

GEOG 4712 – POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

Fall Semester 2012

Instructor:

Ted Holland

Guggenheim 201H

email: hollande@colorado.edu

Office Hours: MW 4-5pm or by appt. (make appt. by email)

Teaching Assistant:

Meredith DeBoom

Guggenheim 311

email: meredith.deboom@colorado.edu

Office Hours: W 1-2:50pm or by appt.

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 of 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 (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news>) would help significantly to acquire (or further 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.

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). Using the lecture notes from the website is no substitute for class attendance. The TA will take weekly recitation attendance and you will be expected to have the recitation sheet completed before class. The TA may give small quizzes in order to assess students' comprehension of reading material especially if it clear that the readings are being ignored.

KEY DATES – FALL SEMESTER 2012:

- *Class begins Monday 27 August.* Recitation sections will be held the first week of classes.
- *Midterm* examination will be held on **Wednesday 17 October 7-10pm in Education 220.**
- *Proposals* (guidelines will be distributed) for the paper are due to the TA **Monday 22 October at 5pm.**
- The *paper* must be submitted to the TA (hard copy) and to Turnitin.com (electronic copy) by 5pm on **Friday 16 November.**
- The *final examination* will be held **during the exam period, 15 December to 20 December;** date to be determined by the university. (The final will cover the material in unit 2).

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this course, we emphasize relative (and sometimes abstract) understandings of the spatial-temporal context within which life unfolds. Major concepts and theories from the field of international relations

are included in our critique 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: U.S. foreign policy, civil war in African states, political transformations in the former Soviet Union, and international political economy are all examples of topics covered in this course. Reversing the order of topics in the course for practical (many students write papers on nationalism topics) and pedagogical (more accessible and familiar material first) reasons, 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, known as “world-systems theory.” We then use this theory to understand contemporary changes in the world’s regions. Finally, we conclude with some considerations of how the political geography of the post 9/11 world might evolve.

COURSE STRUCTURE

In response to student requests, we restructured the course in 1996 as a two lectures- one discussion period per week. (Formerly we had 3 lectures per week). This experiment is successful when all students come to the discussion sections having already read the material and with questions. The website will have a list of key concepts/terms from the lectures and readings and the TA will organize discussion around them. Further details will be provided in the first recitation section meeting.

COURSE READINGS AND MATERIALS

There is no text book for this course. Readings consist of various text-like chapters as well as research articles on electronic reserve. These files are accessed through the Libraries page (Click on ‘Holland’, <http://libraries.colorado.edu/search/r?SEARCH=Geog+4712>) or the class homepage via Electronic Course Reserves link; http://www.colorado.edu/geography/class_homepages/geog_4712_f12/. The course password to access this material after entering your IdentiKey username and password is **xxxxxxxxxx**. PDF files of the class materials (text-only and key diagrams/maps) used in lecture are also available via the website for pre-lecture printing; these print-outs should help to alleviate frantic note-taking. The username for these notes via the Materials link is **geog4712** and the password is **xxxxxxxxxx**. **(This is not the password; both passwords are provided on the hard-copy of the syllabus to prevent improper access).**

COURSE EVALUATION

The exams are evenly divided between lecture and recitation material using a mixed essay and short answer format. A supplemental review sheet of important concepts will be posted on the course website prior to exams. For the course research paper students are required to follow a specific framework by using a theory to explain/interpret a case study they have selected in consultations with the TA. Because of this format, students will find that the research paper is different than papers they have submitted to other courses. We strongly recommend that students carefully adhere to the paper guidelines, which will be posted on the course webpage.

