



Undergraduate Programme  
in International Relations  
(Parallel Degree from HSE and UoL)

**WORLD REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY**

Course Syllabus

(Second/Third Module 2019/2020)

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# World Regional Geography

## Course Syllabus

### Course Description

#### Pre-requisites

The course has no pre-requisites.

#### Abstract

This course is concerned with the ways in which political practice is bound up with geographical definition: with spatially defined conceptions of inside and outside, center and margin, core and periphery systems that are regulated by international law and governed by such concepts as sovereignty and national self-determination.

### Learning Objectives

1. To understand the development of group identities such as nations and examine the linkages between these identities and the political organization of territory.
2. To examine states emergence with an emphasis on how internal and external forces work centripetally and centrifugally on the integrity of state territories.
3. To develop an appreciation for the effects of boundaries on economic, political, and social processes.
4. To study in relevant details theoretical concepts and challenges underpinning the study of geography and politics.
5. To identify the political, economic, and environmental forces that are undermining the modern nation- state system.
6. To have a working familiarity with the most current research topics in political geography.

### Learning Outcomes

To build factual knowledge about profound processes in political geography and develop skills of critical evaluation of various cases, which highlight political affairs within a geographical framework.

### Grading System

Grading formula consist of:

1. Seminars (280 pts)

2. Quizzes (220 pts)
3. Quizzes (100 pts)
4. Map Test 1 (100 pts)
5. Map Test 2 (100 pts)
6. Group Project 1 (100 pts)
7. Group Project 2 (100 pts)

The final grade is composed of the maximum of 1000 points and is translated into a 10-scale marking system by dividing the amount of points received by 100 and rounding up the result. *e.g. 765 points /10=76,5= 8 (grade)*

### Seminars:

All students are expected to attend every class and participate by contributing to the in-class discussions, participating in group projects and making notes. The statements and answers to the questions must contain well formulated arguments that clearly show your position. To do this, students must demonstrate a quality preparation for the seminar: read all the assigned literature and be ready to perform your critical evaluation of it.

! Electronic devices such as tablets or laptops are welcomed at the seminar, but cell phones are allowed only when taking a Socrative.

The final grade is made up of points that students earn throughout the course. The distribution of points is the following:

0	0,5	1	2	3
Absence without a valid reason <sup>1</sup>	Present, but no participation <sup>2</sup>	Present; little contribution <sup>3</sup>	Present; sophisticated contribution	Present; outstanding contribution

Overall participation in seminars in the 2<sup>nd</sup> module makes up the grading scheme:

NOT A PASS		SATISFACTORY		WELL PASSED		EXCELLENTLY PASSED	
Out of 280	Points	Out of 280	Points	Out of 280	Points	Out of 280	Points
5	0,5	100	5,5	160	8,5	220	12
10	1	110	6	170	9	225	12,5
20	1,5	120	6,5	180	9,5	230	13
30	2	130	7	190	10	240	13,5
40	2,5	140	7,5	195	10,5	250	14

<sup>1</sup> Medical certificate or any proof of academic activity (e.g. conference) should be handed in to the Administration Office if a student wants to make up for the missed opportunity to get credits. It is obligatory to notify the tutor or the assistants to ask for a special task for the related topic. The tutor should be notified by a student via e-mail during a student's absence and a medical certificate (or any document explaining the valid reason) should be handed in not later than 2 days after a student has return to studying. Unless these steps are accomplished, a student will get the mark "0" for all seminars they missed.

<sup>2</sup> Not being able to respond to the question of the tutor or passive participation in group projects is considered as "no" participation.

<sup>3</sup> Having answered the question of the tutor, but no involvement volunteering or volunteered 1-2 times without demonstrating comprehensive analysis is considered as "little" contribution.

50	3	150	8	200	11	255	14,5
60	3,5			210	11,5	260	15
70	4					270	15,5
80	4,5					280	16
90	5						

Overall participation in seminars in the 3<sup>rd</sup> module makes up the grading scheme:

NOT A PASS		SATISFACTORY		WELL PASSED		EXCELLENTLY PASSED	
Out of 280	Points	Out of 280	Points	Out of 280	Points	Out of 280	Points
5	0,5	80	4,5	130	7	170	9,5
10	1	90	5	140	7,5	180	10
20	1,5	100	5,5	150	8	185	10,5
30	2	110	6	160	8,5	190	11
40	2,5	120	6,5	165	9	200	11,5
50	3					210	12
60	3,5						
70	4						

### Quizzes:

Quizzes<sup>4</sup> are short tests aimed to verify how the material was learned and understood. Each quiz may (but not necessarily) contain three types of questions: a) material from the lecture; b) material from the previous seminar; c) the least frequently answered questions from the previous quizzes. Normally quiz consists of 10-15 short questions. The final grade for this part is the average for all<sup>5</sup> quizzes (in both modules).

### *Sample Quiz Questions:*

**Question 1:** Who was the deputy Prime Minister to unify India?

**Correct Answer:** Sardar Patel

**Question 2:** When the unification of India took place?

**Answer Choice:**

- 1947(correct answer)
- 1957
- 1847
- 1967

### Map Tests:

<sup>4</sup> There may be more than one quiz at the seminar.

<sup>5</sup> Seminar attendance is required to have a grade for quiz. Medical certificate or another document mentioned in the first section is the only excuse to skip the quiz. In other cases, the skipped quiz is estimated at zero which is included in the average score.

The “*Map Test*” is a necessary<sup>6</sup> check of factual knowledge for every student at the program. This test is designed as a small quiz uploaded and accessed by students via the online platform.

“*Map Test*” 1 will consist of 4 blocks of questions:

1. a characteristic of a country's geographical location (whether it has access to the world ocean, whether it is landlocked or double-landlocked, an island, peninsula or an archipelago, etc.),
2. the name of the country by its physical image on the world political map (can be open questions, i.e. you will need the correct spelling)
3. the name of the country that borders with all other countries specified in the question (can be open questions, i.e. you will need the correct spelling)
4. border neighbors of a specific country

“*Map Test*” 2 will consist of four blocks of questions:

1. membership of countries in or associating with international organizations and forums (NATO, CSTO, EU, EEU, CIS, NAFTA/USMCA, MERCOSUR, GCC, ASEAN, BRICs, SCO, Arab League)
2. rating of the size of the territory (need to know the top 20 countries in the World, top 10 in Europe and Asia and top 5 in the rest of the world except Australia and Oceania)
3. rating and the size of the population, the value is rounded up to 10 million (need to know the top 20 countries in the World, top 10 in Europe and Asia and top 5 in the rest of the world except Australia and Oceania)
4. rating and the size of the economy (GDP PPP), the value to round up to 100 million (need to know the top 20 countries in the World, top 10 in Europe and Asia and top 5 in the rest of the world except Australia and Oceania)

*Sample “Map Test” Questions:*

**Question 1:** Who are some of the members of GCC

**Answer Choice:**

- Bahrain (**correct answer**)
- Kuwait (**correct answer**)
- Oman (**correct answer**)
- Qatar (**correct answer**)
- Iran
- Iraq
- Saudi Arabia (**correct answer**)
- United Arab Emirates(**correct answer**)

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<sup>6</sup> Map tests attendance is obligatory. Retake is required and may happen only if you have medical certificate or another document mentioned in the first section. In other cases, test is estimated at zero which is included in the average score.

**Question 2:** Who neighbors with Andorra, Portugal, France

**Correct Answer:** Spain

## Group Projects

Group project (GP) requires students to work in teams<sup>7</sup> in order to present an investigation about a given country, that will be held once a module (there will be two projects). Both group projects consist of 2 parts:

First GP:

- Physical and Human geography of a state
- History of a state, regarding acquiring of its sovereignty and nationhood

Second GP:

- Political System and Political Parties of a state
- Regional position and participation in different international organizations

The presentation is to last for no longer than 12 minutes, followed by a Q&A session. The presentation should be legible; therefore, it is recommended to avoid questionable color pairings and any text smaller than 18 pt. Students are free to select whichever member of the team is to present a particular part, yet the Instructor reserves the right to address subsequent questions to any member of the team. Every team member is expected to contribute to the presentation in order to get a grade.

### *Grading system for GP:*

		1 point	2 points	3 points
Content (group)	Material	Clear structure; basic facts are listed	Facts interpreted with reference to lectures and seminars	Argumentation from further sources
	Visuals	Clear concise text; imported visuals	Self-produced visuals	
	Sources	Relevant sources; APA formatted		

<sup>7</sup> for both of these projects team members will be randomly picked out of the entire course

Delivery (individual)	Effortless speech; occasional speaking	Persuasive speech; occasional speaking	
Feedback <b>**</b> (group)	Grade equals jury's grade +/- 1; substantiation provided	Grade equals jury's grade +/-1; Strength and weakness of the presentation are analyzed	

**\*\*** Each group's presentation is also evaluated by a jury and all other groups according to the rubric. One evaluation per each presentation is then randomly selected and compared against the jury's evaluation; this translates into the evaluating group's *feedback* mark.

## Methods of Instruction

Each week of the course contains one lecture and one seminar devoted to a particular topic of the course content.

## Examination Type

The cumulated grade for the course is enough to pass the discipline, therefore no exam is intended.

## Special Equipment

No special equipment is required.

