World Political Geography

GEO 3471 Summer 2016

Course Home

Instructor Contact:

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Course Overview:

From Earth orbit, the planet appears a singular entity in the mind's eye while from the lunar surface, a big blue marble, see above. Environmentalists and internationalists of various stripes speak of the human race existing on a fragile ecosystem in which cooperation sh become the hallmark of our existence. The reality, however, is that of extreme diversity – peoples, religions, governments, cultures and li chances which differ dramatically across the globe. For example, migration of people across national borders remains a worldwide phenomenon as individuals and their families pursue improved life chances for themselves and their children. As a society of immigrants, Americans are particularly aware of this historical fact and its present day reality. Such movements often occur at great human cost and ri can be seen in the flight of Syrians from their war torn state.. This course is an exploration into this diversity of the human condition acros and distance. The focus is upon the interaction between geographic factors and political processes resulting in differences in how life goe diverse societies. Politics being the art of the possible, geographic factors become one important set of variables which determines the lir political possibility. For example, Israel surrounded by enemies and unfriendly neighbors is unable to ignore their neighbors.

Within this course, the basics involve discussing the evolution of the nation state – the building blocks of the present day international syst and the context within which most people live and work on a daily basis. States have geographic dimensions while nations may be more indistinct geographically speaking since they reflect cultural parameters. This incongruity has definite effects upon world politics – witness disintegration of Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union and conflicts in the Mid East over the Palestinians and Kurds in their quest for pc recognition and autonomy. Kurdistan in northern Iraq is an expression of Kurdish nationalism, a concept fiercely resisted by Iraq, Iran, Syr Turkey. The collapse of Syria into civil war and insurrection has fostered the possibility of another Kurdistan within Syria with unknown pot for change in the realm. The West Bank and Gaza remain as symbols of Palestinian aspirations which compete with Israeli desires.

Conceptually, after the delineation of the basic theoretical framework, the course will shift into a realm or regional mode of analysis. Realr this course are part of a conceptual map for helping to think about the world in systematic terms. Neighbors help determine what a particu nation state is capable of doing so regions become one avenue to understanding the larger world context. The world becomes even mor complex each day as economic systems and communications networks grow increasingly intertwined. The patterns, however, are not ran but at a fundamental level reflect the influence of geographic factors. Modern technology has dramatically reduced the effects of distance geography but never eliminates them, as we will discuss. The edition of the book being used in this course illustrates the conceptual part c realms in that Central Asia has moved from the realm of North Africa and the Middle East to the Russian realm. This change reflects the r that those states in Central Asia are still grappling with the reality that the former Soviet Union (now defunct) controlled their development plus years and that legacy is still being processed within those states.

The **only extra credit** given in the course is completed within the first weeks of the course; there will not be any other opportunity for extra later. You are not required to complete the extra credit assignment, that is your choice but understand this is your only opportunity. Other materials are presented through the use of content modules which you are responsible for accessing and completing the required reading and/or assignment.

Learner Objectives

- You will understand the concepts defining what geography is and its 5 major themes
- You will be able to discuss what makes a realm and how within the realms regions states and peoples are interconnected
- You will understand development of nation states and the processes through which they add or loss territory along with the rise of mu nation states
- You will be able to discuss how economic and social development is impacted by geography and how societies cope with their physic environment
- You will understand what realms and regions exist presently and their composition and major changes that are occurring in each inclu environmental changes that do not observe national boundaries.

Required Texts and Materials:

Jan Nijman, Peter O. Muller, & H.J. de Blij - *The World Today: Concepts and Regions in Geography* (7th Edition)

The text provides basic information in the course especially regarding concepts used in regional geography. Exam materials will come fror text and modules along with readings linked in the modules. **Readings from the textbook are identified in the modules at the beginni**

Course Grade Structure:

Examinations: Total of 3 examinations, each is weighed **200 points**, for a total weight of 60% of the course grade.

Module Assignments: Total of 2 module assignments, each weighed 200 points, total weight of 40% of the course grade.

Participation: Students are expected to participate in several discussion forums. No points are assessed. **Participation is counted student's grade falls between one letter grade and another; remember there are no plus/minus grades. Active and positive participation will lead to the higher grade. as demonstrated over previous semesters.**

Extra Credit: 50 points, completed as part of module 0 on line, **this is the only extra credit available in this course**

Communicating within the Course

In this class our official mode of communication is through the course email located inside Canvas and email to the instructor at **roger.handberg@ucf.edu (mailto:roger.handberg@ucf.edu)** , Individuals with a personal issue should email the instructor at **roger.handberg@ucf.edu (mailto:roger.handberg@ucf.edu)** using their knightsmail account. All communications between student and ins and between student and student should be respectful and professional. It is the student's responsibility to check the "course mail" tool frequently. You must also create a Knight's Email account at www.knightsemail.ucf.edu for separate official communications from the unive Under university policy, the instructor is prohibited from communicating official information about student performance in the course excep through Knight's email (the email system is free). To repeat, students should use Knights email to contact the instructor outside the course **roger.handberg@ucf.edu (mailto:roger.handberg@ucf.edu)** .

