

GEOG 441/541
Political Geography
Monday/Wednesday – 10:00 – 11:20 pm
175 Lillis
Fall 2016

Instructor: Professor Alexander B. Murphy, 173 Condon Hall, abmurphy@uoregon.edu
Office hours: TBA

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Sanan Moradi, 247 Columbia, smoradi@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 (20% of the grade), a late-in-the-term take-home exam (30% 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.

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. 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 26

Introduction to the subject matter of the course
Geographical perspectives on politics and political arrangements

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, Chapter 1

Map exercise handed out on September 26

September 28 and October 3

Pre-modern forms of political/territorial organization
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 5, 10 & 12

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 10**

October 17 & 19

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

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

***Orwell Review due Oct. 19**

October 24

Political territory, ethnicity, and nationalism

Reading: Article by Mikesell, 1983 (on Canvas)
Article by Mikesell and Murphy, 1991 (on Canvas)

October 26 – EXAM COVERING THE FIRST HALF OF THE CLASS

October 31

Territorial dimensions of ethno-nationalism 2: The Belgian Case

Reading: TBA

Undergraduate short paper assignment handed out on October 31

November 2 & 7

Introduction to geopolitics
The nature and significance of international boundaries
International boundary conflicts
Ideological bases for the territorial extent of states

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, chapters 3-4
Chapter by Murphy, 2005 (on Canvas)

November 9 & 14

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

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

November 16

Stateless nations in a world of “nation-states”: the Kurdish case (Guest lecture: Sanan Moradi)

Reading: Dahlman and Moradi, 2015 (on Canvas)

***Graduate student take-home midterm handed out on Nov. 16 and due in class on Nov. 21**

November 21 & 23

Political geography at the local scale
Political geography and everyday life

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, pp. 199-216 of Chapter 5
Article by Mitchell, 1991 (on Canvas)
Article by Painter, 2006 (on Canvas)

November 28

Political geography and the environment

Reading: Agnew and Muscarà, pp. 183-199 of Chapter 5
Additional article TBA (on Canvas)

November 30

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 in class**

**December 8, 10:15 – 11:45 pm - EXAM COVERING SECOND HALF OF
THE CLASS (i.e., not cumulative)**