

Identification	Subject	PSIR 215 Geopolitics 3KU / 6ECTS credits
	Department	Political Science and Philosophy
	Program	Undergraduate
	Term	Fall, 2025
	Instructor	Ayaz Rzayev
	E-mail:	ayaz.rzayev@khazar.org
	Phone:	Department: 238
	Classroom/hours	11 Mehseti str. (Neftchilar campus)
	Office hours	By appointment
Prerequisites	Consent of instructor	
Language	English	
Compulsory/ Elective	Required	
Required textbooks and course materials	<p>Core textbooks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Flint, C. Introduction to geopolitics.</i> Routledge, 2021 • <i>Tuathail, G. Ó., Dalby. The Geopolitics Reader.</i> Routledge, 2006 <p>Course Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agnew, John. "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory." <i>Review of International Political Economy</i> 1, no. 1 (1994): 53–80. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4177090. • Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., & Jervis, R, <i>International politics: Enduring concepts and contemporary issues</i>, Rowman & Littlefield, 2017 • Freedman, Lawrence. <i>Strategy: A History</i>. Oxford University Press, 2013 • Fry, Douglas. <i>War, Peace and Human Nature</i>, Oxford University Press, 2013 • Hal Brands, <i>Making the Unipolar Moment</i>, Cornell University Press, 2016 • Hal Brands, <i>War in Ukraine</i>, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024 • Klein, Matthew and Michael Pettis. <i>Trade Wars are Class Wars</i>. Yale University Press, 2020 • Miller, Chris. <i>Chip War</i>. Scribner, 2022. • Murray, Williamson and Macgregor Knox. <i>The Dynamics of Military Revolution</i>. Cambridge University Press, 2001 • Slobodian, Quinn. <i>Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neoliberalism</i>. Harvard University Press, 2018. • Jervis, Robert. "System Effects Revisited." <i>Critical Review</i> 24, no. 3 (2012): 393-415. • Mayshar, Joram, Omer Moav, and Luigi Pascali. "The Origin of the State: Land Productivity or Appropriability?" <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> 130, no. 4 (2022): 1091-1144. • Froman, Michael. "After the Trade War." <i>Foreign Affairs</i>, August 11, 2025. www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/after-trade-war-michael-froman. • Rodrik, Dani. "Rescuing Economics from Neoliberalism." <i>Boston Review</i>, November 6, 2017. https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/dani-rodrik-rescuing-economics-neoliberalism/ • Berlin, Isaiah. <i>The Hedgehog and the Fox</i>. 1953 	
Course outline	This course aims to introduce students to the main concepts and research themes in contemporary geopolitics. We will explore the interactive relationships between power, place, and political spaces, examining how geography shapes global affairs.	
Course objectives	This course allows students to identify linkage between geography and politics. Students explore concepts such as power, territory, and resources, and how they influence the behavior of states and non-state actors. It aims to develop their analytical and critical thinking skills in understanding global politics	
Learning outcomes	<p>By the end of the semester, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define and distinguish between traditional and critical approaches to geopolitics. 	

	2. Discuss the main elements of the geopolitical imagination that shape our understanding of the world and our place in it. 3. Be informed about famous theories and authors in this field. 4. Learn about geographical specifications of world countries.		
Teaching methods	Lecture		x
	Group discussion		x
	Case analysis		x
	Others		
Evaluation	Methods	Date/deadlines	Percentage (%)
	Midterm Exam		30
	Class Participation		5
	Essay		15
	Presentation/Group Discussion		10
	Final Exam		40
	Total		100
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation for class <p>The structure of this course makes your individual study and preparation outside the class extremely important. The lecture material will focus on the major points introduced in the text. Reading the assigned chapters and having some familiarity with them before class will greatly assist your understanding of the lecture. After the lecture, you should study your notes and work relevant problems from the end of the chapter and sample exam questions. After each lesson for the next class all students are required to be well-prepared and answer the questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Withdrawal (pass/fail) <p>This course strictly follows grading policy of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Thus, a student is normally expected to achieve a mark of at least 60% to pass. In case of failure, he/she will be required to repeat the course the following term or year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheating/plagiarism <p>Cheating or other plagiarism during the Quizzes, Mid-term and Final Examinations will lead to paper cancellation. In this case, the student will automatically get zero (0), without any considerations.</p> <p>Essay</p> <p>We appreciate an ability of students to prepare a good essay. The essay should be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An original research of the students. Written according to the international standards with introduction, internal parts, conclusion, and used special literature. Limited in size (10 -12 pages/Times New Roman - 12). Printed in computer, and has a cover page. <p>Students have to make presentation on the essay topic. This activity will be evaluated on the basis of two components: the written copy and presentation.</p>		

