

# Political Geography

## Space, Place, Boundary, and Movement in Electoral Politics and Public Policy

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COURSE INFORMATION	<p><i>Term:</i> Spring 2021, Mod 1 <i>Level:</i> Advanced Seminar <i>Meet:</i> Tuesday, 3-5 <i>Type:</i> Remote (<i>synchronous or asynchronous</i>) <i>Syllabus Revision:</i> January 28, 2021</p>	<p><i>Instructor:</i> Jack Reilly <i>live text:</i> <a href="https://ncfpolgeo.slack.com">ncfpolgeo.slack.com</a> <i>E-mail:</i> <a href="mailto:jreilly@ncf.edu">jreilly@ncf.edu</a> <i>Office Hours:</i> Fridays, 9-11 <i>Appointments:</i> <a href="https://jackreilly.com/appointments">jackreilly.com/appointments</a></p>
CATALOG DESCRIPTION	<p>This seminar examines the effects of geographic context on political behavior, with a particular emphasis on the role of space in the political activity of citizens, legislators, and policymakers. Topics to be addressed include space, distance, migration, boundaries, voting, social influence, public policy formation, and the inclusion of geographic and contextual-level variables in the analysis of politics.</p>	
COURSE CONTENT	<p>Political geography is a huge topic - far more than can be covered in a single course (much less in a mod). So, in the interest of providing the necessary focus, we will not even try! Most notably, this iteration of the course is unapologetically focused on the intersection of geography and political behavior in electoral democracies. This yields the exclusion of a number of interesting topics, but among the most noteworthy is the exclusion of much of the international scope: state formation, state building, conflict, geopolitics, world order systems, and great power politics are out.<sup>1</sup> We focus instead primarily on how aspects of physical, human, and social geography - distance, space, place, direction, density, landscape, boundary - influence actors in democracies and how topics core to the study of geography - migration, globalization, and nationalism - relate to how citizens choose their elected officials, how elected officials represent their citizens, and how public policy is created by governments across electoral democracies.</p>	
COURSE STRUCTURE	<p>This course can be taken in one of two ways: as a remote synchronous discussion seminar, or as an asynchronous correspondence course. Students taking the course need to choose a track at the beginning and stick with it, as course requirements are slightly different in each track.</p>	
SIBLING COURSES	<p>This course is a mod1 course (a half semester course) with two sibling half-semester courses: <i>Rural Politics in the United States</i>, a mod2 course taught at the same time as <i>Political Geography</i>, but taking place in the second half of the semester, and <i>R for GIS and Political Geography</i>, a full term for mod credit course,. Students looking for a whole course unit in political geography are encouraged to consider one or both of those courses in addition to this one.</p>	
PREREQUISITES	<p><i>Required:</i> an introductory course in political science (preferably American Politics or Comparative Politics) or human geography along with intermediate coursework in political science, social psychology, or geography. Third-year or fourth-year status preferred. Enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor, who may waive pre-requisites in special circumstances.</p> <p><i>Co-requisite:</i> a course on research design in the social sciences, to be completed before or alongside this course.</p> <p><i>Recommended:</i> Introductory statistics or equivalent (including <i>Quantitative Political Analysis I</i> and <i>Dealing with Data 1</i>). A second-level statistics course (such as <i>Quantitative Political Analysis</i></p>	

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<sup>1</sup>Although note that, while we will not have an *international* focus, we will do plenty of cross-national comparative work. While the United States will likely be our most frequent case, we will also analyze work in Canada, Mexico, assorted countries in Europe, Israel, India, and more as our topics warrant.

*II, Advanced Statistics for Psychology, Dealing with Data II, Econometrics, Introduction to Categorical Data Analysis, etc)* is beneficial but not required.

A NOTE ON GIS This is not a course on geographic information systems (GIS) or spatial statistics. If you are interested in visualization of geographic data in politics, I recommend you consider R for GIS and Political Geography, available as a mod course alongside this one. (It has no technical prerequisites, R is open source software you can download for free, and we start from the beginning!) There is also a general mapping and cartography course this semester taught by Professor Giglioli that I highly recommend. It primarily uses QGIS rather than R, and is a more structured general introduction to cartography and mapping. Finally, Prof. Toro-Farmer teaches a two course series in GIS, using ArcGIS, that you may wish to examine as well.

