GOVT 440 - Political Geography

Steven Alan Samson
Dr. Steven Alan Samson  
ssamson@liberty.edu  
434-592-3689  
GH 1661T  
Office Hours MWF 13:15-15:00; TR 12:30-13:45 by appointment

I. **Course Description**  A study of the political, cultural, and economic dynamics of the international system with special attention given to their geo-strategic dimensions.

II. **Rationale**  This course directly supports Aims 1-11 of the Liberty University Statement of Purpose.

III. **Prerequisite**  GOVT 200, GOVT 210, or GOVT 220

It is the student’s responsibility to make up any prerequisite deficiencies, as stated in the Liberty University Catalog, which would prevent the successful completion of this course.

IV. **Materials List**

**Purchase:**

**Optional:**
 ISBN: 978-0679776871  (Replacement Test)

**Internet:**
- About.com: Geography
- Authagraph World Map
- www.andaman.org
- Asia Times
- BBC News
- CIA Maps
- Countries and Capitals
- Country Watch
- David Rumsey Map Collection
- Demography Matters
- 80 Unreal Places You Thought Only Existed in Your Imagination
- Foreign Policy Research Institute
- Geosource
- IPL: Newspapers and Magazines
- Middle East Newsline
- Policy Review
- Stratfor Global Intelligence
V. Measurable Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. The student will be exposed to a variety of social science concepts and approaches to the study of political and cultural geography.
2. The student will distinguish competing approaches to and schools of thought within the academic discipline of international relations.
3. The student will recognize and be able to locate approximately 170 countries and numerous other geographical features on outline maps.
4. The student will compare the history, geography, economies, governing institutions, and political behavior of contemporary nations, states, and international entities as major factors that shape international decision-making.
5. The student will demonstrate their knowledge and comprehension of the readings, lectures, and study aids through a series of objective tests and essay questions.
6. The student will thereby become better equipped to understand, participate in, and evaluate international political processes.

VI. Assignments/Requirements

1. **Reading**: Each student is responsible for completing reading assignments prior to class. The emphasis is on close and careful reading of the text. Keeping a loose leaf notebook of class materials is highly recommended, as is bringing it to class.
2. **Participation** is an essential part of class. Textbook chapters, collateral readings, and current events will be the subject of class commentary and discussions. It is especially recommended that students follow [http://www.stratfor.com/](http://www.stratfor.com/), particularly George Friedman’s analyses, and [http://www.atimes.com/](http://www.atimes.com/), particularly the pieces by “Spengler.” The full Stratfor service is obtainable on campus through the library’s database links at the end of S. Students should come prepared to discuss textbook readings as well as current events.

VII. Grading Policies

1. **Tests** (1000 points): a) Students will be tested on the lecture and reading material through a series of seven tests and a map test. Tests will normally be taken during the last 25 minutes of the class period. b) At least six tests, including the final exam, must be completed in order to complete the course. c) The final grade will be calculated on the combined total of six regular test scores (including the final test) along with a separate map test. The lowest test score of the first six tests will be exempted from the calculation and hidden from view following the sixth test. d) In preparing for objective tests, please note the review section for the readings. The major readings in the textbooks, those posted on Blackboard, and those linked to the syllabus have review sections at the end of the study aids posted on Blackboard for each reading or chapter. Each review item represents a specific question that may be on the test (and most will be on the test). e) One short essay each will be required on the second, fourth, and sixth tests, and be optional on the final (seventh) test. A selection of essay questions (from which you will choose one) will be posted about a week in
advance of each test. The questions will be drawn primarily from designated short readings (posted on Blackboard or on the syllabus). They are noted under short essay for each particular test. Advice for writing a good essay: Start with a thesis statement, develop an essay point-by-point using specific examples, and then draw a conclusion based on these points. Make sure you answer all parts of the question and pay attention to specific instructions. The idea is to integrate the material and show a command of the subject. A rubric is posted on Blackboard. f) It is always wise to check Blackboard or e-mail for possible schedule changes. g) Two objective world map tests on the regions of the world require matching the appropriate number or letter of countries and natural features, such as islands, rivers, lakes, seas, and choke points. They are scheduled for Thursday, February 23 and Tuesday, April 4. The raw score of each test will range from 0-80 and be recorded on Gradebook. Map Exercises may be found at various sites, such as the following: http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/africa.html and http://lizardpoint.com/geography/.

