

# SYLLABUS

## GEO 4471 – Political Geography

Fall 2003 – Florida State University International Programs in Florence

Monday/Wednesday 9:00-10:30, N.W. II

Instructor: Phil Steinberg, Associate Professor of Geography, Florida State U.

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### Course Overview

Europe is facing a host of changes and challenges:

- Europe is integrating as never before, into one political and economic entity.
- At the same time, Europe is disintegrating as regions, cities, and self-identified cultural communities develop distinct identities and rally for relative autonomy from national governments.
- These conflicting trends – toward integration and disintegration – are further complicated by increasing diversity, both from immigration and from Europe's geographical expansion.

To investigate these changes, this course takes a *political geographic* perspective rooted in the concept of territoriality: how and why individuals and institutions (including, but not limited to governments) control territory as a means to asserting political power. This perspective recognizes that the modern territorial nation-state is just one of many ways in which societies can organize space, and that it may not be the one most suited for (or most likely to thrive in) a changing Europe.

The class will be divided into three units. The first, short unit outlines the political geographic perspective by focusing on manifestations of territoriality at all scales, particularly in the Florentine cityscape. The second unit, which will run until the midterm break, introduces you to the major concepts of state-scale political geography: states, nations, nationalism, imperialism, and geopolitics. In the third unit, we will use these political geographic concepts to analyze contemporary Europe and its futures.

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- define and distinguish key terms and concepts, including *state*, *territory*, and *nation* (and their derivatives such as *territoriality*, *nationalism*, and *nation-state*);
- understand the modern, territorial state as a historically specific entity;
- recognize the role of nationalism and – more broadly – identity politics in hindering and aiding state formation;
- identify the role of internal territorial organization in the construction of state power over space; and
- distinguish between possible alternatives to the modern state and assess the likelihood of each of them emerging in Europe.

## A Note on Class Size

This syllabus is being designed with the assumption that the class will have between 4 and 8 students enrolled. If enrollment falls outside this range, some changes may be made to the syllabus. The student-led field trip assignment for Unit I could be made an individual or group effort, depending on enrollment numbers. Unit II will likely be lecture/discussion-centered no matter how many students are in the class. For Unit III, anything goes, and if class size ends up being very small I would be happy to focus more in-depth on specific aspects of European transformation, break down into one-on-one tutorials, or make any other changes that the class as a whole can agree upon.

You should not be discouraged from adding this course during Add/Drop period if you had not previously purchased the books. I will make my copies available, and two of the three texts were originally published in England and can probably be ordered relatively quickly.

## Course Materials

### *Texts*

Demko, George J. and William B. Wood, *Reordering the World: Geopolitical Perspectives on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999. ISBN: 0-8133-3405-5. **[Abbreviated as D/W in the Class Schedule]**

Jönsson, Christer, Sven Tägil, and Gunnar Törnqvist, *Organizing European Space*, London, UK, Thousand Oaks, CA, and New Delhi, India: Sage, 2000. ISBN: 0-7619-6673-0. **[Abbreviated as J/T/T in the Class Schedule]**

Taylor, Peter J. and Colin Flint, *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999. ISBN: 0-582-35733-0. **[Abbreviated as T/F in the Class Schedule]**

### *Additional Readings*

Agnew, John and Stuart Corbridge, "Chapter 4: The Territorial Trap" in *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy*, London, UK: Routledge, 1995, pp. 78-100.

Sack, Robert, Excerpt from "Chapter 1: The Meaning of Territoriality" in *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 5-23.

### *Optional Readings*

During the third unit of the class, presenters may also wish to read selected chapters from the *People in Places* workbooks, by Philip Steinberg and Kathy Sherman-Morris **[Abbreviated as S/S-M in the Class Schedule]**

## **Class Schedule**

Read the assigned readings during the period when that material is being covered in class. For each unit, you should always have at least one reading completed before the first class for that unit, and you should complete the unit's readings prior to that unit's final class. Readings average fewer than 20 pages per class session, so you're expected to do all of the reading.

Dates included on the syllabus are estimates. If we end up going faster or slower than predicted, this will be pointed out in class and you should change the pace of your reading accordingly.