Students are also required to submit a paper proposal to their TA 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 in the discussion sections in early October. Course grades are assigned on the

basis of 25% midterm; 25% final examination; 30% term paper (including 5% for paper proposal); 20% discussion section based on attendance, participation, and performance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Lecture

Week 1: (Aug. 27) Introduction to the course
What is political geography? Illustration - War in Bosnia-Herzegovina

UNIT 1 NATIONALISM AND CONFLICTS

Week 2: (Sep. 3) *Labor Day (no class)*
Theories of nationalism – non-geographic

Week 3: (Sept. 10) Territorial bases of nationalism
Ethno-territorialism in practice – Caucasus

Week 4: (Sept. 17) Citizenship, identity and territory
Applications of theories of nationalism to conflicts

Week 5: (Sept. 24) The geographical study of conflicts
Global climate change – geopolitical implications

Week 6: (Oct. 1) Climate change and conflict – is there a connection?
After the fighting stops – postwar outcomes

Week 7: (Oct. 8) US geopolitics and the Promotion of Democracy
Politics of failure in the Third World

Week 8: (Oct 15) Restructuring in the Third World
Review for the exam

Exam 1 Oct 17, Wednesday, 7-10pm Education 220

UNIT 2 GEOPOLITICS AND THE WORLD-SYSTEM

Week 9: (Oct 22) Classical geopolitics – “Family Tree”
Heartland theory and Eurasia

Week 10: (Oct. 29) German (Nazi) geopolitics
U.S. (“Democratic”) geopolitics

Week 11: (Nov. 5) Cold War US geopolitics
Post-911 American geopolitics

Week 12: (Nov. 12) Critical geopolitics
US hegemony and local conflicts

THANKSGIVING WEEK – No classes or recitations

Week 13: (Nov. 26) The nature of territorial units in the future (quasi-states)
World-Systems Theory - Wallerstein

Week 14: (Dec. 3) World-systems theory - Modelski
Critiques of World-System Theories

Week 15: (Dec. 10) Crises of the state in capitalist societies
Chaos and cosmos in the future world-system

Exam 2 TBD Education 220

Recitation

NOTE: RECITATION SECTIONS MEET BEGINNING THE WEEK OF AUGUST 27th.
(The keyword in ALL CAPS after the title is the title of the electronic reserve.)

Week 1 (Aug. 27) Introduction

Reading: Dahlman/ Ó Tuathail “Broken Bosnia: localized displacement.” (BROKEN BOSNIA)

UNIT 1 NATIONALISM AND CONFLICTS

Week 2 (Sep. 3) Theories of Nationalism

Reading: Taylor and Flint 192-234 (TF_NATIONALISM)

Week 3 (Sep. 10) Ethno-territorialism

Reading: Anderson chapters Imagined Communities (IMAGINED COMMUNITIES)
Young and Neuberger, selections on African nationalism (AFRICAN_NATIONALISM)

Week 4 (Sep. 17) Nationalism and conflicts

Reading: O’Loughlin “The political geography of conflict” (GEOGRAPHY CONFLICT)
Collier “What fuels civil war?” (CIVIL WARS)

Week 5 (Sep. 24) Conflicts in the Post Cold War world

Reading: Barnett and Adger “Climate change, human security and violent conflict’ (CLIMATE CONFLICT)
Barnett “Geopolitics of Climate Change” (GEOPOLITICS CLIMATE)

Week 6 (Oct. 1) Aftermaths of wars

Reading: O’Loughlin “post-conflict geographies” (POST_CONFLICT)
Zakaria “Illiberal democracy” (ILLIBERAL DEMOCRACY)

Week 7 (Oct. 8) Democracy in the Third World

Reading: O’Loughlin “Global democratization” (GLOBAL DEMOCRATIZATION)
Secor “Islamism, democracy, and the headscarf ”(HEADSCARF)

Week 8 (Oct. 15) Poverty and Uneven Development

Readings: Sachs, et al “Geography of poverty” (GEOG OF POVERTY)
Grant and Nijman, “Re-Scaling of Uneven Development in Ghana and India,” (RESCALING OF UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT)
Friedman “It’s a flat world, after all” (FLAT WORLD)

UNIT 2 GEOPOLITICS AND THE WORLD-SYSTEM

Week 9 (Oct. 22) Classical Geopolitics

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

Agnew “The three ages of geopolitics” (THREE AGES)

