

GEO 4613-0 18071- Brym
World Geopolitical Hot Spots
Fall 2012
Department of History and Geography
T &R: 5:45pm-7:00pm (LAR 220)

Instructor: Dr. Michelle Brym

Office: LAR 204A **Phone:** 974-5665 **E-mail:** mbrym@uco.edu **If you have any questions at all during the semester sending me an e-mail at the above address will be the fastest way to contact me!**

Office HRS: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-5:30 or by appointment. You are strongly encouraged to meet with me if you have any questions or problems throughout the semester. Appointments can be made for times other than those listed above.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a comprehensive study of geopolitics. Topics covered in the course include historical approaches to geopolitics and present day themes geographers apply to the study of global conflicts. Selected geopolitical hot spots of current concern will also be discussed. Analysis of each hotspot will entail a study of the regional setting, historical development patterns, and the current status.

SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the role of the key thinkers that have influenced the framework through which geopolitics is studied (Discipline Knowledge)
2. Be able to define key geopolitical concepts and apply these concepts to an understanding of current day conflicts. (Discipline knowledge and Problem Solving)
3. Be able to articulate the importance of scale and cultural specific logic in understanding political conflicts (Global and Cultural Competence)
4. Learn to lead and participate in a discussion on current geopolitical events. Be able to understand the multiple viewpoints represented in a given political conflict. (Leadership Skills, Problem Solving)
5. It is my hope that as you learn about conflicts around the world you will better assess how the global economic and world political system connect places around the globe (Civic Engagement)

Transformative Learning Objectives

Transformative Learning Objectives (“Central Six”)

Transformative learning goals (the “Central Six”) have been identified as: Discipline Knowledge; Leadership; Problem Solving (Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities); Service Learning and Civic Engagement; Global and Cultural Competencies; and Health and Wellness.

The Course addresses 5 of the university’s transformative learning goals. Discipline knowledge is accomplished through lectures, and assigned reading materials. Leadership skills will be addressed through student lead discussions, Problem Solving will be

accomplished through policy reports and participation in class discussions, Service Learning and Civic Engagement will be accomplished through the development of an understanding of the connection between policy decisions made in the U.S. and their influence on the world system, Global and Cultural Competencies will be achieved by the exposure to different cultural practices that influence politics at different scales.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

1. Flint, Colin. 2006. *Introduction to Geopolitics*. Routledge, New York; NY, 1st edition.
2. Allen, John & Christopher Sutton. 2010. *Student Atlas of World Politics*, McGraw-Hill, 9th edition.

HOW YOUR LEARNING WILL BE ASSESSED

The final grade you earn in this class will reflect your performance on the following:

- 1) two exams
- 2) the facilitation of a class discussion on a current geopolitical hotspot
- 3) three written policy reports, and
- 4) class attendance and participation.

2 Exams	200 pts	45%
1 Facilitation of Class Discussion	70 pts	16%
3 Policy Reports	150 pts	33%
Class attendance and participation	30 pts	6%
TOTAL		450 pts

Exams

The format of the exam will be short answer questions and essay questions. You will be responsible for material presented in class, the textbook and assigned readings. Makeup exams will only be given to those students who are unable to be present in class because of an official university excuse. Let me know as soon as possible that you will not be able to make the exam. **No makeup exams will be given with out a written petition, explaining the illness or university event that caused you to miss the exam. If you miss due to a medical emergency you must have a signed physician’s medical excuse to take the exam.**

Facilitation of Class Discussion:

Each student will be responsible for the facilitation a class discussion. You will select one article on your given topic two weeks before your assigned facilitation date. Once the instructor has approved your selected article, this article along with a second article selected by the instructor, will be passed along to all students in the class to read. A handout will be distributed and posted on D2L with instructions how to select a journal, the specifics of your roles as a facilitator and how you will be graded for your performance.

Policy Reports:

You will turn in three policy reports this semester. For each report you will select a specific conflict that relates to the topic being studied in class. You will write up a report that provides a brief background to the conflict, identifies interests groups involved in the conflict, and provides suggestions to elevate the conflict. Each paper will be 4 pages double-spaced. A handout will be posted on D2L with more detailed instructions. Late work will be penalized based on the degree of lateness. It is better to hand in a late assignment than to not turn anything in. This report **MUST BE TYPED. NO electronically submitted assignments will be accepted** without prior permission by the instructor.

