

**Geography 3600 Fall 2023**  
**Political Geography**  
**Mondays and Wednesdays 12.30-1.50 PM**  
**ENV 345**

**Instructor: Prof. Ipsita Chatterjee**

**Office: ENV 320G**

**Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10.30AM to 11.30AM**

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**Preamble:** The world is a big, complex, dynamic, yet it is possible to have a reasonable understanding of what is happening around us and why. What is power and how it translates to geopolitics? Who is responsible for events like conflicts and war? How do the ideologies of powerful governments, individual, groups, institutions, think tanks determine global geopolitical events? How does geography play a role in electoral politics and gerrymandering? Why is territory/space/geography important in politics? This course will inform you, and conceptually equip you to answer these questions, and help develop a deeper understanding of local and global, politics, economics, and society. In the first half of the course you will be familiarized with theories on geopolitics, socio-historical context of their emergence, ideas, which produced world orders, and defined the topography of power over centuries. Once you are equipped with the national and international geopolitical context of the past, this course will guide you into the present. The lectures will be interspersed with documentaries, discussions, activities, and assignments to help you better internalize the class materials.

**Purpose:** To provide you with conceptual tools, which will enable you to not only understand, analyze, and explain international affairs/geopolitical phenomena for academic purposes, but also to enable you to use these concepts in 'real' life so that you develop critical skills to comprehend and articulate your reality more comprehensively.

To encourage you to think critically; think critically means to delve really deep beneath appearances, superficiality, and manifestations to understand the mechanisms, the nuts and bolts, systemic imperatives guiding events and phenomena.

To introduce you to the World of Geography, and demonstrate the use of spatial perspectives (like territory, resources, raw material, place-based specialized labor) in understanding and explaining global and local events.

**Required Text:** The only required text for the class is:

Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education. Students must possess this book. This book is available at the University bookstore.

**Additional readings:** All other additional readings are posted on CANVAS. All additional readings that are not in the text book listed above are posted on CANVAS. Please go to CANVAS ([unt.instructure.com](http://unt.instructure.com)) – go to the course website (Political Geography) and then click on “module” on the left to access the readings arranged by folders and labeled by topic numbers that correspond to the schedule included later in this syllabus. Use Firefox, Google chrome as your browser for swift downloading of the readings.

**Important dates:**

9/20 Examination 1

10/23 Examination 2

11/27 2-page paper due

12/6 Examination 3

**Course Requirements:**

**1. Attendance** in class lectures is mandatory. The class lecture is your most important source of information after your readings. Class lectures will simplify, condense, and clarify the contents of your readings. We will take attendance once in a while, and these will be used later as a ‘decider’ to boost your grade in case you have not done according to expectations, or have borderline grades.

**2. Class participation-** We will initiate class discussions based on documentaries and reading materials in which your participation is expected and will be noted to be used later as a decider to ‘boost’ your grade in case you have a borderline grade.

**3. Readings** - You are required to come to class having read all the material that is listed for that day as under class schedule.

**4. Examinations (total of 3)** – There will be three exams in the semester (dates specified in the schedule). The examinations will be held in class during lecture time. The exams may include a combination of multiple-choice questions and short answer-based questions based on the class lectures, discussions, readings.

**Make up exam policy-** Make-up exams will only be allowed in case of an official written document of a death in the family, personal medical emergency, religious holiday, or if you are part of a sports or academic team representing the university and will be out of town on that day for a university event. In that case, please contact the TA and schedule a make-up within one week of the original exam-day on a date and time that is convenient for your TA. Make-up exams may be significantly different and harder than the original exams.

**If you anticipate a schedule conflict with any of the exam dates due to personal reasons beyond religious holidays, sickness/death, university representation, DO NOT TAKE THIS COURSE.**

**5. Essay (2 page)-** The essay should be a maximum of 2 pages; work cited can exist beyond the 2-page limit. The topic for the deliberative essay is noted on the schedule below, the instructor will discuss ideas and approaches to this paper when she assigns the essay, you will be given a one week to complete it. Due date for the deliberative essay is noted in the schedule below. In writing the paper you should begin with an introductory section that presents the context of your topic and identifies your basic position (argument). Then develop in the body of your essay three or four reasons by drawing from course materials and outside sources that will persuade the reader that your position is valid. In your conclusion you need to summarize your argument while talking about its significance for geography and society. Your instructor will typically look for the following features when evaluating your deliberative essay: 1. Whether your argument/position is articulated clearly; 2. Whether the three or four major claims that you make in support of your argument are well substantiated and cited; 3. Whether the essay shows an understanding of the course readings and class lectures; 4. Whether the essay cites sources correctly; and 5. Whether the essay is grammatically correct and proofed for errors (spelling, punctuation, typos, etc).

