

Geography 4712
Fall Semester 2020

POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

Instructor:

Professor John O'Loughlin

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Office Hours: MW 10-11am (email me before for a time slot and a Zoom link) or by appt. (make Zoom appt. by email)

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This course focuses on the international and cross-national perspectives of political geography. It deals with political, economic and social aspects of international relations from a geographical perspective and examines societies in transition in the post Cold War and 9-11 world. As such, the course has an integrative character and requires basic knowledge about international affairs. Frequent reading of a substantive newspaper or magazine, such as *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Economist* or the *BBC News* webpage (news.bbc.co.uk) would help significantly to acquire (or develop) knowledge of global locations and current events.

The course is designed for the upper-division level. It surveys some important aspects of the discipline of political geography but does not engage in a systematic survey of regional issues and conflicts. Instead, contemporary developments in the world's regions (especially the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, the Middle East and Africa) are used to illustrate the concepts from the lectures and readings.

All students are expected to come to the classes with questions based on their reading of the materials. The website will have a list of key concepts/terms from the lectures and readings and the instructor will organize discussion around them on most Fridays. Further details will be provided in the first Friday meeting. The electronic readings are available on the course link in Canvas and we will read various text-like chapters as well as research articles on electronic reserve. Information on the electronic files and other class material are given on the course Canvas page..

There is one course text: Colin Flint Introduction to Geopolitics 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2017. Make sure you have it by the 2nd week of class; 3rd edition only.

PDF files of the class materials (text-only and key diagrams/maps) used in lecture are also available a day or two before the respective lecture via Canvas for pre-lecture note-taking

Success in this course is a function of the well-proven formula (class attendance, staying current with the readings, and asking for help when needed). Use of the lecture notes from the website is no substitute for class attendance. The instructor will take attendance and you will be expected to have the recitation sheet completed before class. The instructor may give small quizzes in order to assess students' comprehension of reading material especially if it's clear that the readings are being ignored.

The exams are evenly divided between lecture and readings material by a format to be decided later -probably short-answer format. A supplemental review sheet of important concepts will be posted on Canvas about a week prior to exams. For the course research paper students are required to follow a specific framework by using a theory covered in class to explain/interpret a case study they have selected in consultation with the instructor. Because of this format, students will find that the research paper is different than papers they have submitted to other courses. I strongly recommend that students carefully adhere to the paper guidelines, which will be posted on the course webpage.

Students are required to submit a paper proposal and the proposal must be approved before students continue with their research. Details about the format and requirements of the research paper will also be given about early October.

Grades are assigned on the basis of 25% midterm; 25% final examination; 25% term paper; 25% class attendance/performance.

NOTA BENE - KEY DATES FALL SEMESTER 2020:

Midterm examination (Unit 1 material) will be held on **Friday 23 October** *Proposals* for the paper are due to the Canvas dropbox on **Friday 30 October at 5pm**

The *paper* must be submitted to the Canvas dropbox by **5pm on Friday 27 November**

The *final examination* will be held on **December 12, 1:30p-4pm**. (The final will cover the material in Unit 2).

Course Overview:

In this course, we emphasize relative (and sometimes abstract) understandings of the geographic context within which life unfolds. Major concepts and theories from the field of international relations are included in our analysis of world politics alongside topics that anchor the discipline of political geography. The course is not purely theoretical, however, and our explicit goal is to tie theory to contemporary issues and case studies. This is especially true in weekly recitation sections. The course material also does not center on a single world region. Instead, we follow a thematic approach with topics such as U.S. foreign policy/geopolitics, civil war in African states, political transformations in the former Soviet Union, and international political economy are all examples in this course.

Placing the order of topics in the course for practical (many students write papers on nationalist topics) and pedagogical (more accessible and familiar material first) reasons, after some introductory material, we begin by analyzing the reasons why “nationalisms” and civil wars seem to be booming, both literally and figuratively. Then, we examine the “Third Wave of Democracy” and examine the recent developments in Russia, the Middle East and Africa. After the midterm, we begin with a short review of “geopolitics” particularly as the field developed in the U.S. before and after the Cold War before we turn to a comprehensive framework for understanding contemporary global economic and political changes, “world-systems theory” and we then use this theory to understand contemporary changes in the world regions.

Lecture Outline

Week 1: (Aug. 24) Introduction
What is political geography? Who gets what **where**, and how.

