

The University of Oklahoma

College of Continuing Education

Advanced Programs – Course Syllabus

Course Title:

Seminar in Human Geography: Critical Geopolitics

Course Number:

GEOG 6220-221

Course Description:

This course aims to introduce you to the subfield of critical geopolitics. The fields of scholarship stem from a concern over how we know the world around us, how priorities are set, and how these worldviews are communicated and adopted by various geopolitical actors. Critical geopolitics differs from the understanding of geopolitics in which locational and spatial characteristics are the only determining factor in how power is used in the international system. It focuses upon and critiques the assumptions made about “interests” and engages the processes of their creation. In other words, the readings will ask the question, how are dominant worldviews born, spread and acted upon to maintain power? Part of the course will examine various types of geopolitical thinking that will resonate with International Relations and will then turn to looking at particular media and practices, known as popular geopolitics.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: June 13 – 18, 2017.

Location: Classes held at Building 2775, Rooms 10 and 11, Kapaun Air Station on Vogelweh Air Base.

Hours: Tuesday - Friday 6:00-9:30 pm; Saturday and Sunday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: May 15, 2017

Site Director:

Email: apramstein@ou.edu. Phone: DSN 480-6807, Civilian 06371-47-6807.

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor: Darren Purcell

Mailing Address: 510 Sarkeys Energy Center
100 East Boyd St.
Norman, OK 73069

Telephone Number: (407) 453-1831

Email Address: dpurcell@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.

Instructional Materials:

All materials will be available as PDFs or links that are shared via Canvas. Access Canvas at <https://oklahoma.instructure.com/>, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Course Objectives:

- Be able to identify the geographical view of geopolitics (realist, feminist, critical) and see their linkages to International Relations.
- Questions assumptions of all three bodies of thought.
- Use of basic text analysis tools to understand the geopolitical discourses in popular media.

- Emphasize the power of media (popular media) in giving voice to state and non-state actors' efforts to shape the worldviews and actions of various actors.

Course Outline:

Day 1 - Defining Geopolitics

- Dodds, Klaus. (2014) "It's essential to be geopolitical!" In *Geopolitics: A very short introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-17.
- Cohen, Saul (2015) Chapter 2, 'Survey of Geopolitics.' pp. 15-35.
- Jones, Jones and Woods (2004) Power, space and 'political geography.' *An Introduction to Political Geography*. pp 1-17.

Day 2 - Critical Geopolitics

- Murphy, Alec (ed.) (2004) "Is there a Politics to Geopolitics?" *Progress in Human Geography*. 28:5, pp. 619-640.
- Selections from O'Tuathail, G. *Critical Geopolitics*. Chapters 1 and 2.

Day 3 - Feminist Geopolitics and International Relations

- Shepherd, Laura (2010) Gender Matters in Global Politics: A feminist Introduction to International Relations. Chapters 1-3 (pp. 3-43.)
- Massaro, Vaness and Williams, Jill (2013) "Feminist Geopolitics." *Geography Compass*. 7:8 pp. 567-577.

Day 4 - Popular Geopolitics

- Dittmer, Jason and Dodds, Klaus (2008) Popular Geopolitics Past and Future: Fandom, Identities and Audiences. *Geopolitics*. 13:3 pp. 437-457.
- Dittmer, Jason (2005) Captain America's Empire: Reflections on Identity, Popular Culture, and Post-9/11 Geopolitics. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 95:3, pp. 626-643.

Day 5 - Session 1: Discourses and Geopolitics

- Purcell, D., Brown, M.S.; and Gokmen, M. (2009) "Achmed the Dead Terrorist and Humor in Popular Geopolitics." *GeoJournal*. 75(4): 373-385.
<http://www.springerlink.com/content/62qm04758164v515/>
- Purcell, D. Heitmeier, B., and Van Whye, C. (2016) "Critical Geopolitics and the Framing of the Arab Spring Through Late-Night Humor." *Social Science Quarterly*.
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ssqu.12296/full>
- Berg, Eiki (2010) Some Unintended Consequences of Geopolitical Reasoning in Post-Soviet Estonia: Texts and Policy Streams, Maps and Cartoons. *Geopolitics*. 8:1, 101-120.
- Laurent Beauguitte, Yann Richard & France Gu erin-Pace (2015) The EU and Its Neighbourhoods: A Textual Analysis on Key Documents of the European Neighbourhood Policy, *Geopolitics*, 20:4, 853-879.

