IS/PSCI/GEOG 3844 European Geopolitics

Eurasian Geopolitics

Steger Center for International Scholarship

Spring 2023

Instructor's Contact Details

Professor: Dr. Yannis Stivachtis
Office: 119 Major Williams Hall
E-mail: ystivach@vt.edu
Tel: (540) 231-5816
Office Hours: virtually or in person but always with appointment
Zoom Link: https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/8826427416

Class Information

Lectures: Mondays to Fridays 9-11:30 am

Course Description

Analysis of the effects of human and physical geography on Eurasian politics and security. Topics under discussion include: the geography of the Russian and Eurasian realm; Eurasia in classical and contemporary geopolitical theories; main actors in Eurasian international relations; great powers and Eurasian geopolitics; the geopolitics of energy and climate change in Eurasia, the geopolitics of Eurasia's identity (migration, religion, culture); the geopolitics of Eurasia's core and periphery; the geopolitics of Eurasian conflicts, the geopolitics of Eurasian economy; and the geopolitics of Eurasian integration.

Course Outcomes

At the end of this course, the students will be able to:

- Apply the tools of geopolitical analysis to the Eurasian region;
- Explain the relevance of classical and contemporary geopolitical theories to international relations in Eurasia;
- Analyze the impact of various aspects of human and physical geography on Eurasian politics and security;
- Examine the domestic politics and foreign policy of the Eurasian states;
- Assess the impact of geography on great power policies in Eurasia;
- Examine the causes of Eurasian conflicts and their management;
- Explore the impact of energy/natural resources and climate change on international relations in Eurasia;

- Analyze the sources of Eurasia's identity; the impact of factors, such as migration, religion, and culture on questions of national identity in Eurasia; and the relevance of the core-periphery relations on Eurasian international relations;
- Identify and discuss the impact of geography on the economies of regional states and the Eurasian region as a whole; and
- Identify and analyze the factors contributing to Eurasian integration.

Required Texts

Stylianos A. Sotiriou (2019). *Politics and International Relations in Eurasia* (Lantham; Lexington Books,).

Natalya A. Vasilyeava & Maria L. Lagutina (2016). *The Russian Project of Eurasian Integration* (Lantham: Lexington books).

Suggested Readings

Lance Davies (2020). *Russian Conflict Management and European security Governance: Policy & Practice*. (Lantham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield).

Richard YOUNGS (2017). *Europe's Eastern Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

Total numbers of points:	100
In-class Participation:	25 points
Daily Briefs:	50 points (10 daily briefs X 5 points each)
Final Report:	25 points

Mid-term & Final Exams

There are no mid-term and final exams for this course.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory, while in-class participation determines the 25% of the students' final grade, attendance is mandatory. Absences, which would have a negative effect on a student's grade, can only be justified by the submission of relevant documentation.

Classroom conduct

Classroom discussion should be open, frank, and casual. Please respect the perspectives and inquiries of your peers and instructor. Do not interrupt someone who is speaking and refrain from deliberately demeaning language or intimidating behavior.

In-class participation

Students are required to study the material assigned by the instructor on a daily basis to be able to participate in in-class discussion and debates.

Daily Briefs

Students are required to submit ten (10) brief reports based on the assigned readings. The length of these reports should not exceed the 500-word limit (single space) and they should be submitted in a hard copy.

Final Report

The final report should not exceed the 3,000-word limit and should describe how this study abroad experience (including the course material and especially the associated educational trip) has contributed to the increase of students' knowledge, personal development, experience, and employability, as well as how it has helped them to prepare for professional life and pursue successful careers.

Students with Special Needs

Students who need special assistance with note and exam taking should contact the course instructor within the first week of classes. However, those students should contact the relevant university office to obtain the necessary documentation before they meet with the course instructor. The instructor will do everything to address students' needs.

Course Evaluation

Toward the end of the semester, the online Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) questionnaire (https://eval.scholar.vt.edu) will be used to gather feedback on particular aspects of the course and instruction. We read and consider all student comments regarding the course and instruction.

Grade Scale

Please note that for this course the applicable grade scale is as follows:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66

D- 60-63
F 0-59
F*

Please note that grades ending at .5 will be rounded up.

The F represents failure in the course. The "*****" is intended to identify a student who has failed to uphold the values of academic integrity at Virginia Tech.

A student who receives a sanction of **F*** as their final course grade shall have it documented on their transcript with the notation "FAILURE DUE TO ACADEMIC HONOR CODE VIOLATION." You would be required to complete an education program administered by the Honor System in order to have the "*" and notation "FAILURE DUE TO ACADEMIC HONOR CODE VIOLATION" removed from your transcript. The "F" however would be permanently on your transcript."

Honor Code

The Virginia Tech honor pledge for assignments is as follows: "I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this assignment."

The pledge is to be written out on all graded assignments at the university and signed by the student.

The honor pledge represents both an expression of the student's support of the honor code and an unambiguous acknowledgment that the student has, on the assignment in question, abided by the obligation that the Honor Code entails. In the absence of a written honor pledge, the Honor Code still applies to an assignment.

Your written assignments may be reviewed through the University's plagiarism prevention and detection software called Turnitin- Feedback Studio, which is a resource designed to detect and prevent plagiarism. This software is a tool that works by cross-referencing submitted materials with journals, essays, newspaper articles, papers, books, the internet, and other literary works. Turintin-Feedback Studio does not identify all forms of plagiarism. The software also does not replace my judgement regarding what constitutes plagiarism.

Students enrolled in this course are responsible for abiding by the Honor Code. A student who has doubts about how the Honor Code applies to any assignment is responsible for obtaining specific guidance from the course instructor before submitting the assignment for evaluation. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the University community from the requirements and expectations of the Honor Code.

For additional information about the Honor Code, please visit: https://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/

All assignments submitted shall be considered "graded work" and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Honor Code. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified.

Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute academic misconduct. This listing is not, however, exclusive of other acts that may reasonably be said to constitute academic misconduct. Clarification is provided for each definition with some examples of prohibited behaviors in the Undergraduate Honor Code Manual located at https://www.honorsystem.vt.edu/

A. CHEATING

Cheating includes the intentional use of unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise, or attempts thereof.

B. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism includes the copying of the language, structure, programming, computer code, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and passing off the same as one's own original work, or attempts thereof.

C. FALSIFICATION

Falsification includes the statement of any untruth, either verbally or in writing, with respect to any element of one's academic work, or attempts thereof.

D. FABRICATION

Fabrication includes making up data and results, and recording or reporting them, or submitting fabricated documents, or attempts thereof.

E. MULTIPLE SUBMISSION

Multiple submission involves the submission for credit—without authorization of the instructor receiving the work—of substantial portions of any work (including oral reports) previously submitted for credit at any academic institution, or attempts thereof.

F. COMPLICITY

Complicity includes intentionally helping another to engage in an act of academic misconduct, or attempts thereof.

G. VIOLATION OF UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE, DEPARTMENTAL, PROGRAM, COURSE, OR FACULTY RULES

The violation of any University, College, Departmental, Program, Course, or Faculty Rules relating to academic matters that may lead to an unfair academic advantage by the student violating the rule(s).

Instructor's Bio

Yannis A. Stivachtis is Professor of Political Science and Jean Monnet Chair. He currently serves as Executive Director of the VT Center for European Union, Transatlantic and Trans-European Space Studies (CEUTTSS) – *A Jean Monnet Center of Excellence*. He also serves as Associate Chair of the Department of Political Science, Director of the International Studies Program, and University Coordinator for the Diplomacy Lab program.

His research and teaching interests include national and international security, strategic theory, strategy and world order, comparative strategy, U.S. and EU strategy, EU's foreign, security and defense policy, EU's external relations, EU's interior policies (Homeland security), European organizations, the evolution of international society, and the study of regional international system/society in Europe, Eurasia, and the Middle East. He was recently awarded (2019) the *Jean Monnet Chair* in recognition of his excellence in European Studies by the European Commission — Education, Audiovisual and Cultural Executive Agency (EACEA). He has also been recognized as *National Security Scholar* by the U.S. Department of Defense (2014).

