GEOGRAPHY BEHIND THE HEADLINES: Geographical Foundations to Current Issues

Instructor: Dr. Victor Konrad, Loeb A425 Loeb; 613 520 2600 extension 6801 (office hours only); Victor.Konrad@carleton.ca

Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11:30, 15:00-17:00, or by appointment

Lecture Class: Mondays, 11:35-14:25

Prerequisite: Second year standing or permission

Course Description:

Geography matters in the events, issues and concerns expressed in the headlines we see in the media every day. This course is an exploration of the geography inherent in the prominent headlines of our time. We will examine the geographical backgrounds to selected issues of current interest through geography’s perspective of integrating human and physical environments. The issues selected will be global in their significance, yet in most instances we will seek the national, regional and local implications and interdependencies of the media concerns. We will evaluate how the scales are linked by major themes in geography, and how these themes, migration for example, help us to understand the headlines and the world around us, from a global perspective all the way to consequences for our National Capital Area.

Course Format:

This course is a lecture class. In order to advance in this course you must attend the lectures and discussions, read the textbook and complete the essay assignment. The examinations will test your knowledge of the concepts and the content of the lectures and the text.

Course Objectives:

The following objectives underlie this course:

- To become familiar with the geography behind major headline issues around the globe
- To develop a critical understanding of the geographical concepts and approaches that enable us to understand the geography behind the headlines
To conduct focused research on an aspect of geography behind the headlines and to improve analytical and writing skills in pursuit of the geography of the story.

**Lecture and Discussion Schedule: THIS ‘SCHEDULE AND TOPICS OUTLINE’ IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH THE HEADLINES**

Jan 7 **Introduction**: Distribution and discussion of Course Outline; Reading Geography in the Headlines; The significance and importance of understanding the Geography behind the media in a global yet local world *Reading in text: Chapter 1. Why Geography Matters...More than ever*

Jan 14 **Canada in the Middle East, Africa and Afghanistan and the Impact on Canadians**: Geographical Elements of Place, Space and Perception in Canada’s Missions Overseas *Reading in text: Chapter 2. Reading Maps and Facing Threats*

Jan 21 **Global Terrorism**: Geographical Implications for North America, Canada and Ottawa; **Iran, Iraq and Pakistan**: The Geopolitics of Insurgency and the rise of Islamic State *Reading in text: Chapter 6. The Geography Behind War and Terror*

Jan 28 **Re-Shaping North Africa and the Middle East**: Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria and Yemen; **Israel and the Palestinians**: Power and geography *Reading in text: Chapter 7. Interpreting Terrorism’s Geographic Manifestations*

Feb 4 **Interim Examination One Hour** Reinventing the Canada-US Borderlands: Geopolitics Comes Home *Reading TBA; New Lines/News Lines in the Arctic and Antarctic*: Sovereignty, Indigenous Homelands, Resources and Environment *Reading TBA*

Feb 11 **Climate Change**: Global and geographical dimensions: Fact? Fiction? Media Creation? *Reading in text: Chapter 3: Geography and Demography, Chapter 4. Geography and Climate Change*

Feb 18-22 Winter Break, No Classes

Feb 25 **Disasters in the News**: Katrina to Fukushima to Nepal: Hurricanes, Tornadoes, Tidal Waves and Earthquakes; Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Chile and Himalayas *Reading in text: Chapter 5. Climate, Place and Fate*

Mar 4 **A New Russia**: Putin’s Russia and Russians Everywhere **The Ukrainian Crisis** *Reading in text: Chapter 10. Russia: Trouble on the Eastern Front*
Mar 11 European Union to European Superpower? Europe in the Vanguard, or a Continent in Crisis? Reading in text: Chapter 9. Europe: Superpower in the Making or Paper Tiger of the Future?

Mar 18 China and India: Population, Economic Expansion and Challenges in Globalization Reading in text: Chapter 8: Red Star Rising: China’s Geopolitical Gauntlet

Mar 25 Interim Examination: One Hour + Take Home; Hope for Africa? The Geography of Survival Reading in text: Chapter 11: Africa in a Globalizing World

April 1 Canadian Geography Behind the Headlines: the stories of 2017-18. Reading TBA

April 8 Conclusions and Review

Course Evaluation:

A one hour interim examination in class on Feb 4, 2019. (20% of final grade)

One essay, script, screen play or column (minimum 10 pages-maximum 15 pages, double-spaced, excluding supporting illustrations and references). (40% of final grade=5% proposal + 35% final paper) The topic must be cleared with the instructor by Jan 21, 2019, and a formal written proposal (maximum 2 pages, double-spaced) must be submitted by Jan 28, 2019. The proposal will be returned in class on Feb 4, 2019. The proposal accounts for 5% of the total course grade. The essay is DUE IN CLASS March 11, 2019. Late submissions will be penalized 3% per day up to one week after the due date, and will not be accepted after March 18, 2019.

An in class, one hour, interim examination in short answer, multiple choice and map recognition formats and a take home segment on March 25, 2019. The take home segment is due April 1, 2019. (40% of final grade)

“Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means the grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.”

Reading:


Standard Departmental Requirement:
While you may collaborate with others in working through the assignment(s), you must prepare and submit your own separate report, written in your own words, which clearly demonstrates your understanding, interpretation and analysis of the assignment.

Students are encouraged to use the following services:

- **Writing Tutorial Service** – for writing and editing help: 229 Patterson, 613 520 6632
- **Student Academic Success Centre** – for help to develop your academic plan: 302 Tory, 613 520 7850
- **International Student Services** – for help with proof-reading and developing English writing skills: 128 University Centre, 613 520 6600

The supplemental text, *Communicating in Geography and the Environmental Sciences*, is a guide to communicating in this course. This book outlines how to prepare written submissions and how to study for the examinations. Also, to help you in writing and editing your written assignments the following Canadian guide is available in the reference section of the library:


**Late Assignments Policy:**

There are strict deadlines to submit assignments as noted in the outline above. Assignments that are submitted after these deadlines will not be accepted, unless prior arrangements for an extension have been made with the instructor, at least one week before the deadline. This policy refers to non-medical reasons. Students who are unable to complete their paper proposal or final paper on time, because of illness or any other circumstances beyond their control, may request an extension, either directly with the instructor or through the Registrarial Services Office. However, to be valid, such a request must be supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documents.

**Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at [http://www.carleton.ca/equity/](http://www.carleton.ca/equity/). For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

- **For students with disabilities**: The Paul Menton Centre (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders
(ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613 520 6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

- **For religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.
- **For Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

**Instructional Offenses: Plagiarism**

While students are encouraged to discuss aspects of the course outside the classroom, written assignments must reflect the student’s personal work and thoughts. In your written work, you must use quotation marks for direct quotes, cite your sources, and include a complete bibliography listing all the works you cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, that is, the fact of using someone else’s words or ideas (including other students’) as if they were your own. Cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean’s Office and appropriate action will be taken. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Also, some students mistakenly believe that it is acceptable to cut and paste text from websites into their papers, without acknowledging it by providing quotation marks and citing their sources. This too constitutes plagiarism. Therefore, like other sources, websites must be cited fully. In addition, downloading from Internet (either in part or in their entirety) papers written by others to hand in, as well as submitting the same assignment in different courses, are unacceptable practices and will not be tolerated.

You may find more information on plagiarism and its consequences, as well as instructions on how to acknowledge your sources properly, on the MacOdrum Library website. The Academic Integrity Policy of the University is found at: [http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity](http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity)