



## Geopolitics Syllabus

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### Course Description

This class integrates two required semester courses: *Geography for Life* and *US Government and Politics*. The purpose of the course is to promote informed, active citizenship. In addition, we will explore physical, cultural, and political geography questions in our world today. The course is an opportunity for every student to develop skills including critical thinking, reading, writing, public speaking, and listening.

### Essential Questions

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- What is geography? What is politics? How do geography and politics affect people's daily lives?
- What is the purpose of government? What does citizenship mean to you?
- What are some historical and current topics in African geopolitics?
- What is the best way to create political change?
- In 2018, how do we, as a society, balance security and privacy?
- Why did Europeans create the European Union? What current challenges face the EU?
- What do you think America's immigration policy should be?

### Course Outline

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We will cover two to four academic units per quarter:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: Introduction to Geopolitics, American Government and Politics
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: African Geopolitics, Political Action in the American West, Reading for Geopolitics
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter: Writing for Geopolitics, Gender, Balancing Privacy with Security, Debates
- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: European Geopolitics, Immigration in America

### Materials You Need EVERY Day

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- Pencil or pen
- Organized binder with lined paper
- Planner

### Texts and Organization

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Throughout the year, we will use many resources, but we will not have a textbook. For this reason, it is important to stay organized! It will be crucial to keep class notes and readings organized so that you can use evidence effectively for writing and speaking assignments.

### Grading Policies

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**50% Process:** classwork, homework, participation, and organization

**50% Product:** tests, projects, quizzes, graded discussions, and essays

- If you need an extension on an assignment, I encourage you to speak with me before the assignment is due. You may submit late work by the end of the quarter for up to half credit.
- If you are absent, you have 2 days to make up the missed work, unless other arrangements have been made.
- "On time" means it is physically present and ready to turn in at the appointed time. Examples of LATE: "I just need to print it" or "My mom is bringing it later."

- Need help? Schedule a time with me after school or go to the Homework Hall.
- Grades at the end of each term (quarter) are FINAL.

### **Honors and National History Day**

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All students may choose to take the class for honors credit. In addition to all of the regular assignments, honors students will complete a National History Day project outside of class. You may opt-in to honors during the first two weeks of the quarter. Once enrolled in Honors, failure to meet National History Day deadlines will negatively affect your grade. Honors students will meet after-school most Fridays.

### **Class Behavior Expectations**

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1. Be on time—in your seat, silently working on the ATB when the bell rings
2. Be prepared—have your materials and completed homework with you
3. Be respectful—of others’ identities, ideas, belongings, and personal space
4. Be focused—working on the class activity
5. Be proactive—think ahead and advocate for yourself. Please talk to me if you are stressed or confused
6. Leave no trace. Pick up your stuff. Push your chairs in.

Food, open drinks, or electronics should not be out during class unless you have discussed a reason with me. If we are doing *extended* silent work, and it helps you to focus, I may give you permission to listen to your headphones.

### **Conduct**

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The nature of this course is that we will examine some difficult topics and have some challenging conversations. This course raises some very tough historical and political dilemmas without clear-cut answers. It is imperative that you thoughtfully listen to those who have different opinions from your own. You do not need to agree with your classmates or me; however, you must speak and listen respectfully. In addition, the nature of historical study is that we look at some terrible things that human beings have done to one another. Genuine questions are appreciated and a serious tone that respects the lives and deaths of the people we study is expected.

If something in class is offense, confusing, or controversial to you: please talk to me about it. I am here to provide you with an excellent education and I want to make sure that your opinions and beliefs are valued. You can always talk to me outside of class, or write me a letter or email, if something is concerning or uncomfortable for you. I promise to respect your feelings and work together with you to resolve any issues.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Geopolitics: First Day Student Questionnaire

*After reading the syllabus and having one class, are you excited about this course? Why or why not?*

*Imagine someone in class says something you find offensive or just plain incorrect. How would YOU handle it? What should the teacher do?*

*Are there political or geographic issues that interest you? If so, what are they and do you know why they matter to you?*

Please write me anything else that I should know about you, or any other thoughts you are having as we start this school year:

## Geopolitics Disclosure, 2017-2018

A parent or guardian should read and sign the following.  
Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Dear SLCSE families,

This year I am your child's Geopolitics teacher. Most of the students in this class are in 10<sup>th</sup> grade; however, there are also several high school students in other grades. This yearlong Social Studies class combines content of geography and politics to help everyone build essential skills while learning about and questioning our world. The attached syllabus offers information on what and how our class time will be spent, if you have more specific questions: please ask your student or feel free to contact me. I am happy to share the rationale behind our units of study.

If you have any questions or concerns, the best way to reach me is via email at [myles.crandall@slcschools.org](mailto:myles.crandall@slcschools.org).

Our class will discuss large questions without one simple answer, I encourage you to ask your student about what we're discussing in class and their working opinion.

I look forward to getting to know you over the course of the year.

If there is a topic that you know about that you feel would benefit the class, and you would be willing to come into class, then please let me know. Potential topics include: your culture, your job as it relates to politics or geography, your experience in a foreign country, your experience immigrating to America, or your ideas about an essential question within our class. If you have an idea of something that you would like to discuss with our class then please share that below and I will try to reach out to you to see if we can align your schedule with our class (this is totally **optional** and you may leave this section blank):

Please sign below indicating that you have seen this syllabus and gone over it with your child.

Thanks so much,  
Myles Crandall

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Email of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Phone of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Receive texts? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you prefer to be contacted (email, text, call...)? \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional information that may help Mr. Crandall: