

# Bemidji State University

## GEOG 3531: Political Geography

### A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3

Lecture Hours/Week: \*.\*

Lab Hours/Week: \*.\*

OJT Hours/Week: \*.\*

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

MnTC Goals: None

This course utilizes "World Systems Theory" to investigate 1) theories of State formation and organization; 2) historical processes of imperialism, colonialism, and decolonization; 3) major issues of the emerging political economy; 4) historical and contemporary geopolitics; and 5) the political geography of everyday life.

**B. COURSE EFFECTIVE DATES:** 08/25/2014 - Present

### C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS

1. First, we will consider theories of State formation and organization in order to assess the prospects for post-Cold War democratization. Second, we will look at imperialism, colonialism, and decolonization. Third, we will outline some of the major issues of the emerging political economy, especially whether or not the State will continue as it did in the 20th century to intervene in industrial and consumer markets.
2. Fourth, we will consider historical and contemporary geopolitics, especially in terms of the changing roles of international organizations and the political geography of weapons of mass destruction. Fifth, we will try to look beyond world systems theory at the emerging political geography of everyday life, particularly in terms of ecological challenges and the rise of non-State actors (corporate, criminal, terrorist, and so forth) as major influences shaping a new sense of territoriality as we enter the 21st century.
3. While there is much talk these days about "globalization", geographers are aware that the processes usually identified as being involved do as much to emphasize existing boundaries and promote the setting of new demarcations of national, regional, and local space as they do to transgress and expose the weaknesses of territorially-based politics. In this course, after a brief introduction to the history of political geography as a discipline, we will utilize "world systems theory" to investigate five dimensions of the contemporary world (dis)order.

#### **D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (General)**

1. 5. Students will be able to consider how geography impacts international law, empires, and civil divisions.
6. Students will be able to understand the politics of trade, migration, language, ethnicity, ecology and the environment.
  
2. 1. Students will be able to distinguish the principal features of World Systems Theory as an explanatory model for geopolitics superior to that of outmoded International Relations analysis.
2. Students will be able to discuss the meaning and history behind concepts of ¿nation,¿ ¿state,¿ and ¿nation-state¿.
3. Students will be able to explore the background of various regional conflicts, boundary disputes, and social problems.
4. Students will be able to compare distributions of major political systems and their applications to ¿territory¿.

#### **E. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Goal Area(s) and Competencies**

None

#### **F. LEARNER OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

As noted on course syllabus

#### **G. SPECIAL INFORMATION**

None noted