

# Geography 4061, Section 1 – Political Geography

## Political Science 4060, Section 2 – Political Geography

Fall 2018

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00-1:20pm – 245 Howe-Russell Building

Final exam: Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-12:00pm

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### Course description

Political geography concerns how politics is geographical and geography is political. Topics include international relations and geopolitics, electoral geography and redistricting, the nation-state and other forms of political organization, and practices of political territorialization and bordering.

Like the LSU course description above says, this class will address two big, and related, questions: How is politics geographical and how is geography political? To answer those questions, this semester we will seek to understand what is meant by politics and geography with a particular focus on nationalism, citizenship, (im)migration, borders, walls, and populism.

While this course is not a comparative study of Political Geography, a sub-discipline within human geography, and Political Science, its existence at the boundary between the two will provide opportunities to compare and contrast approaches to the study of politics from the geography and political science disciplines.

### Geography B.A. learning objectives

This course's learning objectives are based on the Bachelor's of Arts degree program in the Department of Geography and Anthropology at LSU. Those objectives are:

- A capacity to construct and to evaluate arguments in light of geographical evidence.
- An understanding of continuity and change in human activity across the globe.
- Awareness of the influence of varied and complex factors on human activity across space.
- An ability to examine a variety of sources critically and to analyze them in terms of their contexts.
- The capacity to evaluate human activity in light of geographical evidence.
- Awareness of diversity and complexity of human activity as it relates to space and place.

Geography 4061 will emphasize the following student learning objectives:

- An understanding of continuity and change in human activity across the globe.
- Awareness of the influence of varied and complex factors on human activity across space.
- A capacity to construct and to evaluate arguments in light of geographical evidence.
- An ability to examine a variety of sources critically and to analyze them in terms of their contexts.

GEOG 4061 is an upper-division elective in the B.A. degree program in Geography and can be taken for graduate credit towards the Geography M.S. and Geography and Anthropology PhD programs.

### Academic integrity

All rules regarding student conduct and ethical behavior apply in this class. See the *Code of Student Conduct* (<http://www.lsu.edu/students/saa/students/codeofconduct.php>) for these rules. Academic honesty and integrity are expected from all at all times and plagiarism and cheating are not tolerated. All work submitted for this course must be original. You may not submit work prepared for another course or work done by another person. Violations of the *Code of Student Conduct* shall be reported to the Dean of Student's office.

### **Disability accommodations**

Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. (Instructor's note: [By federal law!](#)) This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak with Disability Services and the instructor as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. You can contact [Disability Services](#) at 115 Johnston Hall, (225) 578-5919.

### **Course withdrawal and exam rescheduling dates**

The last day to withdraw without receiving a "W" in the course is August 28<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm.

The last day to invoke the Grade Exclusion Policy is August 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm.

The last day to withdraw from the course or resign from the university is November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30pm.

The last day to reschedule a final exam or exams when three or more are scheduled on the same day is November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30pm.

### **Classroom behavior**

Please turn off or make silent your cell phones and any other electronic things that can make noise before class starts. If any electronic device goes off during class, please silent the device immediately as I will ask you to give me the device for the remainder of the class if I get to it before you can silence it. (I will return the device as soon as class ends). If you insist on using classroom time to watch Vine videos, stream sporting events, or do online shopping, sit in the back rows so as to reduce the visual distraction for the rest of the class. Those doing their organic chemistry homework during class may sit where they like.

### **Access to grades**

I cannot provide students' grades over the phone or email, nor can I provide a student's grades by any means to someone other than that student, including their parents, without the student's written consent in compliance with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). I will post grades through the course's Moodle website and you can ask me in person during office hours or at other times for your grades. Grades should be (but will not necessarily be) posted to the Moodle site within seven days of a given assignment. Note that grade averages will NOT ordinarily be posted to the Moodle site, and explicit announcement will be made in class before any grade averages are posted to the site, most likely before the final exam. [I've, in the past, noticed some subtle inconsistencies between Moodle-calculated grade averages and arithmetic of the same grades run on Excel; for this reason, not bull-headedness, I don't trust Moodle's black-box number crunching and don't advise you to either. That's why I don't put up automatically calculated GPAs in Moodle].

