

# **Political Geography**

## **GEOG 407/507**

### **Fall Semester, 2011**

#### **Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30 – 4:45 pm, Gunter Hall 204**

#### **Course Description:**

The world patterns of nations; geographic factors affecting the background and present development of countries. Fall. Prerequisite: GEOG 104/114 or GEOG 110 or junior standing.

#### **Institutional Learning Goals in this Course:**

1. Liberal Knowledge and Skills of Inquiry, Critical Thinking, and Synthesis: In this course, students will utilize empirical data, conduct their own analysis, and prepare written synthesis as appropriate. In addition, global issues of political conflict in conflict zones and origin areas are evaluated.
2. Core Skills: While mastering the content oriented objectives below, students will also find improvement in their written, oral, and cartographic communication skills. Students will also examine statistical tables and be asked to draw conclusions from them. Problem solving skills will be addressed through evaluation of government policies, and in examining theoretical work of selected geographers.
3. Acquisition and Application of Specialized Knowledge: Selected concepts introduced in this course provide foundation knowledge for students completing the major in international studies, geography and geography-global systems.
4. Values and Social Responsibility: Students will be frequently confronted with the alternative value systems of other world cultures. Implications for decision making within and between cultures will be developed.
5. Appreciation of Cultural Identifies: This course serves to introduce students to world cultural diversity through the approach of contemporary geography. Political geography builds upon differences in the nature of places, cultural and natural landscape, and the historic perspectives of diverse cultural groups.

#### **Specific Course Objectives:**

The course will place emphasis on the economic, environmental and social impacts of the political organization of space at different geographic scales. At the conclusion of the course, all students should be able to:

1. Understand and describe spatial patterns of international and domestic political organization.
2. Determine the impact of political organization on local and global communities.
3. Discuss the impact of political conflict, war and terrorism on specific geographic areas.
4. Identify site of local, regional, national, and world significance in the development of contemporary political geography.
5. Consider of comparisons and contrasts between geographic patterns of economic and political development.
6. Identify career opportunities in related to political geography.

#### **Instructor:**

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Office Hours: M,W,F 10-11. or T, Th 1-2, or by appointment

**Resource Materials:**

Colin Flint and Peter Taylor, Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State, and Locality, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007.

Additional materials will be available through blackboard for this course.

**Evaluation:**

Course evaluation will include three exams (two midterms and a final exam), an article review, a short forum presentation, and an individual project. The exams will be short answer and essay exams. Graduate students will take exams at the same time as undergraduate students, but may have different essay questions.

The article review will be a review of a post 2000 journal article relating to political geography. The article may be found in any peer reviewed professional journal. Most likely sources are the Annals of the AAG, The Geographical Review, the Professional Geographer, or Political Geography (all in the Ort Library). Guidelines for the review are on blackboard, and should be utilized. The review should be about 400 words and include a summary and a critical reaction. The article review for graduate students will follow the same guidelines and standards as for undergraduates.

Each undergraduate student will do a short forum presentation (2-3 minutes) during the semester (on either Sept 28 or Nov 9). Each student will provide a political geographer's perspective on a real world issue. Detailed Guidelines are on blackboard.

The term project will require the student to do an independent project report on a topic of their choice. Guidelines are on blackboard along with the scoring rubric. The Independent project will be of greater importance to graduate students than undergraduates. Graduate students are expected to meet with the instructor as they develop their project.

	Undergraduates	Graduates
Midterm Exam I:	100 points	100 points
Midterm Exam II:	100 points	100 points
Article Review:	25 points	20 points
Independent Project:	100 points	130 points
Forum Presentation:	25 points	
Final Exam:	100 points	100 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>450</b>

Course grades for undergraduates will be based on the following scale:

405-450, A; 360-404, B; 305-359, C; and 260-304, D

Course grades for graduate students will be based on the same scale, except the grade of D is not used for graduate students.

The grades of NC or CS are not allowed for this course. The grade of FX will be assigned to any student who does not complete all three exams and the project.

**Policies:**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend each class unless they are involved in conflicting university activities or ill. More than four unexplained absences will have a negative impact on course grade.

**Academic Honesty:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Academic dishonesty on exams or the course project will lead to course failure. Please consult the Pathfinder for a definition of dishonesty and related issues. The Department of Geography policy on plagiarism is on blackboard for this course.

**Class Disruption:** Disruption of class will not be tolerated. Students disrupting the classroom learning environment will be asked to leave class. Please consult the Pathfinder for a definition of class disruption, and an explanation of university policies on disruptive behavior. Students must turn off or silence cell phones and other electronic devices during class.

## Course Schedule:

Class	Topic	Assignment
Aug 31	Introduction	Chapter 1
Part I. Global Relationships and the World Economy		
Sept 2	Political Geography	
Sept 7	Power and Politics Globally	
Sept 9	Geopolitics	Chapter 2
Sept 14	Geopolitics in the Age of Terrorism	
Sept 16	Colonialism	Chapter 3
Sept 21	Informal Imperialism	
Sept 23	Impacts for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	
Sept 28	Forum Project Idea Discussion	
Sept 30	Midterm Exam I	
Part II. States and Nationalism		
Oct 5	Modern States	Chapter 4
Oct 7	Nature of States	
Oct 12	Boundaries	
Oct 14	Core Areas and Capitals	
Oct 19	Sea Resources and New Issue for States	
Oct 21	Political Development and Nationalism	Chapter 5
Oct 26	Population, Resources, and Diversity	
Oct 28	Economic and Regional Development	
Nov 2	International Organizations	
Nov 4	Foreign Trade	
Nov 9	Forum Project Progress Reports	
Nov 11	Midterm Exam II	

Part III. Domestic and Local Issues in Political Geography

Nov 16	Domestic Issues	Chapter 6
Nov 18	Electoral Geography	
Nov 23	Manipulation of Space	
Nov 30	Local Government	Chapter 7
Dec 2	Jurisdictional Reorganization and Reform	
Dec 7	Resistance to Reform	
Dec 9	Conclusions: Toward a Geography of Peace	Chapter 8
Final Exam: Tuesday, December 14, 5:00 – 7:30 pm		