2. Makeup Tests: a) Make-up tests have become a logistical nightmare due to the quantity of tests, university-sponsored activities, and other reasons for absence, especially due to receiving last minute requests via e-mail. Please do not e-mail me about make-up tests or absences (except for prolonged absences). So here is a set of procedures: 1) General rule number one: The test must be taken at the scheduled date and time in the scheduled classroom. 2) General rule number two: Unless you have an excused absence, the first test you miss will be counted as the low test score, which is automatically dropped before the final exam. The second test you miss will require you to take the optional test during the final exam period. 3) General rule number three: If you miss the test due to a required university-sponsored activity, military exercise, documented illness, or family emergency (for which you bring documentation from Student Affairs that I may keep for my records), please see me at the end of class on the date of returning to class. I can then arrange for a test to be sent to the Testing Center. If you fail to do this, general rule number two will apply. For excused absences: The make-up test must be taken within one week except in cases where I have been notified of a prolonged absence. I will not normally post the scores of make-up tests until at least a week after the regular test. Please do not request to take a test early. A replacement test will be made available during the final exam period.

3. Test Scores and Final Grades: a) Raw scores for the tests, including any extra points given to compensate for problematic questions and 0-4 points for short essays, will be multiplied by four and recorded in the Gradebook section of Blackboard. Raw scores for the short essays range from 0=Unacceptable or No Answer, 1=Poor, 2=Fair or Average, 3=Good, and 4=Superior. b) Each objective question is worth one point (raw score) and four points when multiplied to be recorded on Blackboard. Regular tests are composed of a minimum of 35 questions (or 33 or more objective questions and one short essay) and are worth 140 points maximum. d) Short answer points are included in the recorded score. e) Only six of the seven regular tests will be counted; the lowest score will be dropped following the sixth test. f) The Map Tests are worth 160 points and, like all tests, may be taken only once. g) The seventh regular test (the final test) is mandatory and may not be taken prior to the scheduled final exam period. h) The final grade will be determined by the total number of points following the final test.

4. Optional: Students who miss a reading test or do poorly on one may read and take a test on Robert D. Kaplan’s The Empire Wilderness, chapters 1-4, 7-8, 13, 26-30 or Alexandros Petersen’s The World Island, chs. 4-7. No more than one substitution is permitted.
5. Students seeking Honors credit should may read Part I of William C. Martel’s *Grand Strategy in Theory and Practice* and (individually or as a team) do a PowerPoint presentation on highlights of American strategic thinking. Honors students are also strongly encouraged to follow the Collateral readings, which further develop some of the major themes of the course.

6. **Grades:** The grading scale is 1000-900=A, 899-800=B, 799-700=C, 699-600=D, 599 and below=F.

VIII. **Attendance Policies**

For the good of the Liberty University student body, a consistent attendance policy is needed so that all students in all majors will understand the expectations of faculty in all their courses. **In general, regular and punctual attendance in all classes is expected of all students.** At times, students will miss classes. Students will be permitted elective absences per the policy below. University-approved absences will not count towards these absences.

- Students who are late for class 10 minutes or less are considered tardy but present for the class. If a student misses in-class work due to tardiness, the faculty member may choose not to allow the student to make up this work. Three class tardies will be counted as one absence.
- Students who are more than 10 minutes late for class are considered absent.
- Questions regarding elective absences must be addressed by the student with the professor within one week of returning to class. In cases where this is not possible, the student must notify the Professor in writing of the circumstances impacting his or her absence. The student may appeal the Professor's decision in writing to the respective Chair within one week. Final appeals may be made to the Dean in writing within one week of the Chair's decision and the Dean's decision is final.
- When circumstances result in excessive absences (e.g., serious medical illness, family crisis), upon return to campus the student shall communicate in writing with the Registrar's Office (Registrar@liberty.edu) and provide an explanation of his or her situation with appropriate documentation. The Registrar will consult with the faculty member before making the final decision and will notify, in writing, the student and the faculty member.