## Materials

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### BOOKS

#### Required

- Enos, *The Space Between Us: Social Geography and Politics*
- Wong, *Boundaries of Obligation in American Politics: Geographic, National, and Racial Communities*
- Rodden, *Why Cities Lose: The Deep Roots of the Urban-Rural Political Divide*
- Rickard, *Spending to Win: Political Institutions, Economic Geography, and Government Subsidies*

#### Optional

- Min, *Power and the Vote: Elections and Electricity in the Developing World*
- Jones, Jones, Woods, Whitehead, Dixon, and Hannah, *An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place, and Politics*. Second Edition.

### TECHNOLOGY

This is a remote course. As such, to successfully complete the course, you will need internet access and a device capable of running or accessing the following software: Canvas, Zoom, Google Drive, and Slack. You will also need the ability to play mp3 audio files and mp4 video files. You may find all electronic course resources linked from the course Canvas page or course google drive folder.

For your class project, you will also need word processing software and the ability to conduct research over the internet. This is not a course on statistics or research design. If you have prior experience in statistics and data analysis, you may wish to conduct analysis with statistical software as part of your project, but this is not required.

## Course Requirements

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### OVERVIEW

Satisfactory completion of the course requires completion of the following:

1. Weekly Reading & Preparation
2. Assignments
  - (a) Discussion Leadership

- (b) Response Papers (1 pg)
- (c) Article Presentation
- (d) Annotated Bibliography

3. Self-Evaluation

**Additional requirements only for those taking the class for the Political Science AOC advanced seminar requirement:**

- 4. Co-registration in one or both of: *Rural Politics in the United States* or *R for GIS and Political Geography*.

SYNCHRONOUS/  
ASYNCHRONOUS  
OPTION

This courses is available as either a synchronous remote course with video conference session or as an asynchronous remote course with no live conference requirements. Requirements for each "track" may be found below.

Requirement	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Response Papers	2	6
Discussion Questions	4	0
Zoom Seminars	7	0
Article Presentation	In-Class	Recorded
Annotated Bibliography	1	1

GUIDANCE

**Daily Participation and Reading:** This is an advanced seminar taught at a graduate level. Informed class participation is expected and required each week.

**Response Papers:** Each student will write three 1 page reaction papers during the mod. This paper will be submitted to the whole class by noon the Monday before class (via slack), and should be read by other students in the class. As you are writing your reaction papers, you may wish to think of some of the following questions:

- *What is the primary argument of the readings for this week?*
- *How do these readings fit together? Do they agree? Disagree?*
- *How do these readings fit in with other readings from this class, or from other coursework you have taken?*
- *Do you buy what the author(s) is/are selling? Why or why not?*

**Discussion Leadership:** On days when you have a response paper due, you also lead off class discussion with the professor.

**Discussion Questions:** Submit discussion questions or points (broadly construed) to the class by 9 AM on the day of class in the course slack. (Note: on days you submit response papers, you don't have to submit discussion questions as well.) Feel free to respond to others comments and questions in the course slack as well as in class seminar!

**Article Presentation:** Present the main findings from an article on political geography in class, using slides (10 minutes).

**Annotated Bibliography:** Identify the articles from a chosen journal focused on political geography over a five year span, and nominate one for inclusion in the course (should you choose).

## Course Expectations

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- ETIQUETTE** Course participants must be courteous to the professor and fellow students. Attend class on time, listen to fellow students when they talk, disagree (or agree) with others' arguments professionally. Remote instruction presents unique challenges to seminar classes, but the principles remain the same: when you are in seminar, attend and focus on the class and your fellow students discussion.
- SYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION** I encourage you to come by my virtual Zoom student hours at any point if you have questions about the course, the readings, school, etc. To set up a zoom meeting, just schedule time here: <http://jackkreilly.com/appointments> or email me!
- ASYNCHRONOUS COMMUNICATION** Students can generally expect a response to all e-mails within 36 hours, excepting weekends. (And typically more quickly - I check email daily.) In addition to email, I encourage you to come to the course slack channel to ask questions or discuss questions outside of regular zoom meeting times.
- A NOTE ON WRITING** Clear writing and argumentation is a critical element to success in this class. I strongly recommend exploring the options for writing (and revising!) assistance at the Writing Resource Center. You can schedule an appointment through the writing center here: <https://ncf.mywconline.com>