### **Turning in assignments**

Assignments must be turned in to me in paper format in class or by email to my lsu.edu email address on or before the due date. The due time for assignments is the beginning of class, 12:00pm, when not otherwise specified. No assignments should be turned in under my office door or through my departmental mailbox.

### **Absences, late assignments and make-up exams**

I will assist students absent from class with valid reasons as defined in [PS-22 of the LSU System](#), such as illness, religious observances, or university athletics. Students who miss class for valid reasons are excused from class attendance on those days. Students are still responsible for any graded work missed, however. Any exams or other class work missed must, if at all possible, be made up before the assignment is due. Contact me at least one week before your expected absence to make arrangements for taking make-up exams or completing other assignments early.

I do not prefer to take late assignments or give make-up exams after the exam date, although I will if necessary in keeping with PS-22. If you believe you cannot turn in an assignment on the due date, turn it in before the due date. If you can't take an exam or do other course work on a specified day and time, then, to the best of your ability, contact me at least one week before your absence. In the case of official university-sponsored events and scheduled medical appointments, please provide me appropriate documentation when you're able to. Appropriate documentation means a letter from your coach, instructor, or doctor that provides me with the details of the event or appointment and is signed by the appropriate party. For religious observances, you don't need to provide documentation but you still need to inform me a week beforehand. In the event of emergencies, contact me as soon as possible and provide any documentation you can, such as an obituary, about the emergency. All rescheduled exams or other coursework, whatever the reason for the absence, should if at all possible be taken before the original date and time for the exam.

### **Nullifying missed assignments in extraordinary circumstances**

In the eventuality of extraordinary circumstances where I judge it was impossible for a student to complete an assignment on time and could not give prior notice to turn in the assignment early, I will offer two options to the student, and it's your free choice which you'd prefer. The first choice is for you to turn in the assignment late or do a make-up exam on a schedule that you and I mutually agree to. The second choice is that you don't do any make-up work, and I adjust your grading scale to make all other course work worth more toward the final grade in proportion to the points lost in the missed assignment. For example, having 1% of your grade nullified would shift the point base of the course from 100 to 99; having a mid-term exam nullified would shift the base from 100 to 75. Your final grade average would be adjusted by dividing your nominal average by the decimal form of shifted point base. This is how a nominal grade of 75 points would be calculated with the nullification of 25% of the course's grade:  $(75) / (0.75) = 100.00$

### **Course readings**

- 1) Anderson, Benedict (1983/2016) *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso. ISBN-13: 978-1784786755. (pp. 236)
- 2) Hing, Bill Ong (2004) *Defining America through immigration policy*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. ISBN-13: 978-1592132331. (pp. 324)
- 3) Jones, Reece (2017) *Violent borders*. London: Verso. ISBN-13: 978-1784784744. (pp. 224)
- 4) McGann, Anthony, Charles Smith, Michael Latner, and Alex Keena (2016) *Gerrymandering in America: The House of Representatives, the Supreme Court, and the Future of Popular Sovereignty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN-13: 978-1316507674. (pp. 261)
- 5) Muller, Jan-Werner (2016) *What is populism?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. ISBN-13: 978-0812248982. (pp. 104)

The five required books are available at the ~~LSU Barnes & Noble bookstore and Co-Op bookstore~~.

Other readings will be available through the course's Moodle site, under 'Readings' for the respective week of class the readings correspond to.

### **Grading**

The instructor of record is responsible for the assigning of individual assignment grades and final course grades. Grades for individual assignments are recorded in a numerical format and those numerical grades are weighted according to their share of the total course grade of 100 possible points. The sum of those numerical grades is the student's final course average, with the exception of circumstances when students have nullified graded work. Final letter grades are assigned according to a 10-point scale as listed below, with plus and minus grades further sub-dividing each letter grade in three. Letter grades are not shifted to higher (or lower) letter grades if they fall near this break point, apart from specific instances when I judge that students have participated significantly in class discussions.

