

Comparative Politics of Borders

Details

Instructor: Bogdan G. Popescu

Hours: TBA

Total Hours of Contact: 2:30 per week

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: None

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

In recent times, the expansion of flows of people has been met by a proliferation of fortified borders. This course explores borders and boundaries' meanings, rules, and consequences. The course aims to acquaint students with the study of border-making and the consequences of borders. Students will be exposed to various approaches describing the emergence of borders: philosophical, political economy, and sociological perspectives. It will delve into the inquiry of how both modern and historical borders were made and their long-term implications. The course will explore questions like:

- What are borders?
- How are international borders determined?
- How are borders adjudicated and maintained?
- How do international borders influence war and peace between states?
- How do borders affect international trade and development?

The course will examine various regional contexts, including Europe, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the United States. By the course's conclusion, students will be able to scrutinize diverse political outcomes through the lens of border-making.

Summary of Course Content

The course introduces students to interrelated topics: 1) the emergence of borders, 2) the relationship between borders and state sovereignty, and 3) how borders affect domestic and international politics. It explores how historical trajectories shape the delineation of borders globally, addressing questions such as the nature and origins of the borders, characteristics of borders, types of borders, their role in projecting symbolic and hard power, their effectiveness in containing populations, and their long-run consequences.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the students will:

- have a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes “the border” and its historical origins
- analyze how historical paths and events have shaped the contemporary delineation of borders
- compare and contrast different countries and regions, including Europe, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the United States, regarding border-making and its impact on trade and migration
- recognize how historical legacies of border-making continue to shape patterns of political inclusion, nationalism, and ethnic politics

Assessment

You will be graded based on how well-prepared you come to class. During the first session, there will be primarily a lecture, while the second session will be dedicated to student presentations and a discussion. During the second session, students must demonstrate their knowledge of the readings and ability to engage in independent, critical thinking. References to current global issues will be a constant. Contributions to class discussion, especially during the second session, will represent 33% of the final grade.

There will be a mid-term in-class, closed-book exam, which will test the improvement of students’ knowledge of the theories and facts developed in the first half of the course. There will also be a final exam, which will be comprehensive of all topics covered in the course. The exam will test students’ knowledge and ability to engage in proactive, independent critical thinking. Both the mid-term and final exams represent 33% of the grade.

A major exam (midterm or final) cannot be made up without the permission of the Dean’s Office. The Dean’s Office will grant such permission only when the absence was caused by a serious impediment, such as a documented illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (in which you must attend the funeral) or other situations of similar gravity. Absences due to other meaningful conflicts, such as job interviews, family celebrations, travel difficulties, student misunderstandings or personal convenience, will not be excused. Students who will be absent from a major exam must notify the Dean’s Office prior to that exam. Absences from class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally be excused. Individual students who will have to miss class to observe a religious holiday should notify the instructor by the end of the Add/Drop period to make prior arrangements for making up any work that will be missed.

Attendance

Students are required to attend classes following the University’s policies. Students with more than four unexcused absences (two weeks) are assumed to have withdrawn from the course. Thus, students must attend classes and all exams in person on campus (unless otherwise required by the University). Students with a justified need to participate in any exam remotely may do so only if express permission has been obtained from the Dean’s Office before the exam.

Students with Learning Difficulties and other Disabilities

The University does not discriminate based on disability. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

Required Books

There are no specific required book for the course. See the items for every specific week's session.

Academic Honesty

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

Week 1

Class 1: Intro to the Course

Date - Day - Lecture

- Introduction and course overview
- What is the “Border”?

Reading

Brown, Wendy 2010. Walled States, Waning Sovereignty. New York: Zone Books. C1 and C4

Diener, Alexander C. 2012. Borders: A Very Short Introduction. Edited by Joshua Hagen. New York: Oxford University Press. C1,C3,C4

Class 2: Borders and functions of borders

Date - Day - Lab

- How have border rules changed over time?
- What are the pressures that borders face today?

Reading

Simmons, Beth A. 2019. Border Rules. International Studies Review. Vol. 21. No. 2: PP. 256-283

Week 2

Class 1: Borders and Conflict

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the “the territorial integrity norm”?
- Why do territorial disputes cause enduring interstate rivalries?

