**GE 331:**  
Political Geography  
Spring 2007

**Instructor:** Professor Bill Anderson  
Office: CAS 439f  
Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 11-12:30; Wednesday 1-2  
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**Lectures:** Tuesday, Thursday 9:30 – 11:00, CAS 224

**Description:** Political Geography is the study of how geographical features and patterns interact with political processes to create a constantly evolving political landscape*. Studies in political geography can be local, regional or global in scale. While in this course we are most concerned with the global scale, we will not lose sight of the fact that global outcomes are often driven by local phenomena.

The course has three goals: 1) to inform students on the geographical features, processes and theories that have been identified by political geographers as relevant to the creation of the political landscape; 2) to apply these ideas in describing and explaining the evolution of the political landscape in all parts of the world; and 3) to endow the student with a broad base of spatial empirical information as required for further study in geography or international relations.

The course begins with an overview of concepts and theories in political geography. This is followed by a review of events that transformed the political map in two critical periods of history: the colonial era of the 19th century and the Cold War era. The remainder of the course comprises a series of regional surveys. For each region we examine a) critical geopolitical features, b) key events and issues within the region involving borders, resources and international relations; and b) the region’s role and position in the broader, global political system.

**Required Books:**  


GG331 Course Pack: A set of supplementary readings. Available for purchase in first week discussion sessions. Students will be assigned additional readings according to the region on which they are assigned in the discussion sessions (see below.)

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*Saul Cohen, the author of our textbook, prefers the term Geopolitics to Political Geography. While these two terms have somewhat different connotations in their historical contexts, we will treat them as interchangeable for the purpose of this course.
Maps:
This course will emphasize maps as media for organizing and conveying geographical information. The Student Atlas of World Politics (listed above) contains political, physical and thematic maps to which you should refer frequently over the course of the semester. (It also contains tables with international data on political, economic, environmental and quality of life indicators.) Other contemporary maps are available from the National Geographic Society web site (www.nationalgeographic.com) whose MapMachine feature allows you to access a wide variety of up-to-date political and topographic maps, plus satellite images for all parts of the world.

Acquisition of map knowledge is a fundamental skill for students of political geography and international relations. Maps will be assigned for study throughout the course and a series of map quizzes will be used to test your map study skills.

Discussion Sessions:
Weekly discussion sessions will expand on the material presented in lecture. Each student will be assigned to a team that will take responsibility for one of the world regions covered in the text and lectures. The team will make a presentation to the class and lead a discussion on its assigned regions. Further details will be provided in a separate syllabus for the discussion sessions.

Course Web Site: Lectures will be presented with the aid of PowerPoint slides, which will be made available on the courseinfo site. (Remember – review of these slides is no substitute for attending lectures!) Course grades, assignments, answer keys and some supplementary readings will also be provided on the site.

Evaluation:

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion section attendance and completion of assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Map Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid Term Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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Note – one point will be deducted from the final grade for every unexcused lecture absence beyond three.

General Lecture Outline:
Part I Background

Week 1 (January 16, 18): Introduction. Course objectives, basic concepts, review of scholarship in Political Geography.
Readings: Cohen, Chapters 1, 2
Maps: review 1-10.

The Legacy of Colonialism. How European colonization, especially in the late 19th century, gave rise to the modern political map of the world.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 3
Course Pack: Newman
Course Pack: Glassner and Fahrer

Readings: Cohen, Chapter 4
Course Pack: Huntington
Maps: 17, 18, 21, 22, 24, 31, 34.

Week 4 (February 6, 8) North and Middle America Review of physical and geopolitical features, stages of US geopolitical development, Canada – US relations, US relations with Mexico and Middle America.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 5

Week 5 (February 13, 15) Maritime Europe and the Maghreb I. Review of physical and geopolitical features, European borders in historical perspective, geographical challenges of European integration.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 6
Maps 16-19, 83-85.

Week 6 (February 22) Maritime Europe and the Maghreb II. The Maghreb as Europe’s strategic annex.
Readings: Maps 95-97.
Review for midterm

Midterm Exam, Tuesday February 27.

Week 7 (March 1, 6, 8) Russia and the Heartlandic Periphery. Review of physical and geopolitical features, historical perspective on expanding Russian / Soviet state, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 7
Maps 30 (p.44, 51), 86, 87, 89, 90.

Week 8 (March 20, 22) East Asia. Review of physical and geopolitical features, China: continentality vs. maritimity, Taiwan and Indochina.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 8, Course Pack Dzurek
Maps 91-94.
Week 9 (March 27, 29) *The Asia-Pacific Rim*. Review of physical and geopolitical features; Japan: from militarily dominance to economic dominance; export orientation, economic growth and regional integration; disputes over ocean rights.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 9  
Maps 24, 101

Week 10 (April 3, 5) *South Asia*: Review of physical and geopolitical features, geographical and historical perspectives on the emergence of national states, India Pakistan border dispute, India Bangladesh riparian dispute.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 10, Course Pack World Bank  
Maps 30(p.46, 47), 91-92

Week 11 (April 10, 12) *The Middle East*. Review of physical and geopolitical features, from Ottoman dominance to Great Power Rivalry, oil and economic transformation. Arab-Israeli disputes over geographical resources: territory and water.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 11  
Course Pack: Harris  
Maps 21,30(p. 45,49,50) 89, 90.

Week 12 (April 17, 19) *South America*. Review of physical and geopolitical features, colonialism and borders, initiatives for economic integration.
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 12, Course Pack Wiarda and Kline  
Maps 80-82.

Week 13 (April 24, 26, May 1) *Sub-Saharan Africa*. Review of physical and geopolitical features, the colonial legacy: arbitrary borders and poor economic integration, South Africa as regional economic catalyst?
Readings: Cohen, Chapter 13  
Course Pack: Hargreaves  
Maps 22, 23, 30 (p.47, 48) 95-97.

May 3: Review for final

*Final Exam*: Tuesday, May 8, 9-11 AM, room TBA - *All students must be available to take the exam on the scheduled date.*

*Students are reminded of their responsibility to know and understand the provisions of the Academic Conduct Code. Copies are available in CAS 105.*
Supplementary Reading Package (Available in discussion sessions.)