**Student Elective Absences**

While the University believes that consistent attendance in all classes is the largest contributor to students earning good grades, the University Attendance Policy allows students in upper-level classes the opportunity to make their own decisions concerning attendance.

*It is the students’ responsibility to ensure they are present for required classes and turn work in when it is due.* Work missed for University-approved absences may be made up. University-Approved Absences include only Liberty University sponsored events, to include athletic competition or other Provost-approved absences.

Students are required to attend on all test dates. Test dates may change but everyone will be notified by e-mail if that occurs. Absence on a test date will require prior notification or a subsequent excuse from the university, a medical doctor, or a military unit officer for those who are in the military. This also applies to anyone who uses Testing Services to make-up a test. Prolonged absences without notice of a week or longer will result in a university warning. If the absence persists and no communication follows, it may lead to being dropped from the roster with an FN.

NOTE: Although you may not currently be concerned about it, in the near future you will need faculty members to give letters of reference, recommendations for employment, or letters of recommendation for graduate school. Your attendance, punctuality, appearance, and attitude will be areas of interest to those requesting these letters. In
addition, some of you will need a security check for your future job. Be aware that cheating and plagiarism are causes for a permanent record being placed in your student folder, which will be consulted during a background security check.

IX. Other Policies

Dress Code
Students are expected to come to class dressed in a manner consistent with The Liberty Way.

Honor Code
We, the students, faculty, and staff of Liberty University, have a responsibility to uphold the moral and ethical standards of this institution and personally confront those who do not.

Academic Misconduct
Academic misconduct includes: academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and falsification. See The Liberty Way for specific definitions, penalties, and processes for reporting.

Disability Statement
Students with a documented disability may contact the Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) in Green Hall 2668 for arrangements for academic accommodations. For all disability testing accommodation requests (i.e. quieter environment, extended time, oral testing, etc.) the Tutoring/Testing Center (Green Hall 2700) is the officially designated place for all tests administered outside of the regular classroom.

Drop/Add Policy
A Fall/Spring course may be dropped without a grade, tuition, and fee charges within the first five days of the semester. From the sixth day until the end of the tenth week, a Fall/Spring course may be withdrawn with a grade of W or WF.

Classroom Policies
The inappropriate use of technology, such as cell phones, iPods, laptops, calculators, etc. in the classroom is not tolerated. Other disruptive behavior in the classroom is not tolerated. Students who engage in such misconduct will be subject the penalties and processes as written in The Liberty Way.

Food is not permitted. Neither is gum-chewing. Students who are not in appropriate campus attire will not be admitted to class. Caps may not be worn in class.

Helms School of Government Policies
Plagiarism and Multiple Submissions of Papers:
Plagiarism is a serious offense and utilizing the work of others without proper citation is a clear violation of University policy. However, no clear directive has been established within the Helms School of Government as to the permissibility of a student submitting substantially the same paper to satisfy writing requirements in different courses. Effective spring 2007, any writing assignment required for a Helms School of Government course must be an original composition drafted specifically for the individual course. When a course requirement in an upper division course builds upon a previously researched topic, and the student desires to utilize his/her prior submission as a foundational document for the new course assignment, he/she may bring a copy of the previous paper to the current professor. The professor will review with the student the additional research and writing elements needed to complete the current assignment without violating this policy.

Christian Service:
For those students not already involved in Christian Service, see the professor for details and other information if interested.