His previous appointments include: Professor of International Relations, Geneva School of Diplomacy (Switzerland); Professor of International Relations, The American College of Switzerland; Visiting Professor, The American University of Paris; Visiting Lecturer, European Institute-University of Geneva; Research Fellow, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR); Senior Fellow, Institute for Strategic Studies-Austrian Ministry of Defense (Austria); Senior Fellow, Austrian Institute of European & Security Policy; and Research Fellow at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). He has also taught in various diplomatic and military academies.

He has published numerous journal articles and book chapters, as well as several books. He has also presented at several national and international conferences and has given invited talks at the London School of Economics, the Bundeswehr University-Munich, the Pontifican Catholic University of Minas in Brazil, the University of Vienna, The Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce at the University of Kentucky, the University of Virginia, Kent State University, the University of Alabama-Birmingham, and the University of Central Missouri.

He is currently the editor of the *Critical European Studies* book series (Routledge), editor of the *Athens Journal of Social Sciences*, and co-editor of the *Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies*. He currently serves as Senior Analyst of the Center for European and Mediterranean Affairs (Greece); Vice-Chair of the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Program Evaluation, European Commission (EC) - Research Executive Agency (REA); External Expert for the H2020 Research Program (EC-REA); External Expert & Evaluator, Accreditation of Internal Quality Assurance Systems (IQAS) and Study Programs of the Greek Higher Education Institutions, Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), Greek Ministry of Education; Advisory Board member of the Center for Intelligence and Security Studies, Bellevue University; and Senior Advisor of the Research Institute for European & American Studies (RIEAS, Greece).

Yannis Stivachtis' Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting
https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/8826427416

Meeting ID: 882 642 7416
One tap mobile
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+13126266799,,8826427416# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location
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+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
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8826427416@zoomcrc.com

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162.255.37.11 (US West)
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115.114.115.7 (India Hyderabad)
213.19.144.110 (Amsterdam Netherlands)
213.244.140.110 (Germany)
103.122.166.55 (Australia)
149.137.40.110 (Singapore)
64.211.144.160 (Brazil)
69.174.57.160 (Canada)
207.226.132.110 (Japan)
Meeting ID: 882 642 7416

Join by Skype for Business
https://virginiatech.zoom.us/skype/8826427416

Class Schedule

Adjustments to the assignment schedule are inevitable. The instructors will make every effort to keep students abreast of changes.

Week 1

Monday: Course introduction and syllabus presentation
The fundamentals of geopolitical analysis
Geopolitical structure and theory

Tuesday: Classical and contemporary geopolitical theories
Russia and the Eurasian convergence zone
Regional Complex Theory
Core and periphery in the Eurasian realm

Wednesday: Russia

Thursday: The Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia)
Belarus, Moldova, and Ukraine

Friday:The trans-Caucus (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan)
The Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan)
Mongolia

Weeks 2

Monday: The 'overlay' countries (The United States, the EU countries, China, and Turkey)

Tuesday: The geopolitics of energy and natural resources
The geopolitics of climate change

Wednesday: The geopolitics of Eurasia's identity
Factors affecting national identities in Eurasia

Thursday: Regional conflicts: The cases of South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Georgia)
Regional conflicts: The case of Nagorno-Karabakh (Azerbaijan)

Friday:Regional conflicts: The case of Ukraine
Regional conflicts: The case of Transdniestria (Moldova)

Week 3

Monday: Potential regional conflicts

Tuesday: Regional political integration: The CIS

Wednesday: Regional political integration: The SCO
Regional security arrangements: CSTO

Thursday: Regional economic integration: The EAEU and the EEC

Friday:Regional economic integration: The EurAsEc and the EACU

Week 4 : Educational Trip