

GEOPOLITICS

Number of credits: 3 ECTS

Course period: Spring semester / 1 class per week

Language of Instruction: English

Instructor: Associate Professor Ekaterina Mikhaylenko

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Course description

The term “geopolitics” and its cognates emerged at the very end of the nineteenth century in connection to new forms of nationalism and inter-imperialist competition in Europe and the world. Emphasizing the mutually constitutive relationship among power, place, and knowledge, geopolitics has most often been associated with a “realist” and state-centric approach to international relations, although recent decades have seen the rise of a critical geopolitics that includes a far wider range of social actors. This course is both a conceptual history of geopolitics as the term has been defined and applied over the past hundred years, as well as a critical survey of the changing relations among technology, state power, and spatiality as they relate to strategies of global competition and conflict.

Particular attention is paid to the consideration of the place and role of Russia in the modern world.

In order to successfully pass the course, all students are expected to 1) attendance the lectures; 2) know the reading materials; 3) participate at the seminars; 4) complete the weekly assignments; and 5) pass the midterm and final exams.

Prerequisites: -

Course outline

Week1. Introduction to Geopolitics

Week 2. The evolution of geopolitical thought: Geopolitics of Empire: The “Classical Age”

Week 3. The evolution of geopolitical thought: World War II

Week 4. The evolution of geopolitical thought: The Cold War

Week 5. The evolution of geopolitical thought: The Post-Cold War (Dis) Order

Week 6. The evolution of geopolitical thought: Russian school of thoughts.

Week 7. The evolution of geopolitical thought: Critical Geopolitics

Week 8. Mid-term

Week 9. Main categories of geopolitics: space

Week 10. Main categories of geopolitics: power

Week 11. Main categories of geopolitics: resources

Week 12. Geopolitical Actors: the USA, Japan, Germany
Week 13. Geopolitical Actors: China
Week 14. Geopolitical Actors: Russia
Week 15. Contemporary Geopolitics: Eurasian Heartland, Eastasian Rimland
Week 16. Anti-Geopolitics
Week 17. Final Exam

Assignments

For each part of the course there will be an individual assignment to write a short paper addressing a specific question. The assignments will be graded and commented by the Instructor with one paragraph of comments.

Examination

There will be a midterm exam after the first half of the course. The final exam will be given after the entire course is completed. Both the midterm and the final exams consist of in-class short, test questions. In addition to an in-class exam, the final exam additionally consists of a home-take assignment.

Course evaluation

The course grade will be determined by four factors: weekly assignments (30%), seminar participation (20%), mid-term exam (20%), and final exam (30%). All weekly assignments, midterms, and finals will be graded with numbers ranging from 40 to 100.

Core reading

- 1) Klaus Dodds, *Geopolitics: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2014)
- 2) Jason Dittmer and Joanne Sharp, eds. *Geopolitics: An Introductory Reader* (Routledge, 2014)
- 3) Saul Bernard Cohen, *Geopolitics: The Geography of International Relations* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009)
- 4) Gearoid O Tuathail, Simon Dalby and Paul Routledge, eds. *The Geopolitics Reader*, second edition (Routledge, 2006)
- 5) John Agnew, *Geopolitics: Re-Visioning World Politics*, second edition (Routledge, 2003)
- 6) Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (Verso: second edition, 2011)

Recommended reading

- 1) Mackinder, Halford J. (1904) The Geographical Pivot of History. *Geographical Journal*. Pp. 421 – 437.
- 2) Hyndman, Jennifer. (2001) Towards a feminist geopolitics. *The Canadian Geographer*. Pp. 210 - 222
- 3) Dalby, Simon (2012). Environmental Geopolitics in the 21st Century. *Paper for*

Presentation to the Sussex Conference “Rethinking Climate Change, Conflict, and Security.” October 18 – 19, 2012.

- 4) Stuart Hall, “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power,” pp. 276 – 318