Readings:

You are expected to do all of the readings before class so you can participate in the discussion. As you read you should take notes of the main points, new terms introduced in the reading, points that are not clear and statements you strongly agree or disagree with. The instructor will collect a copy of your notes before class. You should have a second copy to use during class discussion. You will be given your notes back on exam day and will be able to use them when taking the exam. The notes are to be in outline form in which you paraphrase the main points of the article. Notes in which you cut and paste directly from the text will not be accepted.

Class Attendance and Participation Policy:

Your attendance and participation points will be a total of the points you have earned for participating in class, minus any points you have lost for failing to attend class or for being disruptive during class. Attendance and class participation (A&P) makes up a small percentage of your total grade but it does have a direct impact on your final grade. Failure to attend class will result in your inability to perform satisfactorily on exams. Nor will you be aware of any changes the instructor may have made to your reading list. I expect our class to be highly interactive. We will have various learning activities and discussions in class therefore regular physical attendance and mental presence is a must! Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class, so arrive on time. Three unexcused absences will be allowed. If you miss more than three you will lose one point per missed class off your in class participation points. You will be penalized 10 points for missing a discussion day class.

I will use the following criteria to determine your participation points:

27-30 points: You regularly (almost every class) volunteered *substantial* questions and shared your opinions with the class. You were always prepared to participate in class. This means you always had your assignments completed, your readings completed and you brought any additional information you were asked to bring to class.

24-26 points: You frequently (about once a week) volunteered to ask *clarification* or *substantial* questions and shared your opinions with the class. You were always prepared to participate in class. This means you always had your assignments completed, your

readings completed and you brought any additional information you were asked to bring to class.

21-23 points: You answered questions when asked and you occasionally volunteered to ask *clarification* questions. Most days you were prepared to participate in class. This means you usually had your assignments completed, your readings completed and you usually brought any additional information you were asked to bring to class.

18-20 points: You rarely were able to answer *clarification* questions when you are called on. Rarely were you prepared to participate in class. This means you rarely had your assignments completed, your readings completed and you rarely brought any additional information you were asked to bring to class.

0-17 points: You rarely prepared ahead of time for class, you rarely could answer clarification questions and you at times disrupted the classroom by engaging in intentionally disruptive behavior (ex: playing with a cell phone in class).

Grading Scale

A: 100-90.0% **B:** 89.9-80.0% **C:** 79.9-70.0% **D:** 69.9-60.0% **F:** 59.9% or less

Students will not be allowed to do extra credit work or resubmit their work in order to improve their grade unless that option is made available to all students in the class. **The points you earn will determine your grade.** Do not expect to receive a grade higher than what you have earned and **do not ask for this consideration.**

How to Succeed in Geography

An A requires extra effort from the student. You will not earn an “A” by doing the bare minimum. Students who earn “A’s” are attentive, rarely miss class, score the highest on exams, are leaders in discussion and put extra effort into their assignments. The following are suggestion to help you earn a high grade in the class. First, attend class. Second read the textbook and assigned articles. Take notes as you read and take notes on information presented in class. Good note taking skills are essential to success in college. If you need help with these skills please ask the instructor for guidance. As your instructor I am here to help you learn however I can only help you if you tell me about any difficulties you are having with the course or personal concerns that are making it difficult for you to concentrate on your studies. If you stop by my office during my office hours I will be happy to help you develop strategies that will make you more successful in the course and in your university career.

CLASS RULES

1. Cell phones, pagers and headphones must be turned off at the door.
2. Come to class on time. You will lose participation points for excessive tardiness.
3. If you are caught cheating, you will fail the assignment or exam automatically.
4. No disruptive conversation during class—you **WILL be asked to leave.** Any student failing to demonstrate mature and respectful behavior will also be removed from the class.
5. Once a student has begun taking an exam the individual may not leave the classroom until they have completed the exam. If you leave during the exam you will receive a 5 point deduction for every minute you are gone.