#### **Grading scale**

A+	97.00 – 100.00
A	93.00 – 96.99
A-	90.00 – 92.99
B+	87.00 – 89.99
B	83.00 – 86.99
B-	80.00 – 82.99
C+	77.00 – 79.99
C	73.00 – 76.99
C-	70.00 – 72.99
D+	67.00 – 69.99
D	63.00 – 66.99
D-	60.00 – 62.99
F	< 60.00

## Class format and assessment

In this class, we will critically engage with the readings and our original research. Everyone is expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material. As this is a seminar-style course based on critical engagement with the material, active student participation is important, part of your grade, and much appreciated.

Classes will consist of a mix of lectures, discussions, review sessions, and films.

Assessment will be based on reaction papers to course readings, an activity on electoral redistricting that utilizes an online game format, and a final research paper with a preliminary prospectus on some aspect of political geography. Reaction papers will be taken in class, seminar leadership will happen during class, and the research paper prospectus and final paper will be accepted in person at the beginning of class and to Moodle by the end of the day they are due (11:59pm).

Some guidelines for your written work:

- Type your written work double-spaced and proof it before you turn in the assignment.
- Include consistently formatted bibliographic references to others' written work that you used in your writing.
- Use correct grammar and syntax in your writing.

### ***The Redistricting Game* activity (1, 5% each = 5%, due October 16<sup>th</sup>)**

We'll play an online game, called *The Redistricting Game*, that has you act as a redistricting official in the U.S. seeking to draw electoral districts for various purposes, within various restraints: A partisan gerrymander, equal population, VRA compliance, etc. The assignment will entail you doing a few of these exercises and writing briefly on what you did and why.

### **Reaction papers (5, 3% each = 15%, due throughout the semester)**

You have the choice of any five classes to turn in a reaction paper on the readings, or some selection from those readings, for that day's class. The reaction papers should be around 250 words and should not just summarize the readings, but make an effort to critically engage with the material and present questions it raised for you for discussion during class. *Reaction papers must be turned in to me by my lsu.edu email address at least 4 hours before the class to which they correspond.* Some questions you may want to consider in your response papers are: What is the author's main argument? Does the author present evidence to support the argument and is that evidence convincing to you? What are some of the weaknesses or strengths of the article? What questions are left unanswered? These response papers will be shared among the class to aid in discussion (I will also write and share my own response papers periodically).

# of points	Assignment	Due date
5	<i>The Redistricting Game</i> activity	10/16
15	Reaction papers (5 papers x 3 points each)	During the semester
25	Mid-term exam	10/11
5	Paper prospectus	11/1
25	Final paper	12/5
25	Final exam	12/5
100	Total points	End of Semester

### **Midterm exam (25%, October 11<sup>th</sup> in class at regular class time)**

The midterm exam will be taken during the entire class period on October 11<sup>th</sup> and is worth one quarter of your final course grade. This exam will cover the first half of the class, from the first day of class through October 9<sup>th</sup>. The exam format will be short answer and essay questions, likely 5-8 questions total, on substantive topics we've covered in the first half of the course.

### **Paper prospectus (5%, due November 1<sup>st</sup>)**

See below for the details on this paper. Your prospectus is a proposal of what you want to write about – what your research question is and how you're going to go about answering that question, in 500-1,000 words. Consider this prospectus a first rough draft of your paper, from which you can narrow down what you will research and get feedback from me on the topic and your writing.

### **Final research paper (25%, due December 5<sup>th</sup>)**

You will choose a topic related to political geography and write a substantive research paper (at least 2,500 words for undergraduates, 5,000 words for graduates) or research proposal for future work about that topic. The exact topic is entirely up to you, but whatever you choose you should define the topic you're focusing on, review what has been written by scholars already on that topic (including references to those published works), describe coherently the evidence you find on the topic and give your analysis and discussion of that evidence. Include a complete list of the sources you cited in your paper. Use your paper prospectus to help you craft your topic, research approach, writing, and argument. If you have

any doubts or insights during your research process, please see me during office hours or speak up during class – your research experiences can be a valuable part of our class discussion.