## Class Schedule

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TOPICS OUTLINE (*Subject to change*)

W	Topic	Main Reading	Text
1	What is Political Geography? What is its Value?	Articles (King; Nall)	1
2	The Psychology of Space and Place	Enos	6
3	Boundaries: Place and Place-Based Threats	Wong	4
4	Movement: Nationalism, Migration, and Globalization	Wong, articles	5, 9
5	Form and Spatial Structure: Political Representation	Rodden	7
6	Distributive Politics and Economic Geography	Rickard	12
7	Public Policy and Space	Rickard, Min	12

**NOTES** After Week 1, each week has a primary reading, selected from a portion of one of our books, along with secondary article(s), which will be available in the course google drive. For those interested, there is also background reading from the *Political Geography* text, but this reading is optional.

**FIRST CLASS SESSION** We will spend most of the first class going over course logistics; there are no discussion questions or papers due. For the first week, please scan the following two articles:

- King, 1996, "Why Context Should Not Count" *Political Geography*.
- Nall, 2015, "The political consequences of spatial policies: How interstate highways facilitated geographic polarization" *Journal of Politics*

## New College Campus Policies and Resources

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**STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY** New College of Florida is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, you are encouraged to initiate a conversation with the office of Student Disability Services (SDS). SDS works with students with disabilities to identify reasonable accommodations and plans ways to implement these with your faculty members. Please visit their website for additional information: <https://www.ncf.edu/student-disability-services/>. You may also contact Student Disability in-person (HCL3), via phone at 941-487-4496 OR via email at [disabilityservices@ncf.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@ncf.edu). Students are welcome to discuss privately any concerns related to barriers to both fully participating and learning in this course. Students with accommodations are highly encouraged to meet with their primary or partner instructor as soon as possible.

**TITLE IX** New College of Florida is committed to equal access to education pursuant to Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. The law protects all individuals on our campus from gender-based discrimination or exclusion or instances of sexual misconduct. All full-time faculty, full-time staff, and resident advisors are Responsible Employees required to report any known instances of sexual misconduct or gender discrimination to the Title IX Coordinator. Please contact our Title IX coordinator ([titleix@ncf.edu](mailto:titleix@ncf.edu)) or see the website (<https://www.ncf.edu/campus-life/title-ix/>) for more information.

**EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY** New College's commitment to excellence can only be realized in a learning environment that is inclusive, characterized by openness to diverse perspectives, and marked by mutual respect. Anything short of this aspiration is inconsistent with our commitment. Equal access, and the opportunity to participate fully in all of our programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, political ideology, national origin, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, is essential to that commitment and will be the standard to which we expect all members of our learning community to adhere.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY** Academic integrity is essential to maintaining a vibrant, healthy, and engaging learning environment for which we all must take responsibility. The New College faculty considers academic dishonesty to be a serious violation of community standards. Students are expected to refrain from acts of academic dishonesty, which may include:

1. cheating and/or plagiarism (such as: presenting the intellectual work of others as one's own; failing to cite sources; improper paraphrasing via failing to use own words even if a citation is given; partial, incomplete, or inaccurate citation of work of others);
2. unauthorized multiple submissions (submission of the same work for different academic activities, without the approval of the instructor);
3. false citation (false citation of a source or knowingly attributing work to a source from which the referenced material was not obtained);
4. falsifying data (fabricating or altering data to deliberately mislead; for example, changing data to get better experiment results is academically fraudulent);
5. falsifying information, signatures, or initials on official and academic forms.

If you are in doubt about what practices are permissible in an examination, you should consult the professor prior to sitting for the exam. If you lack understanding of how, in a paper or other presentation, to distinguish your thoughts from those of others, the faculty can refer you to standard guidelines and discuss specific questions.