<p>As soon as it is possible, we will offer you a list of themes for essays. Every student can choose for the essay a theme with the consent of instructor.</p> <p>Essay requirements/standards are available in DPSIR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional behavior guidelines <p>The students shall behave in the way to create favorable academic and professional environment during the class hours. Unauthorized discussions and unethical behavior are strictly prohibited.</p>			
Tentative Schedule			
Week	Date/Day (tentative)	Topics	Textbook/Assignments
1	20.9	<p><i>Introduction to Geopolitics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What Matters • Thinking Critically • Defining geopolitics • Syllabus Overview • Q&A 	<p>Flint, C. (2021). Introduction to geopolitics. Ch 1-2, pp. 1-47</p> <p>Isaiah Berlin, The Hedgehog and the Fox, 1953</p> <p>Agnew, John. "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory." Review of International Political Economy 1, no. 1 (1994): 53–80. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4177090.</p>
2	27.09	<p><i>Human Nature, State, and War</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human nature: conflict or cooperation? • Perspectives on violence and reciprocity • Theories of state formation: coercion, contracts, and alternatives • War and the rise of state capacity 	<p>Douglas Fry, War, Peace and Human Nature, Ch. 1, pp. 1-23</p> <p>Joram Mayshar, Omer Moav, & Luigi Pascali, The Origin of the State: Land Productivity or Appropriability? Journal of Political Economy, 2022, 130:4, pp. 1091-1144</p> <p>Robert Jervis, System Effects Revisited, Critical Review 24:3, pp. 393–415.</p>
3	4.10	<p><i>Classical Geopolitical Thought</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mackinder's Heartland Theory • Mahan's sea power theory • Spykman's Rimland concept • German geopolitik and its legacy 	<p>Tuathail, G. Ó., Dalby. The Geopolitics Reader. Routledge, 2006, Part 1, pp. 15-57</p>

4	11.10	<i>Geopolitics of Cold War (Part I)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Origins of containment strategy Early Cold War geography and alliance systems Nuclear weapons and territorial control 	<p>Tuathail, G. Ó., Dalby. The Geopolitics Reader. Routledge, 2006, Part 2, pp. 57-117</p> <p>Hal Brands, Making the Unipolar Moment, Cornell University Press, 2016, pp. 1-68</p>
5	18.10	<i>Geopolitics of Cold War (Part II)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolution of containment doctrine Détente and spheres of influence Proxy Conflicts End of bipolarity and geopolitical transformation 	<p>Hal Brands, Making the Unipolar Moment, Cornell University Press, 2016, 68-119, 224-274</p>
6	25.10	<i>Post-Cold War Geopolitics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of history vs clash of civilizations Unipolar moment From unipolarity to renewed great power rivalry 	<p>Tuathail, G. Ó., Dalby. The Geopolitics Reader. Routledge, 2006, Part 2, pp. 117-175</p> <p>Hal Brands, Making the Unipolar Moment, Cornell University Press, 2016, pp. 274-336</p>
7	1.11	<i>Geopolitics and Contemporary Economic Order (Part I)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Bretton Woods to globalization Institutions of the global economy Global value chains and financialization Dollar dominance and the U.S.-led order 	<p>Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., & Jervis, R, International politics: Enduring concepts and contemporary issues, Rowman & Littlefield, 2017, pp. 282-368</p> <p>Matthew Klein & Michael Pettis, Trade Wars are Class Wars, 2020 Yale University Press, pp. 1-39</p>
8		Midterm exams week	None
9	15.11	<i>Geopolitics and Contemporary Economic Order (Part II)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neoliberalism and its discontents Global inequality and austerity Oligarchy and financial capture Post-neoliberal visions and alternatives The future of globalization 	<p>Matthew Klein & Michael Pettis, Trade Wars are Class Wars, Yale University Press, pp. 40-220</p> <p>Dani Rodrik, “Rescuing Economics from Neoliberalism,” Boston Review, November 6, 2017, https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/dani-rodrik-rescuing-economics-neoliberalism/</p> <p>Michael Forman. “After the Trade War.” Foreign Affairs, 11 Aug. 2025, www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/after-trade-war-michael-forman. Accessed 30 Aug. 2025.</p> <p>Quinn Slobodian, Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of</p>

			Neoliberalism, Harvard University Press, 2018, pp. 1-26
10	22.11	<p><i>Geopolitics of Warfare</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of strategic thought • Changing character of warfare • Technology's impact on geopolitics 	<p>Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., & Jervis, R, International politics: Enduring concepts and contemporary issues, Rowman & Littlefield, 2017, pp. 87-104, 166-178</p> <p>Williamson Murray & Macgregor Knox, The Dynamics of Military Revolution, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 1-14, 132-153, 154-174</p> <p>Freedman, Lawrence. Strategy: A History, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 22-53, 69-95, 108-122, 123-144</p>
11	29.11	<p><i>Technology and Geopolitics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nuclear Revolution • The Information Revolution • Critical Technologies and Global Competition 	<p>Freedman, Lawrence. Strategy: A History, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 145-177</p> <p>Chris Miller, Chip War, Scribner, 2022, Ch 49-54</p>
12	6.12	<p><i>The Ukraine War and Geopolitics (Part I)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territory, sovereignty, and strategic depth • Economic geography and interdependence • Alliance geopolitics and burden-sharing 	<p>Hal Brands, War in Ukraine, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024, pp. 1-85</p>
13	13.12	<p><i>The Ukraine War and Geopolitics (Part II)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology and modern warfare • Future implications: deterrence, sovereignty norms, and great power competition 	<p>Hal Brands, War in Ukraine, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2024, pp. 99-204, 205-305</p>
14	20.12	<p><i>The Past, Present and the Future of Geopolitics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. decline and multipolarity • China's rise and alternative visions • Regionalism and pluriversal orders • Environmental change and geopolitics 	<p>Art, R. J., Crawford, T. W., & Jervis, R, International politics: Enduring concepts and contemporary issues, Rowman & Littlefield, 2017, pp. 458-511</p>

15	27.12	<i>Conclusion and Student Presentations</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theories, concepts, practice, and policymaking • Student-led presentations and discussions 	<i>Student will present their projects</i>
		<i>Final</i>	

This syllabus is a guide for the course and any modifications to it will be announced in advance.