**Note:** If you quote or paraphrase from an article or book, you may use in-text citation for those ideas, for example -- (Smith, 2002, p. 21). If you choose to quote verbatim, you must cite the source, both to be intellectually honest about where the idea's origins, and to direct your reader to the page/article so that s/he may delve into the idea more fully. Your instructor will be glad to help you learn both when and how to cite sources well.

You are encouraged to seek the instructor's editing expertise before submission. You will do better if you meet us during office hours to show us your drafts before final submission. Due to COVID reasons, I will accept electronic attachments of first drafts.

**Formatting essay**– The two-page assignments should be in 11.5 to 12-point font size, with one-inch margin on each side, and 1 or, 1.5 line spacing.

**Paper submission and deadline:** Please staple your assignments and write your name before submitting them. We will collect the papers on the date specified in the schedule in the **first 5 minutes** of the class. Submission in class after the first 5 minutes have elapsed counts as late submission and 3 points will be deducted for it. No paper will be accepted after class.

**Assignments will have to be handed in hard copy; email attachments will not be accepted.** If you anticipate that you cannot be present on the day an assignment is due either due to an official religious holiday, job interview, doctor's appointment, you have the option of submitting it to the instructor ahead of time. The deadline for this assignment must be strictly followed, an exception will only be made in case of an official, written document of a death in the family, personal medical emergency, or if your traveling because of academic reasons, or are part of the university sports team. Over-sleeping, alarm failing to go-off, computer crashing and printer not working, car breaking down, leaving for vacation are not acceptable excuses for late submission.

**6. Grading** -- Grades will be computed on the following scale:

<b>A</b>	85 to 100 points
<b>B</b>	75 to <85 points
<b>C</b>	65 to <75 points
<b>D</b>	55 to <65 points

<b>F</b>	< 55 points
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Bargaining for higher grades and requesting that you be bumped up if in the borderline is not acceptable, the instructor will under all circumstances follow the following grading scale strictly:

Exam 1 – 25 points  
 Exam 2 – 25 points  
 Exam 3- 25 points  
 2-page essay-20 points  
 Attendance and participation-5 points

### **Class Policies:**

**Contacting and Office hours** – The best way to contact me is to meet me in my office hours, or email me. If you prefer to meet virtually, email me and we will set a zoom link. My email address is listed on the front page of this syllabus, and can also be found on the “CANVAS” course management website. I will try to answer your emails as soon as possible. You are strongly encouraged to meet me and/or your TA to clarify concepts, clear doubts; we are interested in discussing and reviewing materials with you, so utilize the office hours to your advantage.

**Cell Phone** – Please switch off cell phones during the duration of the class.

**Academic integrity**-Academic dishonesty includes cheating during exams, copying assignments from each other, or using materials from other published sources and claiming them as your own without appropriate citation (plagiarism). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and if discovered will result in loss of grade, or even an “F”.

### **Disability Accommodation-**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

I reserve the right to make reasonable and responsible changes in the syllabus based on our progress, and any special requirement that may arise as the semester progresses. You will be notified about these changes well in advance. As such, the schedule is tentative, some topics may take longer/shorter than slotted in the schedule below.

### **Schedule: Fall 2023**

**All additional readings are available on CANVAS**

**8/21**

**Introduction to the course**

**8/23**

**Topic 1: Political Geography and Geopolitics,**

#### **Readings:**

Chapter 1: Agnew, J. and Corbridge, S., 2002. *Mastering space: hegemony, territory and international political economy*. Routledge (CANVAS)

Chapter 2: Agnew, J.A., Mitchell, K. and Toal, G. eds., 2008. *A companion to political geography*. John Wiley & Sons (CANVAS)

Chatterjee, notes on Antonio Gramsci’s “Hegemony” (CANVAS)

**8/28, 8/30**

## **Topic 2: Social Darwinism, Ratzel's "lebensraum" and Makinder's "heartland"**

### **Readings:**

Pages 1-10: Dutta Dikshit, R.D. 1994. Political Geography. TATAMcGraw-Hill Publishing Co. (CANVAS)

Pages 101-110: Dutta Dikshit, R.D. 1994. Political Geography. TATAMcGraw-Hill Publishing Co. (CANVAS)

Pages 1-4: Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education (Text book).

### **9/4 Labor Day, no classes**

### **9/6, 9/11**

## **Topic 3: Nation, nationalism, boundaries, hegemony, and power**

### **Readings:**

Chapter 4: Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education (Textbook).

Chapter 5 (from page 175-201 till Citizenship...): Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education (Textbook).

Chatterjee (notes) Rohingya Refugee Crisis 2017 (CANVAS)

Chapters 2 and 3: Dutta Dikshit, R.D. 1994. Political Geography. TATA McGraw-Hill Publishing Co (CANVAS)

### **9/13**

## **Topic 4: Geography of Elections, Identity politics, and Gerrymandering**

### **Readings:**

Chapter 6 and 8: Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education (Textbook).