Assignments: The assignments referenced above must be posted on the course website with your response submitted through

web. The assignments will involve reading text materials, researching materials on the web and in the media (electronic or print), and the answering the question posed in the form of an essay. Please note the deadline listed on the syllabus provided on the website and on the submission site. Grades for this assignment like all other course grades are posted to the course grade book to which students enrolled i course have access. **You are expected to format assignments and references according to the instructions at the end of this docu**

Assignment topics are discussed in the modules. **Each assignment must be a minimum of 1200 words, maximum of 2,000 and in MS format; otherwise, I am unable to open the document.** This may lead to a delay in grading the materials while you resubmit the assign A second occurrence will result in a “zero” grade for the assignment. This restriction means no WordPerfect, MS Works or other word processing programs are acceptable. Each assignment should have a **minimum of 5 references, text and course module materials do count as a reference but can be used where applicable and properly cited. See section at the end of this link for formatting for assignments. Note that if you quote materials, there must be a citation identifying where the quote came from, failure to do so w result in lost points. Wikipedia is not an acceptable reference; first use reduces your grade the equivalent of one letter grade; se use, failure of the assignment. In addition, entries taken from Encyclopedia Britannica and dictionary entries to define terms are counted as references.**

Exams:

The examinations can incorporate both essay and short answer formats. Students will be queried as to their understanding of the process concepts in world political geography. Assignments will test student understanding of different information and concepts discussed in the modules and in the readings. The instructor grades all exams and assignments which are not machine graded which takes time.

Extra Credit:

Extra credit comes in two components in Module 0, one must complete the entire assignment to get full credit. The Introductory Assignme involves students completing a course-related biography and demonstrating certain techniques related to successfully completing the cou The Web Link Annotation as part of the Extra Credit involves students locating an Internet link not already identified in the course. Their assignment becomes annotating (describing and evaluating) in general terms the particular web site’s content, usability and then make so assessment as to its validity, usefulness and reliability as a possible source of information. Simply put, is the link worth accessing or not? I of the material on the Web is of dubious reliability, becoming a critical content evaluator and consumer of information is an important part course. In addition, you must answer two questions concerning the syllabus, those are included in your web annotation. **This is the only credit assignment available during this course so please do not ask for additional extra credit opportunities.**

Academic Purposes and Conduct:

Please consult The Golden Rule online at http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu for guidelines. Students should only present material that th demonstrate they have studied and learned from course documents and approved activities. Cheating, dishonesty, or plagiarism is ground grade reduction or failure in this course.

Plagiarism is presenting someone words or work as if they were your own. Do not cut-and-paste others' material into your discussions or essays. All of the writing assignments in this class require you to produce your own informed thinking about the assigned topics. When yo integrate your research and secondary literature into your arguments, you must provide sufficient attributions and citations to protect the intellectual property of others. To learn more about plagiarism, see http://www.plagiarism.org. This course requires original work on writing assignments. If you wish to write about a topic that you have previously done in another course, you must contact me before hand to work an acceptable project.

UCF faculty members have a responsibility for your education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior when necessary respond to infringements of academic integrity. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, suspension or expulsion from the university, and/or a "Z Designation" on a student's official transcript indicating academic dishonesty. For information about the Z Designation, see http://z.ucf.edu/.

For more information about UCF's Rules of Conduct, see**http://issuu.com/ucfsdes/docs/goldenrule__2014-2015_ (http://issuu.com/ucfsdes/docs/goldenrule__2014-2015_)**. Be advised that instructors at UCF are required to report alleged cheating or plagiarism with the C of Student Conduct.

Course grading: Grades in this course will employ only standard letter grades A, B, C, etc. with no “minuses” or “pluses.”

Participation in Class Discussions: Several Class Discussions are posted for students to discuss questions related to th course. Constructive participation in such forums will count in determining final grades. If a student is on the border between one grade a another, participation will be assessed as the tie breaker as to whether the higher letter grade is assigned. Remember there are no plus/m grades in this course. Constructive refers to comments adding to the discussion not tirades regarding some issue that the individual is em concerning and wishes to vent on others in the class.

N.B. The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus and course schedule due to changing circumstances and other problems that arise during the semester. Changes will be posted to the course website. The forums are linked to specific questions identified in the modules. Those announcements can include changes in the course requirements or other items of interest.

Formatting for Assignments, proposals and papers in Handberg's Courses:

All quotes within your assignment must show a reference identifying where the quote came from, failure to do so will result in lost po this should include page number from where the quote came from if applicable. Students should use end notes (footnotes placed at the e the paper or assignment, use the footnote tab within Word for proper placement) with references in the following format within the end not

Book: author name(s), book title (publisher name, year published), pages cited (required if a quote)

Article journal: author name(s), "article title in quotes," Journal title complete, volume number of journal (date published inclu month if available), pages in article, if quote page required from whence the quote was obtained.

Newspaper/periodical article: author name(s), "article title," newspaper name (date published), **if web based provide complete URL (date article accessed).**

Government document or report: author name(s) or committee or group author name, "report title," name of agency which report done, **if web accessed provide complete URL (provide date website accessed and report read),** provide pages quoted accessed (required if quote used).

Website: author name(s) or organization home of website, title of website or applicable tab within the website, **provide complet (provide date website accessed and read).** For the Introductory Assignment, you are expected to adhere to this format for reporting on website you selected.

Proper citation is important especially since I reserve the right to check on your cite as to relevance and accuracy. Do not list references y have not read.

April 2016