

# Political Geography

GGG 301\_\_001

## Professor

Dr. Christine Rosenfeld

## Email

[crosenfe@gmu.edu](mailto:crosenfe@gmu.edu)

## Office Hours

Tuesdays/Thursdays  
12:30-1:30

2216 Exploratory Hall  
or by [zoom](#)

## Course Delivery

In-person

## Meeting Time & Location

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30-2:45 pm  
Exploratory Hall 2310

## Course Description

This 3-credit course provides an overview of the subfield of human geography called political geography. Subtopics surveyed include traditional areas of focus for the subfield, including electoral geography and state formation, in addition to themes that political geography has taken up since its foundation, including social movements, environmental injustice, etc. Theory foundational to political geography in addition to an array of other social sciences will be discussed alongside historical and contemporary case studies. Special attention is paid to the unevenness of power at various scales as expressed through Politics/politics. This course satisfies the Mason Core Social and Behavioral Sciences Requirement.

## Required Texts

Readings are free and accessible on Blackboard (BB).

## Learning Outcomes

- Identify deeper context of geopolitical disputes
- Describe how power works and is expressed through Politics/politics
- Apply theoretical concepts to current events
- Explain how P/political processes affect people, especially marginalized groups
- Navigate a scholarly journal article

## Student Expectations

- Read email daily
- Attend class
- Reach out if you're stuck or behind
- Display respect

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## Grading/Requirements

*Submit all items on BB.*

100 pts, 10%

### Participation

For this class, participation means that you show up and when you show up, you're actively engaged with me and your classmates, contributing verbally and non-verbally. If you struggle speaking in class, I hope you find this class comfortable enough to use it as an opportunity to practice AND also take advantage of contributing during partner and/or small group work.

100 pts, 10%

### Reflection

At the end of the semester, you are responsible for writing a 2 page (at least 500 words), double spaced, reflection about yourself and the course.

200 pts, 20%

### Reading Responses

You must complete 6 Reading Responses (RR), which are one page (at least 300 words) double spaced where you summarize the key content and argument of one scholarly reading assigned for the week. Make connections between readings/topics than span units and/or relate to outside events. At least 3 RR must be completed prior to October 11.

600 pts, 60%

### Assignments

You will complete 4 assignments throughout the course of the semester. Format of assignments is variable and may include writing, creating visuals and infographics, recording a "podcast," conducting observation and interviews, creating an annotated map, etc. You may view your SafeAssign report prior to submitting.

## Grade Point Cutoffs

A+	980-1000	B-	800-829
A	930-979	C+	780-799
A-	900-929	C	700-779
B+	880-899	D	600-699
B	830-879	F	0-599

### Late Work Policy

Each student starts with 2 late work tokens, which allow you to turn in a graded item up to 48 hours past the original due date without penalty. When using a late token, you do NOT need to email the professor in advance; simply turn in/complete your item on BB.

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### Academic Integrity

George Mason University has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity and all students are expected to adhere to the Honor Code. Cheating and/or plagiarism—passing off work as your own that is not—will result in an F for your final grade in this class. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism and familiarize yourself with the Honor Code. The official GMU policies are available from the Office of Academic Integrity: <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/>. Please consult with me about questions *prior to turning in assignments*. See also [Assignment Procedures](#).

### Miscellaneous

- Communicate accommodations or concerns.
- Obtain reliable access to a computer and internet.
- Course materials are [private to this class](#).
- Only use your GMU email account; include full name and course #.

### Title IX

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993- 8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

### Diversity Statement & Accommodations

GMU promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study, and personal growth. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion (see [religious holiday calendar](#)), age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected. *If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with the professor and how best to address you in class and via email. I use she/her for myself. Please consider updating your profile in PatriotWeb.*

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: [ods@gmu.edu](mailto:ods@gmu.edu) | Phone: (703) 993-2474

### Additional Resources

See list and links on BB.

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### Course Schedule

Week	In-Person Class 1:30 pm- 2:45 pm	Topic	Readings (linked in Weekly Lesson folder)	RR due Tuesday 1:30 pm Assignments due Sunday 11:59 pm
1	Tues 8/23 Thurs 8/25	Welcome & Power	Politics/politics_Painter & Jeffrey	
2	Tues 8/30 Thurs 9/1	Power	Power_Foucault: Sovereign Power_Lilia & Vinthagen	Reading Response
3	Tues 9/6 Thurs 9/8	The State & Sovereignty	State as Container_Taylor; Landscapes of Power_Sharp	Reading Response
4	Tues 9/13 Thurs 9/15	Borders & Frontiers	Borders in an Era of Globalization_Popescu; Violent Borders_Jones; Against Borders_Bradley & de Noronha	Reading Response <b>State Assignment</b>
5	Tues 9/20 Thurs 9/22	Borders & Frontiers	Frontier Theory & the Amazon_Rosotto Ioris; Articulated Sovereignty in Limpopo Park_Lunstrum	Reading Response
6	Tues 9/27 Thurs 9/29	Borders & Frontiers	Fishing Boats in Inter-Korean Maritime Boundary_Song; Arctic Exerpts	Reading Response
7	Tues 10/4 Thurs 10/6	Unrecognized States	States Without Sovereignty_Casperson	Reading Response <b>B(ordering) Assignment</b>
8	Thurs 10/13	Nationalism & Separatism	Imagined Communities_Anderson	Reading Response
9	Tues 10/18 Thurs 10/20	Social Movements	Social Media in the Egyptian Revolution_Eltantawy & Wiest; Zeynep Tufekci TED Talk; States of a Social Movement_Christiansen	Reading Response
10	Tues 10/25 Thurs 10/27	Statelessness	The World's Stateless Report Exerpts	Reading Response
11	Tues 11/1 Thurs 11/3	Biopolitics	Professing Selves_Naimabadi; Conquest_Smith	Reading Response <b>Society &amp; Culture Assignment</b>
12	Tues 11/8 Thurs 11/10	Environmental & Resource Injustice	Resource Curse_Ross; Royal Dutch Shell_Ruffin; Thirsty World_Ingebretsen	Reading Response
13	Tues 11/15 Thurs 11/17	Environmental & Resource Injustice	US-Mexico water access; RECA Exerpts	Reading Response
14	Tues 11/22	NO CLASS		Reading Response <b>Environment Assignment</b>
15	Tues 11/29 Thurs 12/1	Wrap Up		<b>Reflection Assignment</b>