Chen, J. and Rodden, J., 2013. Unintentional gerrymandering: Political geography and electoral bias in legislatures. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 8(3), pp.239-269. (CANVAS)

Pattie, C. and Johnston, R., 2014. "The electors shall meet in their respective states": Bias and the US Presidential Electoral College, 1960–2012. *Political Geography*, 40, pp.35-45. (CANVAS)

### **9/18 Review for Exam 1**

### **9/20 Examination 1**

### **9/25**

## **Topic 4: Geography of Elections, Identity politics, and Gerrymandering continued...**

### **9/27, 10/2**

## **Topic 5: Feminist Geopolitics**

### **Readings:**

Pages 83-87: Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education (Textbook).

Hyndman, J., 2004. Mind the gap: bridging feminist and political geography through geopolitics. *Political Geography*, 23(3), pp.307-322. (CANVAS)

Dowler, L. and Sharp, J., 2001. A Feminist geopolitics? *Space and Polity*, 5(3), pp.165-176. (CANVAS)

#### **10/4**

##### **Topic 6: Capital**

###### **Readings:**

Pages 23-29: Peet, R. and Hartwick, E. 1999. Classical Economics (**pages 23-29**) in *Theories of Development*, Guilford press, New York. (CANVAS).

Peet, R. 2007. Deconstructing Free Trade from Epistemic communities to ideological communities in struggle. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* NS32, pp576-80. (CANVAS)

Smith, A. excerpts from *Wealth on Nations*. (CANVAS).

#### **10/9, 10/11**

##### **Topic 7: Imperialism, Dependency, Orientalism**

###### **Readings:**

Chapter 3: Flint, C. and Taylor, P.J., 2007. *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality*. Pearson education (Textbook).

Harvey, D. 2005. The 'new' imperialism: On spatio-temporal fixes and accumulation by dispossession, excerpts from *New Imperialism*, Oxford University press, Oxford. (CANVAS)

Peet, R. and Hartwick, E. 1999 (Pages 105-113). Marxist and Neo Marxist theories of development (pages 105-113) in *Theories of Development*, Guilford press, London. (CANVAS)

Said, E.W., 1979. Orientalism. *Vintage books: New York* pp.49-73.

#### **10/16**

##### **Topic 8: Keynesian and Fordist world system**

###### **Readings:**

Peet, R. et al. 2003. Chapter 1 in *Unholy Trinity: the IMF, World Bank and WTO* (pages 204-205) Zed Books, London.(CANVAS)

Peet, R. and Hartwick, E. 1999. Fordism in *Theories of Development* (pages 115-118) in *Theories of Development*, Guilford press, New York. (CANVAS)

#### **10/18 Review for Exam 2**

#### **10/23 Examination 2**

#### **10/25, 10/30, 11/1, 11/6**

##### **Topic 9: Globalization-Neoliberal post-Fordist system**

###### **Readings:**

Castells, M. 2001. The Network Society. In: Held, D McGrew A (eds.) *The Global Transformations Reader*. Polity Press, Cambridge, pp. 76–81. (CANVAS)

Harvey, D. 2001. Time-space compression and the postmodern condition. In Held D and McGrew A (eds.) *The Global Transformations Reader* Polity Press, Cambridge pp. 82–91. (CANVAS)

Ritzer, G. Malone, E. (2000) Globalization Theory: Lessons from the exportation of McDonaldization and the new means of consumption. *American Studies* 41 2/3, Summer-Fall, 97-118. (CANVAS)

Peet, R. et al. 2003 Washington-Wall street Alliance in *Unholy Trinity: the IMF, World Bank and WTO* (**pages 204-205**) Zed Books, London. (CANVAS)

Chatterjee, I. Notes on Fordism and Post Fordist flexible accumulation. (CANVAS)

**11/8: 2 Page paper assigned, due on 11/27**

**Topic:** What is Globalization? Can you think of examples of how time-space compression or network society is true in your life? Is 'McDonaldization' good or bad? (Use Harvey, Castells and Ritzer and Malone readings)

**11/13, 11/15**

**Topic 10: Global society and conflict**

**Readings:**

Huntington, S. P. 2000. The clash of civilizations? In O'Meara P, Mehlinger H D and Krain M (eds.) *Globalization and the Challenges of a New Century* Indiana University, Bloomington, pp 3–23. (CANVAS)

Barber, B. 1992. Jihad Vs Mc World, *Atlantic Monthly*, March, pp. 53-65. (CANVAS)

**11/20, 11/24: Thanksgiving break, no classes.**

**11/27, 11/29**

**Topic 11: War on Terror and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict**

**Readings:**

- **Benin, J and Hajjar, L.** *Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Middle Research and Information Project, available at [www. MERIP.org](http://www.MERIP.org) (CANVAS)
- **Gregory, D.,** 2004. Palestine and the “War on Terror”. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, 183–195. (CANVAS).

**2 Page paper assigned, due on 11/27**

**12/4 Exam 3 Review**

**12/6 Examination 3**