### Final exam (25%, December 5<sup>th</sup> in class, 10:00am)

The final exam will be taken in the regular classroom, but not at the normal class time: Rather, it will happen during the final exam time period (10:00am-12:00pm) on Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, and like the midterm the final exam is worth one quarter of your final course grade. This exam will cover the second half of the class – it is not comprehensive – from October 16<sup>th</sup> through November 29<sup>th</sup>. The exam format will again be short answer and essay questions, likely 5-8 questions total, on substantive topics we've covered in the last half of the course.

### Course schedule

August	T	21	Course introduction, review of assignments, orientation	
	Th	23	The nation as imagined community (Anderson 1-66)	
	T	28	Nation, empire, language and dynasty (Anderson 67-140)	
	Th	30	Race, the census, memory, and nationalism (Anderson 141-206)	
September	T	4	Geographies of citizenship (Smith 2008/09; Vink and de Groot 2010; Newman 2008; Lu 2014; Wang and Penalzoza 2018)	
	Th	6	Race in the U.S. Census and the classroom (Cohn 2014; U.S. Census Bureau 2011; Prewitt 2005; Carter 2009; Dwyer 1999; Kobayashi 1999; Delaney 2010; Kassam 2018)	
	T	11	Redistricting and gerrymandering in jurisprudence, social science (McGann 1-96; Bullock 1-25)	
	Th	13	Explanations of partisan gerrymandering (McGann 97-176)	
	T	18	Constitutional questions for future redistricting (McGann 177-235; Bullock 175-93)	
	Th	20	Racial gerrymandering, <i>Shelby v. Holder</i> and the VRA (Liptak 2013; Whitaker 2014; Grofman 2013; Short 2014; Hayes and McKee 2012)	
	T	25	Political geographies of the carceral state: Felon voting rights and prison gerrymandering (The Sentencing Project 2015; Ebenstein 2018; Crisp 2018)	
	Th	27	Political geographies of the judicial system: Judicial redistricting and jury unanimity (Wogan 2017; DeSantis 2017a; 2017b, 2018; Riordan 2011; Adelson et al. 2018)	
	October	T	2	What about Voter ID laws? (Mayer 2012; Davidson 2009; von Spakovsky 2012; Hood and Bullock 2012; Hicks et al. 2015; Mycoff et al. 2009; Barreto et al. 2009; Schaffer et al. 2009)
		Th	4	<b>Fall Holiday (no class)</b>
T		9	The 'Big Sort'? Migration and political polarization (Gimpel and Schuknecht 2001; Burmilla 2009; Jurjevich and Plane 2012; Cho et al. 2013; Abrams and Fiorina 2012)	
Th		11	<b>Midterm exam</b>	
T		16	<b>TRG assignment due;</b> Electoral geographies outside the U.S. (Christopher 1996; Johnston 2002; Latner and McGann 2005; Forest 2012)	
Th		18	State / citizen formation and geography (Herb 2008; Biolsi 2005; Smith 2012)	
T		23	Defining America through immigration policy (Hing 1-70)	
Th		25	Redefining American immigration (sort've) in the mid-20 <sup>th</sup> century (Hing 73-111; Gjelten 2015; Semuels 2017)	
T		30	U.S./Mexico border policy (Hing 115-205)	
November		Th	1	<b>Paper prospectus due;</b> American refugee and asylee policy (Hing 209-58; Lind and Scott 2018)
	T	6	Contemporary American immigration policy and proposals: Travel ban, TPS (Gladstone and Sugiyama 2018; Warren and Kerwin 2017; Wilson 2018)	
	Th	8	Contemporary American immigration policy and proposals: RAISE Act, 'zero tolerance' (Frum 2015; Beinart 2016; Belvedere 2017; Valverde 2018)	
	T	13	European border policy (Jones Chapter 1; Reid-Henry 2013; Walters 2002)	
	Th	15	Global border regimes (Jones Chapters 3 and 4; Megoran 2006)	
	T	20	Enclosure and global movement (Jones Chapters 5, 6, and 7)	
	Th	22	<b>Thanksgiving holiday (no class)</b>	
	T	27	What populists say (Müller 1-40)	
	Th	29	What populists do (Müller 41-104)	
	December	W	5	<b>Final paper due; final exam, 10:00am – 12:00pm</b>