## Course Content

Week 1. **Theories of political development and main approaches to its studies.**

Week 2. **Western Europe.** Eurocentric nature of political study; origins of sovereignty and nation-state; European Empires and colonialism; a current role of Western Europe in the global affairs, regional integration (e.g. European Union) and development of regional system of institutions

Week 3. **North America and the United States.** Colonial past and its impact on the formation of North America; characteristics of state-building in the United States; current position of the United States in the global power distribution

Week 4. **Latin America.** Colonial institutions and their role in explaining modern stage in economic and political development of Latin America

Week 5. **Eastern Europe.** Historical background of Eastern European countries and relations with Russia; formation of national identity and state-building process throughout the history

Week 6. **Russia and Post-Soviet Space.** The role of history and geography in the development of Russian statehood; inherent vulnerabilities of Russian geographic location; current objectives and goals of Russia, economic and political cooperation with the Post-Soviet Space states

Week 7. **China.** Historical development of the Chinese state: concepts of sovereignty, regions and dynasties; transformation of Chinese foreign policy, the role of historical and cultural background in directing the current objectives of China as the global actor

Week 8. **India.** Formation and development of the Indian statehood; historical stages in the political evolution of the Indian state; democratization and modern political discourse in India; influence of geographic factors on the economic and political dynamics inside the state

Week 9. **East Asia, South-East Asia, Oceania and Africa.** Geographic position as the key determinant of the regional economic and political development; characteristic of domestic political structure, process of democratization; politics of regional integration in the regions

Week 10. **The Greater Middle East.** Formation of statehood and the role of the sovereign in history of Middle East monarchies; geopolitical factors which explain the instable nature of the Middle East region; unresolved tensions and growing regional confrontation; economic and political development of the African states

Week 11. **Political Geography and Area Studies.** Main concepts in the study of political geography; key ideas and theories applied to explain the dynamics of global affairs

Week 12. **Globalization and Post-Westphalian Political Order.** Deepening and speeding-up of the process of globalization; transformation of interstate relations and development of the institutional framework of global governance

Week 13. **Political Order in Transition.** Changing nature of political order and re-ordering of interstate relations; growing tensions and appearance of new patterns of power distribution among major political actors

Week 14. **Political Geography and Territorial Stability.** Increasing concerns about the instabilities and uncertainties in global and regional politics; historical and geographic explanation of current conflicts

Week 15. **Political Geography of Local Border Disputes.** Focus on local dynamics and growing social and political tensions inside regions

Week 16. **Post-Globalization and Regionalism.** Consequences of globalization and increasing interdependence of states in the international relations; formation of regional forms of cooperation

Week 17. **Political Geography of Alliances and Integration.** Formalized institutional frameworks and their role in shaping contemporary international relations; forms and particular cases of interstate integration

Week 18. **International Organizations and Politics of Regional Integration.** Formation of international organization such as the United Nations and European Union; structure and the main agenda of those organizations, their agenda and impact on both the global and regional decision-making

## Course Readings

All readings sent via email by the tutor or the assistants are required for a productive seminar, which is necessary to pass the academic discipline.

### Essential Readings:

- Ball, D., & Lee, S. (Eds.). (2016). *The Importance of Geography. Geography, power, strategy and defence policy: essays in honour of Paul Dibb.* ANU Press.
- Flint, C., & Taylor, P. J. (2014). *Political geography: World-economy, nation-state, and locality.* Routledge.
- Popov, V., & Dutkiewicz, P. (Eds.). (2017). *Mapping a new World Order.* Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Richmond, O. P. (2016). *Peace formation and political order in conflict affected societies.* Oxford University Press.
- Sapelli, G. (2015). *Global challenges and the emerging world order.* Springer.
- Stacie, G. (2018). *When Right Makes Might: Rising Powers and World Order.* Cornell University Press.
- Stephen, M. D., & Zürn, M. (Eds.). (2019). *Contested World Orders: Rising Powers, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the Politics of Authority Beyond the Nation-State.* Oxford University Press, USA.

### Further Readings:

- Davutoğlu, A., Aydın, C., Brown, C., Çıdam, Ç., Duvall, R., Falk, R. & Weiming, T. (2014). *Civilizations and World Order: Geopolitics and Cultural Difference*. Lexington Books.
- Diez, T., & Tocci, N. (Eds.). (2017). *The EU, promoting regional integration, and conflict resolution*. Springer International Publishing.
- Götz, E., & Merlen, C. R. (2019). Russia and the question of world order. *European Politics and Society*, 20(2), 133-153.
- Orsini, A. (Ed.). (2016). *The European Union with (in) international organisations: Commitment, consistency and effects across time*. Routledge.
- Slobodchikoff, M. O. (2014). *Building Hegemonic Order Russia's Way: Order, Stability, and Predictability in the Post-Soviet Space*. Lexington Books.
- Tozzo, B. (2018). *American Hegemony after the Great Recession*. Springer.