### *I. Political Geography and the Future of Europe*

#### A. Introductory class (M 9/1)

What is political geography? Intro to significance of territory; Class introductions; Syllabus overview; Etc.

#### B. Territoriality as the central principle in political geography (W 9/3, W 9/10)

Class field-trip on W 9/3

Student-led field-trip(s) on W 9/10

*Reading: Sack hand-out*

#### C. Using political geography to understand a changing world and a changing Europe (M 9/8)

*Readings: J/T/T Introduction; D/W Chpt. 1*

Student-led field-trip(s) in-class on W 9/10

### *II. Principles of Political Geography*

#### A. The rise of the state and the state system (M 9/15, W 9/17)

*Readings: J/T/T Chpts. 3&4; T/F Chpt. 4 from beginning to p. 153 and from p. 172 to end*

#### B. Globalizing the state system: imperialism and its limits (M 9/22, W 9/24)

*Readings: T/F Chpt. 3; D/W Chpt. 15*

#### C. Nations, nation-states, and nationalism (M 9/29, W 10/1)

*Readings: D/W Chpt. 11; J/T/T Chpt. 5 through p. 86*

#### D. States as territorial units: organizing and governing the space within (M 10/6)

*Reading: T/F Chpt. 4 – pp. 153-172 only*

#### E. States as territorial actors in a geopolitical system: vying for control of strategic spaces (W 10/8, M 10/13)

*Reading: T/F Chpt. 2*

**Th 10/16 or F 10/17 – MIDTERM**

### *III. New Political Geographies of Europe*

A. Beyond the territorial state (M 10/27, W 10/29)

*Readings: J/T/T Chpt. 5 from p. 86 to end; D/W chpt. 12*

B. Integrating Europe (M 11/3, W 11/5)

Student-led field-trip/presentation on 11/5

*Reading: J/T/T Chpt. 7*

*Optional Reading for Presenter: S/S-M Chapter R8 [EU Expansion]*

C. Diversifying Europe (M 11/10, W 11/12)

Student-led field-trip/presentation on 11/12

*Reading: D/W Chpt. 8*

*Optional Reading for Presenter: S/S-M Chapter KM3 [Migration to W. Eur.]*

D. Localizing Europe (M 11/17, W 11/19, M 11/24)

Student-led field-trip/presentation on 11/24

*Readings: J/T/T Chpts. 8&9; T/F Chpt. 7*

*Optional Reading for Presenter: S/S-M Chapter R6 [Jerusalem & Makkah]*

E. Deterritorializing Europe (W 11/26, M 12/1, W 12/3)

Student-led field-trip/presentation and distribution of final evaluation study-sheet on 12/3

*Readings: J/T/T Chpts. 6&10; D/W Chpt. 14*

*Optional Readings for Presenter: S/S-M Chapters KM5 [Social Movements] & KM9 [Self-Determination]*

### **Evaluation**

Your grade will be determined from four sources.

1. *Territoriality exercise:* During the September 10 class, the students in the class will lead the instructor (and fellow students) on “territoriality-tours” of Florence, pointing out and discussing instances of territoriality on the Florence cityscape. If class size is very small (3 or less), each student will do an individual 15-20-minute tour. If class size is four or greater, we will do two group tours (each 20-30 minutes long). In case of group tours, each student will take responsibility for discussing specific points along the tour, and each student will receive a separate grade, although the grade will also reflect the overall quality of the tour. (15%)
2. *Mid-term exam:* The mid-term exam, which will be given on October 16 or 17, will consist of a number of essay questions, some of which you will be permitted to not answer (e.g. “Answer two of the following four questions.”) The exam will cover the scope of Unit II. The mid-term will be open-book and open-notes and will cover all of the material from the first part of the class. (35%)
3. *Unit III paper/poster/presentation/field-trip:* On November 5, 12, 24, and December 3 (the final day of each of the last four sections of Unit III), class will be led by a student (or a group of students, if there are more than four students enrolled in the class). The student leader(s) will relate that section’s topic to things that they have observed during their study-abroad experience. Topics could range from everyday lives of Florentine

citizens, to the city's retail landscape, to ongoing policy debates in the press. The presentation format can range from a field trip to an in-class presentation to a narrated poster of photographs taken by the student. For instance, a student presenting on the "Diversifying Europe" unit could photograph and interview a number of non-Italian immigrants and present a poster about the immigrant experience and immigrant attitudes toward Florence, Italy, and Europe. If there are fewer than four students in the class, no student will be required to make more than one presentation. Although students may do library research for this project, other forms of research using the resources and people of Florence will be encouraged. If students need Web access to do their research, I can arrange for free Web time. Each student should meet with me just before Fall Break to discuss individual project options. (35%)

4. *Final evaluation:* During the last day of class (December 3), you will be given one or more website printouts or newspaper clippings pertaining to a current event in the political geography of Europe. Also, during this last day of class, you will sign up for one of the times available for meeting with me for your final evaluation. The final evaluation will involve a conversation where I begin by asking you your opinion on the selected reading and how you can relate it to some of the material covered in the class. When you receive the website printout or newspaper clipping, you will also receive a number of possible first questions, which will help you prepare for this final evaluation. (15%)

## **Predicted FAQs**

1. *I'm supposed to lead a field trip next week? I just got to Florence; how can I lead a field trip?* You can. I'll be leading you on a similar field trip so you'll get ideas for some of the ways in which territoriality can be expressed in the cityscape. All you'll have to do is wander around and look for other instances. By putting the field-trip together so early in the semester, you'll develop a "lens" for looking at the city, which should help you get the most out of not just this course but the entire study-abroad experience.

2. *What's with that "final evaluation?" Is that like an oral exam?* Well, I guess you can call it an oral exam if you want to, but it's really a conversation where I begin by asking you a question that I've already prepped you for, and we see where things go from there. As opposed to a formal final exam, you'll be given chances to show that you understand the material that we covered during the semester, even if that's not clear from your initial response, so it's really much more student-friendly than a traditional exam. It's also more representative of the "exams" that you'll be faced with after college. We can schedule our meeting any day after the last day of class (Wednesday, December 3), so that you won't have to hang around through the finals period if you don't have any final exams.

## **Honor Code**

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code. The Academic Honor System of The Florida State University is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility to:

1. Uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work,
2. Refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the University community, and

3.Foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the University community.  
For the entire FSU Honor Code, see [http://registrar.fsu.edu/Grad\\_Website/ugr034.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/Grad_Website/ugr034.htm).

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is never permitted. If you get an idea from somewhere else (including from one of your fellow students), include a citation. If you extract a quotation from another source (even if that source was another paper written by you), you *definitely* need to cite it.

Don't be afraid to cite. In fact, citations will generally help your grade: I'll be impressed that you went out of your way to research something. There are limits to this, of course: If you "researched" your entire paper by copying someone else's, a citation to the paper that you copied won't excuse the fact that there are no original thoughts in the paper. If in doubt, see me when you're writing, and I'll be glad to discuss citation options. You're much more likely to receive points for your concern than to lose points for showing me what you didn't know.

While the web makes plagiarism easy, it also makes it easy to catch plagiarizers. So don't try it.

By the way, I don't care *how* you cite so long as you include citations, but your format should be consistent for the duration of a paper.

### **Absences Policy**

Normally, I don't penalize for unexcused absences. My feeling is that if you miss class it will end up being reflected in bad grades on exams and papers, so no additional penalties are necessary. In this case, however, due to the small size of classes, your absence will hurt not only yourself but also your fellow students. Therefore, I will follow the absences policy recommended by the FSU Florence Program: You will be allowed three unexcused absences; I will not help you to make up what you missed from an unexcused absence, but I won't directly penalize you either. After your third unexcused absence, however, you will be penalized through a ten percent reduction in your overall class grade. To have an unexcused absence reclassified as an "excused" absence (in which case I *will* help you to make up the material), see Dr. Carrabino.

### **Office Hours**

I'll be upstairs in the Mezzanine on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 to 12:00. If you need to speak with me at another time, I should be able to make myself available. Just catch me after class, e-mail me at [psteinbe@coss.fsu.edu](mailto:psteinbe@coss.fsu.edu), or, if you're really desperate, call me at home at 055 248 0050.