GEOG 6220-101: Seminar in Human Geography - Critical Geopolitics

Course Description:
This course aims to introduce you to critical geopolitics – a subfield within geography that analyzes back stories and the current state of affairs, concerning how we come to situate ourselves in the larger world around us, how regional (local and global) priorities are set, and how worldviews are communicated and adopted by geopolitical actors. Critical geopolitics goes beyond the surface level assumption of geopolitics, which emphasizes the locational and/or spatial benefits of territory and power. Instead, critical geopolitics critiques the assumptions made about “interests” and engages the processes of their creation. In other words, this course will ask the question, how are dominant worldviews born, spread, exercised, and acted upon to maintain power? As such, the beginning of the course examines various types of critical geopolitical thinking so that we can establish a framework. The second half explores the world of geospatial information technologies (GIT) and how these structures play a role in the shaping of knowledge, priorities, and power around the globe – all of which will be approached through the lens of critical geopolitics.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
Dates: April 20 – 26, 2020
Location: Hurlburt Field, Florida. Class will be held in Bldg. 90220, 221 Lukasik Ave.
Hours: Monday - Friday 6:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.; Saturday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: March 22, 2020

Site Director:
This military installation is not open to the general public. In order to take courses at this installation, students must have a current military or Department of Defense identification card which allows them to access the installation.
Email: aphurlburt@ou.edu. Phone: 850-581-3000.

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Jeffrey Widener
Mailing Address: 510 Sarkeys Energy Center
100 East Boyd St.
Norman, OK 73069
Telephone Number: 405.315.7733
Email Address: jwidener@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via email to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the OU Bookstore Website at https://ou.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php. There is no longer a physical bookstore, the store will remain, but textbooks will not be stocked. The website has book selling, renting, buying, returning, and
order tracking capabilities. If you need help with an order, or if you have any questions contact the toll-free phone at 1-(855)-790-6637, agents are available from 9a – 5p (EST) Monday – Friday. For more information or questions about textbooks, feel free to contact apsyllabi@ou.edu. Text prices are available online

1. Please provide author, title, publication year and ISBN
2. Please provide author, title, publication year and ISBN
3. If you will be placing materials on Canvas please indicate that here. We will add instructions on how to access the material.

Instructional Materials:
All materials will be available as PDFs or links that are shared via Canvas. Access Canvas at https://canvas.ou.edu, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. If you require assistance with Canvas, please click on the Help icon. You can search the Canvas guides, chat with Canvas support, or contact OU IT.

Course Objectives:
- Be able to form a critical geopolitical framework for analyzing patterns, ideas, and powers around the world.
- Define and explain the impetus for utilizing geospatial information technologies (GPS, GIS, Remote Sensing, UAS) for monitoring socio-environmental processes.
- Understand the important role of geospatial information (and its metadata) – how its collected, how its shared, how it’s used – for visualizing spatial characteristics that shape our worldviews, set priorities, and help us understand the world around us.
- Emphasize the power of maps and geospatial information (and other visualizations) as it pertains to geopolitical actors.
- Share your experiences and interests in how geospatial information is utilized from a critical geopolitical mindset.

Course Outline:

4/20/20 - Defining Geopolitics

4/21/20 - Critical Geopolitics
- Selections from Tuathail, G. Critical Geopolitics. Chapters 1 and 2.
4/22/20 – Popular Geopolitics and Geospatial Technology
- Watch Enemy of the State
- Discussion from film guide

4/23/20 - Geospatial Technology and Critical Geopolitics (Maps and Digital Worlds)

4/24/20 – Geospatial Technology & Critical Geopolitics (Satellites, GIS, and Modern Technologies)

4/25/20 – Take Home Exam 8:30-1:30, and Presentation Preparation (at home)

4/26/18 – In Class Presentations of Research Topic and Feedback, Concluding Remarks

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Participation:
This class is a seminar, so the quantity and quality of your participation will comprise 20% of your grade for the course. All participants are expected to have completed all reading materials in advance of the course, and prepared a list of observations comparing & contrasting the readings and at least 1 question for each item. This will help to assure enough ammunition for a quality discussion in which everyone participates. Should contributing to class conversation make you uncomfortable, you will need to let me know from the get-go so that I may coordinate alternative arenas for discussion, such as Canvas forums. Please respect all participants’ perspectives and note that discriminatory behavior of any sort will not be tolerated.

Paper:
Drawing on class materials, compose a 10-12-page paper (one inch margins, Times New Roman, 12-point font, double spaced, etc.) that identifies and discusses the discourses around an issue of geopolitical importance involving the use of locational data, especially those topics that involve differing statements about policies from various geopolitical actors, policy conflicts within countries that have ramifications
for the international system, the freedom of movement and the general conceptualization of space in terms of power. **This paper is due May 15th, 2020 @ 23:59.**

**Presentation:**

You will present an overview of the research question, methods and data for your seminar paper on the last day of class. You, your classmates, and the professor will assess your presentation. Expected length will be determined by the number of students enrolled, but you should plan on at least a 7-15-minute presentation and overview. The use of presentation technologies such as PowerPoint or Prezi is at your discretion and is not required.

**Final Exam:**

Toward the end of our class meetings, you will be asked to submit a question that you believe would make a good final exam essay question. Taking seminar participants’ questions into account as much as possible, I will craft a final exam that asks you to answer two of three possible questions about critical geopolitics and its role in the geospatial technology realm. **The take home exam is due April 25, 2020.**

**Grading:**

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>During class sessions</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td><strong>May 15th, 2020 @ 23:59</strong></td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Final Class Session</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Exam</td>
<td><strong>April 25, 2020</strong></td>
<td>20%</td>
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**Notice:** Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc…in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc…; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at http://studentconduct.ou.edu/

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Adjustment for Pregnancy/Childbirth-Related Issues

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html.
Title IX Resources

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24/7, counseling services, mutual no-contact orders, scheduling adjustments, and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at smo@ou.edu or (405) 325-2215 (8-5), or the Sexual Assault Response Team at (405) 615 -0013 (24/7) to report an incident. To learn more about Title IX, please visit the Institutional Equity Office’s website at http://www.ou.edu/content/eeo.html

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

Name

Education

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Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

Representative Publications and Presentations

Representative Honors and Awards Received

Major Professional Affiliations