X. Calendar for the Semester

CLASS SCHEDULE
(Subject to Change)

Key to Readings: Readings for objective questions are indicated by any Bold color
- Red = Printed readings and/or study aids, e.g., N. 1 or S. 8.
- Green = Readings posted on Blackboard
- Blue = Clickable links to Readings on Internet
- Light Blue = Handouts
- Brown = Audio and/or visual presentation
- Collateral = Suggested readings that often help provide short essay answers

Preliminary Reading:

Carlson, Nicholas. Back in 2000, the CIA Made These Predictions for 2015
Draper, Lucy. German Journalist Returns from Time with ISIS with Chilling Stories
Hayward, John. Gorka: Obama Created 'Global Chaos,' Spread 'Gasoline on the Fire' with Anti-Israel UN Resolution
Schulten, Susan. World War II Led to a Revolution in Cartography
Sempa, Francis P. The Return of Classical Geopolitics
Collateral
Durden, Tyler. For the First Time since World War II, No US Carriers Are Deployed Anywhere in the World

Here are some map exercises to prepare you in world regional geography:
- 40 Maps That Explain the World
- A Member of the European Parliament Dissents on Climate
- French Mathematicians Blast UN’s “Costly and Pointless” Crusade against Global Warming
- Six Maps That Show the Anatomy of America's Vast Infrastructure
- Only 25 Percent of American Students Passed Their Geography Test
- New York in Stunning 360 Degree Detail
- Mapping America's Most Popular Burger Chains
- Dramatic Images of Our Changing Planet
- Physically Depicting Borders between Countries Around the World
- 40 Maps That Will Help You Make Sense of the World

A lesson in how to define a nation-state. The Principality of Sealand has an official webpage and an EU page for its government-in-exile.
- http://geography.about.com/od/politicalgeography/a/sealand.htm?nl=1
- Mapping Migration in the United States Since 1900

January
FIRST UNIT
Tues. 17 K. Preface
Morgenthau, Hans J. Six Principles of Political Realism
Friedman, George. Beyond the Post-Cold War World
Thur. 19 K. 1
Goldman, David P (Spengler). Insoluble Syria
Hill, Charles. The Snares of Strategizing
Kaplan, Robert D. Why So Much Anarchy?
Tues. 24 K. 2
Han's Rosling's 200 Countries, 200 Years, 4 Minutes (video)
Friedman, George. A War between Two Worlds
Singer, S. Fred. A Suicidal Collapse of Western Civilization?
K. 3
Dueck, Colin. Geography and World Politics (Grand Strategy)
Sowell, Thomas. Diversity in Action
Collateral
United Nations. 2014 Human Development Index (HDI)
Failed States Index
Top 10 Busiest Ports in the World

SECOND UNIT
Tues. 31
K. 4
Sempa, Francis P. Mackinder's World
Collateral
Pittman, Aaron. 6 Maps That Explain Global Supply Chains

February
Thurs. 2
K. 5
Hassan, Prince of Jordan. Halford Mackinder's New World
Reporters without Borders. World Press Freedom Index
Sicherman, Harvey. The Revival of Geopolitics
Collateral
The Global Competitiveness Index 2014-2015 Rankings (based on World
Economic Forum statistics)
Heritage Foundation. 2014 Index of Economic Freedom
Index of Economic Freedom (based on an earlier index)

FIRST TEST: K. Preface-3

Tues. 7
K. 6-7
Sempa, Francis P. Spykman's World
Codevilla, Angelo. Would George Washington Mourn NATO?
Munoz, Carlo. Cornyn Presses Navy for More Info on Russian Subs in US
Coastal Waters
Collateral
Open Doors. 2017 World Watch List (Christian persecution)
Transparency International. Corruption Perceptions Index 2016

Thur. 9
K. 7-8
Grygiel, Jakub. To Survive, Decentralize!
Mackinder, Halford. The Round World and the Winning of the Peace
Wiles, James C. Stark Evidence of US, British Naval Decline
Collateral
Schulten, Susan. Richard Edes Harrison Reinvented Mapmaking: World War 2
Sempa, Francis P. The Geopolitical Vision of Alfred Thayer Mahan

THIRD UNIT
Tues. 14
M. Introduction, 4
Europe Lectures
Curtis, Michael. France Protecting Its Culture from Islamists
Ibrahim, Raymond. Confirmed: U.S. Chief Facilitator of Christian Persecution
Riccardi, Nicholas. In resort towns, working class squeezed out as rich move in
Collateral
Economist. How Norman Rule Reshaped England
Squires, Nick. Italy Is a Dying Country as Babies No Longer Replace People

