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American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Security and Global Studies
IRLS213
Political Geography
Credit Hours: 3
Length of Course: 8 Weeks
Prerequisite: NONE

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Instructor Information

Instructor:

Please contact your instructor through the Messages tab in the classroom.

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Course Description (Catalog)

IRLS213 Political Geography (3 hours)

September 11 and its aftermath, the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia and debate over the nature and effects of globalization all highlight the importance of political geography as a means of understanding the world around us. This course examines the relationship between earth and state. World political phenomena are studied from a geographic perspective, including international boundaries, territorial seas, and landlocked states. This course emphasizes the practical application of geography to political events.

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Course Scope

This course provides basic knowledge building and comprehension in the discipline.

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Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

CO-1 Explain the concepts of territory, the state, the nation, and nationalism in the context of cultural interaction among states and non-state actors.

CO-2 Describe the distribution of resources within the international system, including perceptions of power.

CO-3 Apply the basic theories of political geography and international political economy to the current world order.

CO-4 Analyze how globalization might impact current and future trends in supranational integration.

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CO-5 Compare the competing interests of state and non-state actors in the context of international legal and environmental regimes.

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Course Delivery Method

This course, delivered via distance learning, will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course resources and access to an online learning management system will be available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET and include all written assignments, examinations, and research papers submitted for grading. Weekly Forum questions (accomplished in groups in a Forum) require an initial response by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET, with all other required responses due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET. The assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

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Course Resources

- Required Course Textbooks (found in APUS e-Library):

Blacksell, Mark. 2001. *Political Geography*. New York: Routledge.

Chalk, Peter. 2008. *The Maritime Dimension of International Security: Terrorism, Piracy and Challenges for the United States*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Fligstein, Neil. 2008. *Euroclash: The EU, European Identity and the Future of Europe*. Oxford University Press.

Frieden, Jeffrey A. and David A. Lake, eds. 2000. *International Political Economy: Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth*. New York: Routledge.

- External websites and other assigned readings are found in the

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Lessons area of the classroom.

- Weekly Lesson Notes and videos or audio files are found in the Lessons area of the classroom.

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Evaluation Procedures

Forum discussions – 25 percent

Each week, a discussion question is provided and posts should reflect an assimilation of the readings. Students are required to provide a substantive initial post by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET and respond to 2 or more classmates by Sunday 11:55 pm ET. Forum posts are graded on timeliness, relevance, knowledge of the weekly readings, and the quality of original ideas.

Midterm assignment - 25 percent

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 5 questions, 2 pages total, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

Progress assignment - 25 percent

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 5 questions, 2 pages total, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

Final assignment – 25 percent

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 5 questions, 2 pages total, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

Grade Instruments	Percentage
Forum Discussions (8)	25

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Midterm Assignment	25
Progress Assignment	25
Final Assignment	25
Total	100

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8 – Week Course Outline

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Course Objective(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Assignment(s)</u>
1	Concepts in Political Geography I	CO1: Explain the concepts of territory, the state, the nation, and nationalism in the context of cultural interaction among states and non-state actors.	Blacksell, Political Geography pp. 1-47	Week One Forum Discussion
2	Concepts in Political Geography	CO1: Explain the concepts of territory,		

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	II	the state, the nation, and nationalism in the context of cultural interaction among states and non-state actors.	Blacksell, Political Geography pp. 47-92	Week Two Forum Discussion
3	Geography and Statehood in Africa	CO-2 Describe the distribution of resources within the international system, including perceptions of power.	Griffiths, The Scramble for Africa: Inherited Political Boundaries Weinstein, Africa's Scramble for Africa: Lessons of a Continental War Collier and Gunning, Why Has Africa Grown So Slowly	Week Three Forum Discussion Midterm Assignment
4	Geography and Conflict	CO-2	Hintjens, When Identity Becomes a Knife: Reflecting on the Genocide in Rwanda Denich, Dismembering	

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		Describe the distribution of resources within the international system, including perceptions of power.	<p>Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide</p> <p>Mirkovic, Ethnic Conflict and Genocide: Reflections on Ethnic Cleansing in the Former Yugoslavia</p>	Week Four Forum Discussion
5	The Geography of Resource Conflicts	CO-2 Describe the distribution of resources within the international system, including perceptions of power.	<p>Blacksell, Political Geography pp. 94-102</p> <p>Gleick, Water and Conflict: Fresh Water Resources and International Security</p> <p>Selby, The Geopolitics of Water in the Middle East: Fantasies and Realities</p>	Week Five Forum Discussion
6	Introduction to Global Political Economy	CO-3 Apply the basic theories of political	Frieden and Lake, International Political	Week Six Forum

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		geography and international political economy to the current world order.	Economy: Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth pp. 1-36, 47-89	Discussion Progress Assignment
7	Global Economic Integration	CO-4 Analyze how globalization might impact current and future trends in supranational integration.	Blacksell, Political Geography pp. 185-197 Fligstein, Euroclash: the EU, European Identity and the Future of Europe pp. 1-61, 242-253	Week Seven Forum Discussion
8	Global Maritime Policy	CO-5 Compare the competing interests of state and non-state actors in the context of international legal and environmental regimes.	Blacksell, Political Geography pp. 168-181 Chalk, The Maritime Dimension of International Security: Terrorism, Piracy and Challenges for the United States pp. 1-18 Dodds, Flag Planting and Finner	Week Eight Forum Discussion Final Assignment

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			Pointing: The Law of the Sea, the Arctic and the Political Geographies of the Outer Continental Shelf pp. 63-73	
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Policies

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

[Disability Accommodations](#)

Citation and Reference Style

Attention Please: Students will follow the Turabian/Chicago Style as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University.

See <http://www.apus.edu/Online-Library/tutorials/chicago.htm>.

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due

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date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

Netiquette

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add “emoticons” to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺

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Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support

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your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Tutor.com:** AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutor.com connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to be. You get expert tutoring whenever you need help, and you work one-to-one with your tutor in your online classroom on your specific problem until it is done.

Request a Library Guide for your course (<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library: librarian@apus.edu.

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