

GEOG 441/541
Political Geography
Monday/Wednesday – 2:00 – 3:20 pm
175 Lillis
Fall 2017

Instructor: Professor Alexander B. Murphy, 173 Condon Hall, abmurphy@uoregon.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays, 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Dean Olson, xxx Condon Hall, deano@uoregon.edu
Office hours: TBA

This course examines political patterns and processes from a geographical perspective. We look at the political organization of territory in different parts of the world and examine the spatial relationships between political patterns and a variety of related phenomena, including resources, militarization, ethnicity, economic development, and policy making. We will also examine ways in which long-standing political-territorial arrangements are being challenged or undermined.

For undergraduates the requirements of the course are a map exercise (15% of the grade), a two-page book review of a novel by George Orwell (15% of the grade), two exams (each worth 20% of the grade), and a five-page paper on a territorial conflict between nations or states (30% of the grade). For graduate students the requirements are participation in a few extra discussion sections (10% of the grade), two exams (each worth 20% of the grade), and a term paper (50% of the grade). Regular class attendance is expected. The readings listed below should be completed before the lectures to which they are assigned. Please note that assignments must be turned in on time. Since you have ample warning of due dates, no extensions will be granted unless the circumstances are exceptional. To ensure a level playing field for everyone, there will be no possibilities for extra-credit work. You are welcome to discuss assignments with one another outside of class, but completed assignments must be the product of your own work.

Many of the readings for the course are in article form and are available under the Course Documents tab in the Canvas site for the class. Other readings come from two books (available at the UO bookstore): J. Agnew and L. Muscarà, *Making Political Geography*, 2nd ed., Rowman & Littlefield, 2012 [hereinafter Agnew and Muscarà], and G. Orwell, *Burmese Days*, Harcourt, Brace, 1974 (required reading only for undergraduates).

Showing respect for your peers is absolutely essential to a good group learning process. This includes openness to differing opinions, listening as well as talking, and refraining from personal attacks. Violations of academic integrity, such as plagiarism and cheating, will not be tolerated (see <http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>). Suspected violations will be reported to the Director of Student Judicial Affairs. If that office finds the student to be guilty of a violation, it may result in a failing grade for the course. Electronic devices such as cell phones and pagers must be turned off during class. Significant note-taking is strongly encouraged, but laptops are discouraged, as considerable research shows that old-fashioned note taking tends to lead to better understanding. If you nonetheless decide to use a laptop, the only permissible use is for note taking.

In addition to the required readings, I encourage you to keep yourself informed of current affairs during the term, as that will help you ground the knowledge you gain through this class.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND REQUIRED READINGS:

September 25

Introduction to the subject matter of the course
Geographical perspectives on politics and political arrangements
Pre-modern forms of political/territorial organization

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, Chapter 1

Map exercise handed out on September 25

September 27

Foundations of the modern state system
The rise of the modern state and associated territorial ideas
(the concepts of sovereignty and the nation-state)

Reading: Chapter 2 in Jones et al. (on Canvas)
Chapter by Murphy, 1996 (on Canvas)

October 2, 4 & 9

The diffusion of the nation-state idea
Imperialism, colonialism, and the emergence of the modern political map

Reading: Orwell, *Burmese Days* (entire book)

***Map exercises due October 9**

October 11, 16 & 18

Geographical approaches to the study of the state
The importance of territory, resources, internal spatial structure, and population characteristics

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, chapter 2
Chapter 3 in J. Gottmann, *The Significance of Territory*, 1973 (on Canvas)
Article by Mikesell, 1983 (on Canvas)

***Orwell Review due Oct. 18**

October 23

Political territory, ethnicity, and nationalism
Case study: Belgium

Reading: Article by Mikesell and Murphy, 1991 (on Canvas)
Article by Murphy, 1993 (on Canvas)

October 25 – EXAM COVERING THE FIRST HALF OF THE CLASS

October 30

Introduction to geopolitics
The nature and significance of boundaries

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, chapters 3-4

Undergraduate short paper assignment handed out on October 30

November 1

The tension between boundaries and identity
Case Study: Kurdistan (Guest lecture: Sanan Moradi)

Reading: Book chapter by Dahlman and Moradi, 2017 (on Canvas)

November 6

Interstate boundary conflicts
Ideological bases for the territorial extent of states

Reading: Chapter by Murphy, 2005 (on Canvas)

November 8 & 13

Globalization and its impact on the territorial state
The concepts of deterritorialization and reterritorialization
Suprastate patterns of political organization and influence

Reading: Article by Agnew, 2004 (on Canvas)
Article by Murphy, 2013 (on Canvas)
Agnew and Muscarà, pp. 162-181 of Chapter 5

November 15

??Transboundary cooperation initiatives
Case study: U.S. – Mexico border (Guest lecture: Dean Olson)

Reading: TBA

November 20 & 22

Political geography at the local scale
Political geography and everyday life

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, pp. 199-216 of Chapter 5
Article by Painter, 2006 (on Canvas)

November 27

Political geography and the environment

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, pp. 183-199 of Chapter 5
Hommel and Murphy, 2013 (on Canvas)

November 29

The contemporary world in political geographic perspective

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, chapter 5, pp. 162-183, 223-238 & chapter 6

*** Undergraduate short paper due in class**

*** Graduate student paper due by Dec. 1**

December 7, 2:45 pm - EXAM COVERING SECOND HALF OF THE CLASS (i.e., not cumulative)