Although there are no official statistics reflecting cases of polygamy in Kyrgyzstan, anecdotal evidence suggests that polygamy is on the rise. This talk explores possible reasons for this and asks, specifically, whether it is a consequence of Kyrgyzstan’s post-Soviet Islamic revival. The research is based on interviews conducted with representatives of non-governmental organizations representing women, and data from focus groups comprised of Kyrgyz ‘first wives’ and ‘second wives.’

Michele Commercio is an Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of Russian, East European Studies at the University of Vermont. She specializes in Central Asian comparative politics. Her research interests include regime transition, ethnic politics, gender politics, and Islam in post-Soviet states. Professor Commercio’s most recent research has been funded by IREX, NCEEER, APSA (American Political Science Association), and the University of Vermont. Her work appears in Political Science Quarterly, Studies in Comparative International Development, Nationalities Papers, Problems of Post-Communism and Post-Soviet Affairs. Her book, “Russian Minority Politics in Post-Soviet Latvia and Kyrgyzstan: The Transformative Power of Informal Networks,” was published in 2010 with the University of Pennsylvania Press. Her new project analyzes political mobilization among women in Kyrgyzstan.

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Monday, April 25, 2016
Voesar Conference Room, Suite 412
4:30pm - 6:00pm
1957 E St., NW
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This event is on the record.