Reading

Zacher, Mark. 2001. “The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force.” International Organization Vol. 55. No. 2: pp. 215-50.

Carter, David B., and H. E. Goemans. 2011. "The Making of the Territorial Order: New Borders and the Emergence of Interstate Conflict." *International Organization* Vol. 65, No. 2: pp. 275-309.

Class 2: Borders and Ethnic Politics

Date - Day - Seminar

- What is the relationship between ethnicity and territorial claims?
- How does homeland territoriality affect the necessity for sovereign claims?

Reading

Goemans, Hein E., and Kenneth A. Schultz. 2016. "The Politics of Territorial Claims: A Geospatial Approach Applied to Africa." *International Organization* Vol. 71. No. 1: pp. 31-64.

Shelef, Nadav G. 2016. "Unequal Ground: Homelands and Conflict." *International Organization*. Vol. 70. No. 1: pp. 33-63.

Week 3

Class 1: International Order and Border Disputes

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the role of the International Court of Justice on border agreement?
- Are there differences between De Facto and De Jure Borders?

Reading

Alvarez-Jimenez, Alberto. 2012. "Boundary Agreements in the International Court of Justice's Case Law, 2000–2010." *European Journal of International Law*. Vol. 23. No. 2: pp. 495-515.

Schultz, Kenneth A. 2013. "What's in a Claim? De Jure Versus De Facto Borders in Interstate Territorial Disputes." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 58. No. 6: pp. 1059-1084.

Class 2: Resolving Border Disputes

Date - Day - Discussion

- Does international law result in peaceful border agreements?
- Is there compliance with international laws in border agreements?

Reading

Huth, Paul K, Sarah E Croco, and Benjamin J Appel. 2011. "Does international law promote the peaceful settlement of international disputes? Evidence from the study of territorial conflicts since 1945." *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 105. No. 2: pp. 415-436.

Simmons, Beth A. 2002. "Capacity, Commitment, and Compliance - International Institutions and Territorial Disputes." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 46. No. 6: pp. 829-56.

Week 4

Class 1: States and Border Security

Date - Day - Lecture

- What do enclosures say about state sovereignty?
- Why can wall be desirable?

Reading

Brown, Wendy 2010. *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books.

Mutz, Diana C. and Simmons, Beth. 2022. "The psychology of separation: Border walls, soft power, and international neighborliness." *PNAS*. Vol. 119. No. 4

Class 2: Border Infrastructure

Date - Day - Seminar

- What does border governance look like?
- Why do some borders feature more infrastructure than others?

Reading

Simmons, Beth A. and Kenwick, Michael R. 2021 "Border Orientation in a Globalizing World." *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 66, No. 4. pp. 853-870.

Michael R. Kenwick, Beth A. Simmons, and Richard J. McAlexander. 2023. *Infrastructure and Authority at the State's Edge: The Border Crossings of the World Dataset* Online First. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00223433221145582>

Week 5

Class 1: Governing Peripheries

Date - Day - Lecture

- How do states govern peripheries?

Reading

Scott, James, 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed*. Yale University Press: London. C1 and C5

Popescu, Bogdan. 2023. *Imperial Borderlands*. Cambridge University Press: New York. C4

Class 2: Governing Peripheries

Date - Day - Seminar

- Can peripheries be governed by competing states?
- What are the effects of periphery governance by competing states?

Reading

Lee, Melissa. 2020. *Crippling Leviathan*. Cornell University Press. C1 and C2

Abramson, Scott F., Carter, David B., and Ying, Luwei. "Historical Border Changes, State Building, and Contemporary Trust in Europe." *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 116, No. 3: pp. 875-895

Week 6

Class 1: Borders and Trade

Date - Day - Lecture

- How do settled borders impact trade?
- How do trade and population density impact state size?

Reading

Simmons, Beth A. 2005. "Rules over Real Estate: Trade, Territorial Conflict, and International Borders as Institutions." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Vol. 49. No. 6: pp. 823-48.

Green, Elliott. 2012. "On the Size and Shape of African States." *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 56. No. 2: pp. 229-44.