Who Die
Thur. 16
K. 9
Europe Lectures
Cohen, Shaul with Matt Cooper. The Geography of Violence
Goldman, David P. (Spengler). Horror as an Instrument of War
Drodziak, William. Europe's Fragile Unity
Helprin, Mark. Obama Hypnotized by Europa
Beehner, Lionel. Effects of "Youth Bulge" on Civil Conflicts
SECOND TEST: K. 4-8

Tues. 21
M. 1; G. Prologue
Russia Lectures

Joffe, Josef. Putinism or Nationalism? Neither. Opportunism.
Khrushcheva, Nina. The Eternal Putin
Monaghan, Andrew. Who Runs Russia with Putin?
Walker, Bruce. When Evils Collide
Yu, Miles Maochun. Russia Is Fighting for Relevance, Not Dominance

Collateral
Cohen, Shaul. Students of the World
Open Doors. World Watch List 2014

Thur. 23
G. Introduction; K. 10
Russia Lectures

Aronsson, Albin. Putin Casts Covetous Eyes on Sweden and Greece
Codevilla, Angelo. Cracking Putin's Code
Isachenkov, Vladimir. How Threat of Loose Soviet Nukes Was Avoided
Pacepa, Ion. Tsar Putin

Collateral
Leighton, Marian. Go South, Young Russian
Moussavian, Seyed Hossein. Ukraine Crisis Could Strengthen Russia-Iran-China

TIES

EUROPE AND AMERICAS MAP TEST

FOURTH UNIT

Tue. 28
M. 3

North America Lectures
Kaplan, Robert D. World Transformed
Gompert, David C., and Phillip C. Saunders. Paradox of Power

Collateral
Flesher, Joseph. 2 Great Lakes Hit Lowest Water Level Record
Stephenson, Seth. The Greatest Paper Map of the United States You'll Ever See

March

Thur. 2
K. 15

North America, Middle America Lectures
Ferguson, Niall. How America Civilization Can Avoid Collapse
Mihelic, Matt. We Don't Want Your Abortion, America

Collateral
Kaplan, Robert D. Travels into America's Future

THIRD TEST: M. Introduction, 1, 4; K. 9-10, G. Prologue, Introduction

Short Essay: Friedman (2), Singer, Sempa (3), Hill, Kaplan (2), Dueck, Sowell, Hassan, Sicherman, Munoz, Wiles, Grygiel, Mackinder, Riccardi, Beehner (2), Goldman (2), Curtis, Codevilla, Pacepa, Drodziak, Isachenkov, various indices

Tues. 7
M. 10

Middle America, South America Lectures
Hanson, Victor Davis. The Bay Area's 1 Percenters!
Mora, Edwin. US General to Senate: Terror Groups Benefiting from Latin American Drug Trade

American Drug Trade
North, Gary. The Map That Stopped Al Gore Cold

Collateral
Whitlock, Craig. Pentagon Weighs Future of Its Inscrutable Nonagenarian

Futurist, Andrew Marshall

Thur. 9 M. 9
### South America Lectures
De Soto, Hernando. *The Destruction of Economic Facts*

Hill, Charles. *Enlightenment: Critique of Diplomacy, State, and System*

**Tues. 14** SPRING BREAK

**Thur. 16** SPRING BREAK

**Tues. 21**
Rabinovich, Abraham. *Iran Has Terror Infrastructure in Central, South America, Says Israeli Defense Minister*

### FIFTH UNIT

**Thur. 23**

**M. 5**

**Subsaharan Africa Lectures**
Collateral

**Tues. 28**

**K. 14**

**Subsaharan Africa/Northwest Africa/Southwest Asia Lectures**
Cronin, Audrey Kurth. *ISIS Is Not a Terrorist Group*
Rafizadeh, Majid. *New Evidence: Iran's Role in 9/11*
Fragile States Index: 2014

**Thur. 30**

**K. 13**

**North Africa/Southwest Asia Lectures**
Ndii, David. *Kenya Is a Cruel Marriage--It's Time We Talk Divorce*
Pipes, Daniel. *Palestine Betrayed*
Whelton, Clark. *A Demographic Theory of War*
Collateral
Fernandez, Richard. *The Day of Disaster*
Fisher, Max. *40 Maps That Explain the Middle East*
Toplansky, Eileen F. *Erasing Israel from the Map*