Students with Disabilities

ADA Statement: The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with

disabilities who need special accommodations should make their request by contacting Disability Support Services at 974-2549.

Academic Conduct: Any evidence of cheating on quizzes or assignments will earn an automatic zero for all involved and may result in expulsion from the university. For further information read the student information on policies at the University of Central Oklahoma, available at the following website:
<http://broncho2.uco.edu/academicaffairs/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>

Note: This syllabus functions very much like a contract. By remaining enrolled into this class it is understood that it is your responsibility to adhere to the policies herein. **The instructor may make changes to the course schedule.** It is your responsibility to make any adjustments the instructor informs you about during the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

* Have the assigned reading completed by class the day on which the reading is listed below. Bring the readings to class. Reading assignments may be changed during the semester. It is your responsibility to update your reading assignment list if any changes are announced in class.

Part I: Introduction to Geopolitics

Week 1: What is Geopolitics?

8/21 Introduction to Geopolitics/Geography

8/23 Early Geopolitics: Anglo-American Geographers Halford MacKinder and Alfred Thayer Mahan

Readings: 1) Chapter 1 Flint

2) Venier, Pascal. 2004. The Geographical Pivot of History and Early Twentieth Century Geopolitical Culture, The Geographical Journal, 170 (4), 330-336

Week 2: Geopolitical Frameworks

8/28 World Systems Theory and Long Cycles in World Politics

Readings: 1) Chapter 2 Flint

8/30 Cold War Geopolitics and Rogue States

Readings: 1) Chapter 3 Flint 2) Klare. Michael. 1995. Rogue States and Nuclear Outlaws: America's Search for a New Foreign Policy.

Week 3: Geopolitical Codes

9/4 Representations of Geopolitical Codes Today, Readings: 1) Chapter 4 Flint

9/6 A New Global Order, Readings: 1) Continue Flint, etc. 2009 2) Mapping the Dynamism of the United States' Geopolitical Code: The Geography of the State of the Union Speeches, 1988–2008, *Geopolitics*, 14: 604-629.

Week 4: Exam/Part II: Themes in Geopolitics

9/11 Exam 1

9/13 Nationalism and Nation-States Readings: 1) Chapter 5 Flint

Week 5: Nationalism

9/18 Case Study: Indian Nationalism Readings: 1) Oza, Rupal. (2007) The Geography of Hindu Right-Wing Violence in India, in Violent Geographies: Fear, Terror and Political Violence, (eds.) Derek Gregory and Allan Pred, Routledge

9/20 Policy Report 1 Due: Mandatory in Class Discussion

Week 6: Borders

9/25 Readings: 1) Chapter 6 Flint

9/27 Case Study: Israel/Palestine

Week 7: Global Terrorism

10/2 Policy Report 2 Due: Mandatory in Class Discussion

10/4 Readings: 1) Chapter 7 Flint

Week 8: Global Terrorism

10/9 al-Qaeda

10/11 No Class Fall Break

Week 9: Finish Global Terrorism/ Start Part Three: Current Geopolitical Hotspots-North Korea/South Korea

10/16 Policy Report 3 Due: Mandatory in Class Discussion

10/18 North Korea and South Korea Lecture

Week 10: U.S./Mexican Border

10/23 Discussion on North Korea and South Korea Lead by _____

10/25 U.S./Mexican Border Lecture

Week 11: Film

10/30 Joint Security Area Film

11/1 Joint Security Area Film

Week 12: India/Pakistan Conflict

11/6 Discussion on U.S/Mexican Border Lead by _____

11/8 Lecture on India/Pakistan (Jammu-Kashmir) conflict

Week 13: India/Pakistan Conflict

11/13 Discussion on India/Pakistan Conflict Lead by _____

11/15 Lecture on Chechnya

Week 14: Chechnya

11/20 Discussion on Chechnya Lead by _____

11/22 No Class Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: Western Saharan

11/27 Lecture

12/29 Discussion on South Sudan Lead by _____

Week 16: Taiwan

12/4 Lecture

12/6 Discussion on Taiwan Lead by _____

Final Exam Thursday December 13th 5:30-7:20pm