Class 2: Borders and Trade

Date - Day - Seminar

- How can borders induce economic inefficiencies?
- How can rule of law around borders impact development?

Reading

Pinkovskiy, Maxim L. 2017. "Growth Discontinuities at Borders." *Journal of Economic Growth* 22:(2): 145-92

Capello, Roberta, Andrea Caragliu, and Ugo Fratesi. 2018. "Measuring Border Effects in European Cross-Border Regions." *Regional Studies* 52 (7): pp. 986-996.

Carter, David and Paust, Paul. 2019. "Barriers to Trade: How Border Walls Affect Trade Relations." *International Organization*, Vol. 74, No. 1: pp. 165-185

Week 7

Class 1: Borders and Smuggling

Date - Day - Lecture

- What do lived experiences communicate about border smuggling
- What does the ethics of human smuggling entail?

Reading

Zhang, Sheldon, Sanchez, Gabriella., and Achilli, Luigi 2018. "Crimes of Solidarity in Mobility: Alternative Views on Migrant Smuggling." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 676, No. 1: pp. 6-15

Achilli, Luigi. 2018. "The 'Good' Smuggler: The Ethics and Morals of Human Smuggling among Syrians." The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 676. No. 1, pp. 77-96.

Class 2: Border Enforcement and Migration

Date - Day - Lab

- How does criminalization of travel impact clandestine activity?
- Under what condition do walls reduce smuggling?

Reading

Brachet, Juilien. 2018. Manufacturing Smugglers: From Irregular to Clandestine Mobility in the Sahara. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 676(1), pp. 16-3

Kim, Diana and Tajima, Yuhki. 2022. "Smuggling and Border Enforcement." International Organization. Vol. 76, No. 4. pp: 830 - 867.

Hanson, Gordon, and Spilimbergo. 1999. "Illegal Immigration, Border Enforcement, and Relative Wages: Evidence from Apprehensions at the U.S.-Mexico Border". American Economic Review. Vol. 89, No. 5: pp. 1337-1357

Week 8

Class 1: Border Crossing and Border Crossers

Date - Day - Lecture

- How do perceptions about apprehension and punishment affect decisions to migrate?
- How does tightening of previously porous borders alter relations on both sides of the frontier?

Reading

Ryo, Emily. 2013. "Deciding to Cross: Norms and Economics of Unauthorized Migration." American Sociological Review 78(4): 574-603.

Orsini, Giacomo, Andrew Canessa, Luis Gonzaga Martínez del Campo, and Jennifer Ballantine Pereira. 2017. "Fixed Lines, Permanent Transitions. International Borders, Cross-Border Communities and the Transforming Experience of Otherness." Journal of Borderlands Studies. 1-16

Class 2: Migration and Visa Policies

Date - Day - Seminar

- How do visa policies affect migration?
- How could the unintended consequences of immigration policies?

Reading

Mau, Steffen, Fabian Gülzau, Lena Laube, and Natascha Zaun. 2015. "The Global Mobility Divide: How Visa Policies Have Evolved over Time." Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. Vol. 41, No. 8: pp. 1192-1213.

Massey, Douglass S. and Karen A. Pren. 2012. "Unintended Consequences of US Immigration Policy: Explaining the Post-1965 Surge from Latin America." *Population and Development Review* Vol. 38. No. 1: pp. 1-29.

Week 9

Class 1: Historical Borders

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the distinction between "natural" vs. "artificial" borders?
- What is the relationship between territorial sovereignty and nationalism?

Reading

Sahlins, Peter. 1991. *Boundaries - The Making of Trance and Spain in the Pyrenees*. University of California Press. Introduction and C1

Samuel Dolbee. 2022. "Empire on the Edge: Desert, Nomads, and the Making of an Ottoman Provincial Border," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 127, No. 1. pp.129-58.

Class 2: Frontiers in American History*

Date - Day - Seminar

- What are the differences between European and American frontiers?
- What is the difference between borderlands and frontiers?

Reading

Frederick Jackson Turner, 1980. "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." New York: Penguin Books. 1-32.

Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, 1999. "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 104. No. 3: pp. 814-841.

Week 10

Class 1: Rise of Modern Territoriality

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the role of maps for defining borders?
- What was the logic of the Westphalian system?

