance of Human Rights for Peaceful Elections" at John Jay College, October 27.

"Ethnographic Methods," guest lecture in Caress Schenk's MA seminar "Research Methods in Political Science" at Nazarbayev University, October 10.

"Women's Activism and Activism by Women" at [Roundtable on Gender Equality and LGBT Rights in Central Asia](#) at Chatham House, September 25.

["Kyrgyzstan's Slide to Autocracy"](#) at George Washington University, April 13.

"YouTube as a Tool of Transnational Advocacy," at Columbia University Interdisciplinary Graduate Seminar Series, February 5.

## **Presentations and Conferences**

2022 Law and Society Association Annual Meeting.  
Association for the Study of Nationalities Annual Meeting.  
[Descriptive Research Workshop.](#)  
Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting.

2021 International Studies Association Northeast Annual Meeting.  
City University of New York Society and Protest Workshop.  
Research Symposium: Precarious Labor in Central Asia.  
UMass Amherst New Directions in Law and Society Virtual Workshop.  
American Political Science Association Annual Meeting.  
Asian Politics Online Seminar Series.  
International Studies Association Annual Meeting.  
Association for the Study of Nationalities Annual Meeting.

2020 International Studies Association Annual Meeting (cancelled due to COVID-19).  
Association for the Study of Nationalities (cancelled due to COVID-19).  
University of Toronto Comparative Politics Workshop.

- 2019 City University of New York Graduate Center Comparative Politics Workshop.  
Center for Eurasian Studies Society Annual Meeting.  
American Political Science Association Annual Meeting.  
Association for the Study of Nationalities Annual Meeting.  
Carnegie Postcommunist Politics Workshop.  
Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences Conference.  
Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting.

## **Relevant Professional Experience**

### **Pollicy**

*July 2022 - present*

- Recruited 15 digital security practitioners from 9 countries in Eurasia for interviews, prioritized a diverse participant pool and managed scheduling across time zones. Translated the informed consent protocol into Russian and oversaw data storage with an awareness of participants' heightened security needs
- Collaborated with designers and managers to amplify research findings for funders and stakeholders

### **Artistic Freedom Initiative**

*June 2022 - present*

- Wrote 2 2000-word analytical memos about instances of restrictions on expression for Russian artists working in in Europe and the United States
- Recruited 15 Russian artists living outside the country for interviews about their experience with censorship inside and outside Russia. Translated informed consent protocol into Russian, oversaw data storage, and compiled results in memos

### **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty**

*November 2019*

- Conducted qualitative analysis of Kyrgyz- and Russian-language media outlets. Compiled a dataset of articles by using Python to scrape the outlets' websites, cleaned the data, developed a qualitative coding schema, and analyzed the content of articles
- Synthesized findings in a 3000-word memo to make insights relevant, contextualized, understandable and to clarify actionable policy recommendations

### **United States Peace Corps, Kyrgyzstan**

*April 2015-June 2017*

- Integrated into four Kyrgyzstani communities over two years; familiarized myself with social and professional norms in Kyrgyz culture; engaged in public diplomacy through cultural events and media appearances
- Built capacities of >150 English-language teachers in Jalalabad, Issyk-Kul, and Osh regions by organizing professional development workshops; established and maintained relationships with local bureaucrats and community leaders to support curriculum and training development

## **Grants, Fellowships**

|   |             |         |
|---|-------------|---------|
| National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship                            | (\$138,000) | 2019-22 |
| PepsiCo Fellowship for Research Assistance  | (\$3,100)   | 2021    |
| PepsiCo Fellowship for Research Travel (for fieldwork in Kazakhstan)                | (\$2,000)   | 2020    |
| PepsiCo Fellowship for Research Travel (for fieldwork in Russia and Kyrgyzstan)     | (\$4,300)   | 2019    |
| PepsiCo Fellowship for Research Travel (for fieldwork in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) | (\$3,000)   | 2018    |

## **Research Languages**

English (native)  
Russian, Kyrgyz (advanced speaking, reading, writing)  
Kazakh, Spanish (intermediate speaking, reading, writing)  
Persian, Turkish (basic speaking, reading)

## **Technical Skills**

Survey design, field research, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, content analysis, regression, ethnography, remote research

## **Fieldwork Experience**

Ukraine, Georgia, Turkey 2012  
Azerbaijan 2013  
Kyrgyzstan 2015-2017, 2018, 2019  
Kazakhstan 2019, 2020

## **Research Tools**

Microsoft Suite, R, InDesign,  
Python, NVivo, ATLAS.ti

Last updated: September 2022