Week 10 (Oct. 29) German Geopolitics

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

Ó Tuathail (from *Critical Geopolitics*) pp. 111-136 (GERMAN GEOPOLITICS)

Agnew “A new age of global geopolitics” (NEW AGE)

Week 11 (Nov. 5) U.S. (“Democratic”) Geopolitics

Reading: O’Loughlin “Ordering the Crush Zone. (CRUSH ZONE)

Ignatieff “The American empire: The burden” (AMERICAN EMPIRE)

Johnson “Roots of American militarism.” (AMERICAN_MILITARISM)

Week 12 (Nov. 12) Critical Geopolitics

Reading: Barnett “The Pentagon’s New Map” (PENTAGON’S MAP)

Roberts, Secor, and Sparke, “Neoliberal Geopolitics” (NEOLIBERAL GEOPOLITICS)

Flint and Taylor 65-77 (CRITICAL GEOPOLITICS)

Week 13 (Nov. 26) World -systems

Reading: Kolstø, “The Sustainability and Future of Unrecognized Quasi-States” (QUASI-STATES)

Kaplan “Revenge of geography” and critics (KAPLAN&CRITICS)

Week 14 (Dec. 3) Critiques of world-system theories

Reading: Flint and Taylor , 1-65 (WORLD SYSTEMS)

Week 15 (Dec. 10) Cosmos and chaos

Reading: UNEP “From conflict to peacebuilding” (UNEP)

Watts “Conjunctures and crisis” (CONJUNCTURES)

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

COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agnew, J. **Geopolitics: Revisioning World Politics.** London: Routledge, 2003.

Anderson, B. **Imagined Communities.** New York: Verso, 1991.

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Collier, P. et al. **Breaking the Conflict Trap.** Washington DC: World Bank, 2003.

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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.

Hutchinson, J. and A.D. Smith (eds.) **Nationalism: A Reader**. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Ignatieff, M. “The American empire: The burden.” In G. Ó Tuathail, S. Dalby and P. Routledge (eds) **The Geopolitics Reader**. 2nd edition. London: Routledge, 2006, pp. 155-163.

Johnson, C. 2003. **The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic**. New York: Metropolitan Books.

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.

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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.

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O’Loughlin, J. “Post-conflict geographies.” In N. Thrift and R. Kitchen (eds) **International Encyclopedia of Human Geography**. Oxford: Elsevier, 2009.

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.

Roberts, S., A. Secor, and M. Sparke “Neoliberal Geopolitics” **Antipode** 35 (2003) 886-897.

Sachs, J, et al. “The geography of poverty” **Scientific American** March 2001, 70-75.

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

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

THE FINE PRINT

Honor Code and Plagiarism

The College of Arts and Sciences passed an Honor Code a few years ago. All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member (grade of F for the course) and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion) <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

Turnitin.com

A key element of this code is that CU students will not plagiarize (using the words and thoughts of others as your own). As part of the effort to control plagiarism and to ensure that submitted works from students are fully their own, it is the instructor's intent to submit the student papers in GEOG 4712 to TurnItIn.com and to recommend a grade of F in the course to any student in violation of the CU Honor Code. Note that you cannot submit the same paper or part of a paper for two different classes (current or earlier) without the express permission of both instructors. If a student has any questions about this procedure or about any matter regarding proper citation and the Honor Code, he or she should talk to a TA or the instructor. We will provide full instructions on proper citation and referencing in the recitations leading up to the paper deadline.

Disability Accommodations:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices. This office will give you a letter for the instructor that lists the accommodations.

Religious Accommodation:

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. If you have such a conflict, please see the instructor.

Classroom Behavior:

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline, including exclusion from the class. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with

understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy is especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with the politically-sensitive subject matter of this class. Diversity of opinion is welcomed. *PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES AND LAPTOPS DURING CLASS and RECITATIONS.*

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 do not schedule a departure from Boulder before the final exam date. If you have a conflict with the midterm on the evening of October 17, please talk to the instructor or the TA as soon as possible.