UNIT 1 NATIONALISM AND CONFLICT

Week 2: (Aug. 31) Theories of nationalism – non-geographic approaches
Territorial bases of nationalism

Week 3: (Sep. 7) *Labor Day (no class)*
Who belongs to the nation? De jure and de facto

Week 4: (Sep. 14) Ethno-territorialism and democracy – Scotland and Russia
Citizenship and belonging – Turkey and Russia

Week 5: (Sep. 21) Democracy and its challengers

Week 6: (Sep. 28) What causes conflicts? Political geography approaches

Week 7: (Oct. 5) The geographical study of conflicts

Week 8: (Oct. 12) Climate change and conflict – is there a connection?

Week 9: (Oct. 19) Global climate change – geopolitical implications

MIDTERM Exam *October 21-28 take-home exam on Unit 1*

UNIT 2 GEOPOLITICS AND THE WORLD-SYSTEM

Week 10: (Nov 2) Classical geopolitics – “Family Tree”
Heartland theory and Eurasia

Week 11: (Nov. 9) German (Nazi) geopolitics
U.S. (“Democratic”) geopolitics

Week 12: (Nov. 16) Cold War US geopolitics
Post-911 American geopolitics

Week 13: (Nov. 23) Critical geopolitics - contemporary geopolitical orientations

Fall Break November 26-29

Week 14: (Nov. 30) World-systems Theory – Wallerstein and Modelski

Week 15: (Dec. 7 – last day of classes) Critiques of World-System Theory

December 8-16. Take-home exam on Unit 2

Geography 4712

Fall 2014

Discussion Sections and Readings

NOTE: The keyword in ALL CAPS after the title is the title of the electronic reserve on Canvas

Week 1 (Aug. 24) Introduction

Reading: “War in Bosnia-Herzegovina” (DAHLMAN-TOAL)

UNIT 1 NATIONALISM AND CONFLICTS

Week 2 (Aug. 31) Nationalism

Reading: Taylor and Flint 192-234 (TF_NATIONALISM)

Week 3: (Sep. 7) NO CLASS ON LABOR DAY

Territory and Nationalism

Reading: Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Prologue & Chapter 4

Week 4 (Sep. 14) Citizenship and identity

Reading: Secor “Islamism, democracy, and the headscarf ”(HEADSCARF)
 Anderson – “Imagined Communities” (IMAGINED COMMUNITIES)

Week 5 (Sep. 21) Democracy -definitions and debates

Reading: O’Loughlin “Global democratization” (GLOBAL DEMOCRATIZATION)
 Zakaria “Illiberal democracy” (ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY)

Week 6 (Sep. 28) Geography of conflicts

Reading: O’Loughlin “The political geography of conflict” (GEOGRAPHY CONFLICT)

Week 7 (Oct. 5) Nationalism and conflicts

Reading: Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapter 4

Week 8 (Oct 12) Conflicts in the Post Cold War world

Reading: Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapter 5

Week 9 (Oct. 19) Climate change and conflict

Reading: Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapter 8

Midterm October 23 – schedule and format to be indicated later

Unit 2 GEOPOLITICS AND THE WORLD_SYSTEM

Week 10 (Oct 26) Classical Geopolitics

Reading: Taylor and Flint, pp. 49-62 (TF_GEOPOLITICS_1)
Taylor and Flint, pp. 74-104 (TF_GEOPOLITICS_2)

Week 11 (Nov 2) German Geopolitics

Reading: Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapters 2
Ó Tuathail (from *Critical Geopolitics*) pp. 111-136 (GERMAN GEOPOLITICS)

Week 12 (Nov. 9) U.S. (“Democratic”) Geopolitics

Reading: O’Loughlin “Ordering the Crush Zone. (CRUSH ZONE)
Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapter 3

Week 13 (Nov. 16) Critical Geopolitics

Reading: Flint and Taylor 65-77 (CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS)
Roberts, Secor, and Sparke, “Neoliberal Geopolitics” (NEOLIBERAL
GEOPOLITICS)

Fall Break Nov 26-29.

Week 14 (Nov. 30) World-system theories and its critiques

Reading: Flint and Taylor, 1-65 (WORLD SYSTEMS)
Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapters 7

Week 15 (Dec. 7) Flat-worlders versus geographers

Reading: Flint *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Chapters 6 and 9

It is imperative that all students come prepared to the discussion section with the weekly reading completed. The same readings will be the basis for the questions on half of the examinations and quizzes.