Day 5 - Session 2: Discourses and Geopolitics - Tools for Research

- Voyant Tools: Demonstration of tools for text visualization with preselected data set.
<http://voyanttools.org/>
- Selections from Sinclair and Stockwell, *Hermeneutica*.
 - Hermeneuti.ca, Computer-Assisted Interpretation in the Humanities, Now Analyze That! Comparing the Discourse on Race: <http://hermeneuti.ca/now-analyze-that>

- Hermeneuti.ca, Computer-Assisted Interpretation in the Humanities, Name Games: Analyzing Game Studies: <http://hermeneuti.ca/name-games>

Day 6 - Session 1: Popular Culture and World Politics

- Duncombe, Constance and Bleiker, Roland (2015) “Popular Culture and Political Identity.” In *Popular Culture and World Politics: Theories, Methods and Pedagogies*. pp. 35-44.
- Duncombe, Constance and Bleiker, Roland (2015) “Popular Culture and Political Identity.” In *Popular Culture and World Politics: Theories, Methods and Pedagogies*. pp. 35-44.
- Selection from Saunders, 2017, *Popular Geopolitics and Nation Branding in the Post-Soviet Realm*. Routledge (2017)

Day 6 - Session 2:

Presentation of Research Paper Topics and Feedback.

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Participation:

This class is a seminar and so the quantity and quality of your participation will comprise 25% 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 2** questions 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. Kindly respect all participants’ perspectives and note that discriminatory behavior of any sort will not be tolerated.

Paper:

Drawing on class materials, compose a 10- to 12-page paper that identifies and discusses the discourses around an issue of geopolitical importance, such as media coverage of wars, 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. I encourage you to use forms of text analysis discussed in the course as a tool for your work. **This paper is due July 12th, 2017.**

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.

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 compose an 8- to 10-page paper that answers two of three possible questions about critical geopolitics. **The exam is due July 3rd, 2017.**

Grading:

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

Assignment	Due Date	Percent of Grade
Participation	During class sessions	20%
Realist/Geopolitics Paper	July 12, 2017	40%
Class Presentation	During class session	20%
Final Exam	July 3, 2017	20%

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 making 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/eoo.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

Darren Purcell, Ph.D.

Education:

- BA, Geography, 1991 and MA Geography 1996, University of Kentucky,
- PhD Geography, Florida State University, 2003

Current Positions:

- Associate Professor, Geography and Environmental Sustainability, OU.
- Affiliate Faculty, Film and Media Studies, OU.

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

GEOG 6220 Geopolitics in the Information Age

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest:

- Economic geography
- Political geography
- Digital humanities
- Media and geography

Representative Publications and Presentations

- Purcell, D. Heitmeier, B., and Van Whye, C. (2016) "Critical Geopolitics and the Framing of the Arab Spring Through Late-Night Humor." *Social Science Quarterly*.
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ssqu.12296/full>
- Anaz, N. and Purcell, D. (2010) "Geopolitics of Entertainment: An Audience Responds in the Case of Valley of the Wolves-Iraq." *Arab World Geographer*, 13(1): 34-49.
- Steinberg, P. and Purcell, D. (2010) "'Power and Space in Electronic Communications" in *The International Studies Association Compendium*. R. Denmark (ed.) Volume IX, pp. 5893-5906. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Purcell, D., Brown, M.S.; and Gokmen, M. (2009) "Achmed the Dead Terrorist and Humor in Popular Geopolitics." *GeoJournal*. 75(4): 373-385

Representative Honors and Awards Received:

- 2016 - Most Inspiring Professor - University of Oklahoma Student-Athlete Academic Council.
- 2013 - (With K. de Beurs) Outstanding Poster – Social Media and Society Conference.
- 2011 - National Council for Geography Education, Higher Education Distinguished Teaching Achievement Award
- 2010 - College of Atmospheric and Geographic Sciences Teaching Excellence Award (co-winner).

Major Professional Affiliations:

- American Association of Geographers
- International Society of Humor Studies
- Association of Internet Researchers
- National Council for Geographic Education
- National Council for Social Studies.