Reading

James C. Scott. 1998. *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press: pp. 11-52.

James A. Caporaso, 2000. "Changes in the Westphalian Order: Territory, Public Authority and Sovereignty," *International Studies Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 1-28.

Class 2: Nation-States and Borders

Date - Day - Seminar

- How do borders help define nation-states?
- What is the origin of border infrastructure?

Reading

Peter J. Taylor, 1994. "The State as Container: Territoriality in the Modern World-System," *Progress in Human Geography*, 18:2 (June 1994) pp. 151-62.

Reviel Netz, 2004. *Barbed Wire: An Ecology of Modernity*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press. pp. xi-55.

Week 11

Class 1: Border on Land and Sea

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the differences between land-border and sea-border regions?
- What are the other kinds of borders that replace or overlap with the traditional state borders?

Reading

Van Geenhuizen, Marina, and Rietveld, Piet, 2002. Land-borders and sea-borders: An exploration of differences in border region development. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*. Vol. 17. No. 2: pp. 63-77

Cuttita, Paolo. 2006. "Points and lines: A topography of borders in the global space." *Ephemera*. Vol. 6. No. 1: pp. 27-39

Class 2: Border on Land and Sea

Date - Day - Seminar

- What is the difference between borders and frontiers?
- How do disputes over sea disputes differ from disputes over land

Reading

Thomas, Bradford L. 1999. "International Boundaries: Lines in the Sand (and the Sea)." In Demko, George J. and William B. Wood. 1999. *Reordering the World. Geopolitical Perspectives on the 21st Century*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, pp.69-93.

Jonathan I. Charney, 2017. Central East Asian Maritime Boundaries and the Law of the Sea. *American Journal of International Law*. Vol. 89. No. 4: 724-749

Week 12

Class 1: Linearity of Borders

Date - Day - Lecture

- How does linearizing borders affect international politics?
- What is the relationship between property boundary surveys and intercolonial boundary disputes?

Reading

Kerry Goettlich, 2019. "The Rise of Linear Border in World Politics." *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol.25. No. 1: pp. 203-228.

Kerry Goettlich, 2022. "The Colonial Origins of Modern Territoriality: Property Surveying in the Thirteen Colonies," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 116(3): 911-926.

Class 2: Origins and consequences of linear borders

Date - Day - Lecture

- How do pre-colonial institutions affect regional development?
- How does linearity of border affect ethnic composition at borders?

Reading

Stelios Michalopoulos and Elias Papaioannou. 2013. "Pre-Colonial Ethnic Institutions and Contemporary African Development." *Econometrica*. Vol. 81, No. 1, pp. 113-152

Muller-Crepon, Carl. 2023. "Building Tribes: How Administrative Units Shaped Ethnic Groups in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science*, Forthcoming

Week 13

Class 1: Borders and Maps

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the role of maps in the emergence of borders?
- How do maps shape how people understand the world and their place within it?

Reading

Jordan Branch, 2014. *The Cartographic State: Maps, Territory, and the Origins of Sovereignty*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge Studies in International Relations. C1, C2, C3, C4

Class 2: Map-Making and Border Politics

Date - Day - Lecture

- How do cartographic technologies impact political ideas?

- What are the political ramifications of who makes the maps?

Reading

Jordan Branch, 2014. The Cartographic State: Maps, Territory, and the Origins of Sovereignty. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge Studies in International Relations. C7, C8

James R. Akerman, 1995. “The Structuring of Political Territory in Early Printed Atlases,” *Imago Mundi* Vol. 47 pp.138–154.

Week 14

Class 1: Ethnography of Borders

Date - Day - Lecture

- What do ethnographic methods reveal about border experiences?
- What is contribution of lived experiences of border crossing on the nature of states and borders?

Reading

De León, Jason 2015. The Land of the Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail. Oakland: University of California Press. C1, C4, C5, C6

Class 2: Borders and the Underground Economy

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the “extended case method” or “situational analysis” as a form of knowing?
- What is the connection between the underground economy and the migrant workforce?

Reading

Lucht, Hans, 1971. Darkness before Daybreak. Berkeley: University of California Press. C1, C2, C3, C4