**FOURTH TEST:** K. 15, M. 3, 9-10; G. 1

### April

**Tues. 4**

**M. 6**

**North Africa/Southwest Asia/South Asia Lectures**
Foust, J. *A Year after Revolution, Kyrgyzstan's Minority Worse off Than Ever*
Garfinkle, Adam. *The Rise of Independent Kurdistan?*

### SIXTH UNIT

**Thur. 6**

**M. 7**

**South Asia Lectures**
Assaf, Daoud. *John Kerry Europeans*
Baker, Pauline. *Unraveling Afghanistan*
Ching, Frank. *China Goes Down the Silk Road Again*
Eberstadt, Nicholas. *The Global War against Baby Girls*
Collateral
Bergreen, Alan. *Toward a Hashemite Palestine*

**AFRICA, ASIA, AND OCEANIA MAP TEST**

**Tues. 11**

**K. 12**

**South Asia Lectures**
Jha, Prem Shankar. *Overcome by a Sense of Betrayal*
Mohan, C. Raja. *India's Master Plan for the Indian Ocean*
Sempa, Francis P. *Review of Kaplan's Monsoon*

**Thur. 13**

**G. 2-3**
Choi, Charles. *Drought Led to Demise of Ancient City of Angkor*
Kaplan, Robert D. *The India-China Rivalry*

**FIFTH TEST:** M. 5-6; K. 13-14

### SEVENTH UNIT
Tues. 18 M. 2
East Asia Lectures
Burbank, Jane, and Frederick Cooper. How Empire Ruled the World
Chang, Gordon C. Now China Wants Okinawa, Site of US Bases in Japan
Codevilla, Angelo. The Lost Decade
Kotkin, Joel. Rise of the Hans
Collateral
Fernando, Vincent. 15 Facts about China That Will Blow Your Mind
Fernando, Vincent. 15 More Facts about China That Will Blow Your Mind

Thur. 20 K. 11
East Asia Lectures
Akkoc, Raziye. Mapped: The World's Immigration Landscape
Goldstein, Lyle J. Get Ready: China Could Pull Crimea in Asia
Ibrahim, Raymond. West Misses the Point--and Lesson--of Buddhist Anti-Muslim
Sentiment
Lee, John. China's New Silk Road Geo-Strategy in Asia
Collateral
Friedman, George. Beyond the Post-Cold War World
Mead, Walter Russell. The End of History Ends
Monckton, Christopher. Agenda 21's Terror Down Under

Tues. 25 M. 8
East Asia Lectures
SIXTH TEST: M. 7; K. 12; G. 2-3

Thur. 27 G. 4-5, Afterword;Appendices (optional)
East Asia/Southeast Asia Lectures
Bailey, Norman. The Strategic Plan That Won the Cold War

May
Tues. 2 Goldman, David P. I Denounce the Shameful Slanders against Sebastian Gorka, Friend of Israel
Southeast Asia/Austral/Pacific Realm Lectures; Wrap-Up
Wed. 4 READING DAY
Fri. 6 SEVENTH (FINAL) TEST (6-8 PM): M. 2, 8, K. 11; G. 4-5

“What would have happened if, instead, our ruling class had approached the problem of internal security by reminding itself that the American people had secured American society very adequately during World War II and the Cold War, against enemies far more potent and who blended into American society more easily than contemporary terrorists ever could? Honesty would also have required admitting that the hijackers of 9/11 were able to succeed partly because the U.S. government had trained a generation of Americans not to interfere with hijackings. Our bipartisan rulers might also have reconsidered whether perhaps they might have erred by configuring new public buildings and reconfiguring old ones to treat the public, whom officials are supposed to serve, as potential threats? Our rulers might have paid attention to Alexis de Tocqueville's observation that America was much less policed than Europe, but suffered from less crime because ordinary citizens took public safety into their own hands.” — Angelo Codevilla

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY
Geopolitics and Strategy


Political Culture


Resource Wars


**War and the Military**