CLASS READINGS

Anderson, B. **Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism.** New York: Verso, 1991.

Barnett, Jon, “The geopolitics of climate change.” **Geography Compass** 1 (6), 2007, 1361-1375.

Barnett, T.J. “The Pentagon’s new map: It explains why we are going to war and why we will keep going to war.” **Esquire** (March 2003) 174-179, 227-228.

Dahlman, C. and G Ó Tuathail “Broken Bosnia: The Localized Geopolitics of Displacement and Return in Two Bosnian Places’ **Annals, Association of American Geographers** 95 (2005) 644-662.

Flint, C. **Introduction to Geopolitics** 3rd edition. London: Routledge, 2017.

Flint, C. and P.J. Taylor **Political Geography: World-system, nation-state and locality**. 5th ed. New York: Pearson, 2007.

Friedman, T. “It’s a Flat World, After All” **The New York Times Magazine**, (April 3, 2005).

Grant, R. and J. Nijman, “The Rescaling of Uneven Development in Ghana and India”, **Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie** 95 (2004) 467-481.

Kaplan, R. “The revenge of geography” **Foreign Policy** 172: May-June 2009, pp. 96-105, and responses by political geographers “Revenge of geographers” at *Foreign Policy* online

Kolstoe, P. “The sustainability and future of unrecognized quasi-states” **Journal of Peace Research** 43, 2006, 723–740.

O’Loughlin, J “Global democratization: Measuring and explaining the diffusion of democracy” In C. Barnett and M. Low (eds) **Spaces of Democracy**. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2004, 23-46.

O’Loughlin, J “The political geography of conflict: Civil wars in the hegemonic shadow” in C. Flint (ed) **The Geography of War and Peace: From Death Camps to Diplomats**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, 85-110

Ó Tuathail, G **Critical Geopolitics**. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Ó Tuathail, G “Thinking critically about geopolitics” in G. Ó Tuathail, S. Dalby and P. Routledge (eds) **The Geopolitics Reader**. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2006, pp. 1-14.

Secor, A. "Islamism, democracy, and the political production of the headscarf issue in Turkey", In G. Falah and C. Nagel (eds) **Geographies of Muslim Women**. New York: Guilford Press, 2005

Taylor, P.J. and C. Flint **Political Geography: World-system, nation-state and locality**. 4th ed. London: Longman, 2000.

Zakaria, F. “The rise of illiberal democracy.” **Foreign Affairs** 76 (6), 1997, 22-43.

Honor Code and Plagiarism

Classroom Behavior

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety due to the pandemic, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements, and public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. Required safety measures at CU Boulder relevant to the classroom setting include:

- maintain 6-foot distancing when possible,
- wear a face covering in public indoor spaces and outdoors while on campus consistent with state and county health orders,
- clean local work area,
- practice hand hygiene,
- follow public health orders, and
- if sick and you live off campus, do not come onto campus (unless instructed by a CU Healthcare professional), or if you live on-campus, please alert [CU Boulder Medical Services](#).

Students who fail to adhere to these requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to [Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#). For more information, see the policies on [COVID-19 Health and Safety](#) and [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#). If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please see the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

Before returning to campus, all students must complete the [COVID-19 Student Health and Expectations Course](#). Before coming on to campus each day, all students are required to complete a [Daily Health Form](#).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19, have symptoms of COVID-19, or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for or had symptoms of COVID-

19 must stay home and complete the [Health Questionnaire and Illness Reporting Form](#) remotely. In this class, if you are sick or quarantined, ***let the instructor know as soon as you can.***

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code (honor@colorado.edu); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, or protected-class discrimination or harassment by members of our community. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct or retaliatory actions for reporting a concern should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127 or cureport@colorado.edu. Information about the OIEC, university policies, [anonymous reporting](#), and the campus resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when made aware of incidents of sexual misconduct, dating and domestic violence, stalking, discrimination, harassment and/or related retaliation, to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about options for reporting and support resources.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, let the Instructor know if you have a conflict.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Exam Conflicts:

Midterm or Final examination conflicts: if you have 3 final exams on the same day, you can reschedule one. See the university policy on this procedure. Please don't schedule a departure from Boulder before December 12 (day of our final at 1:30. If you have a conflict with the midterm on October 23, please talk to the instructor.