

Course Syllabus
Middle East Conflict
PSCI 4396. 002 – Fall 2013

Course Information

Mrs. Razan Albanna. Ph.D Candidate- Political Science

Office hours: Tues & Thurs. 10:30–11:30am (GR 3.314)

Email: razan.albanna@utdallas.edu

Class: Tuesday & Thursday, 1:00–2:15pm

Location: SLC. 1.202

Course Description

This course offers students an overview of the contemporary Middle East politics, framed in a chronological approach. It will first explore the history of the region to substantiate students' tools of analyzing and examining persisting political problems, such as authoritarianism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the economic underdevelopment. Then it will investigate the conditions that impact the current trends of political Islam, state-society relations, women's liberalization, economic development, and the Arab uprisings across various Arab nations. Throughout the course we will examine questions like why is the Middle East caught in authoritarian rule? What are the probable factors hindering the Israeli-Palestinian peace process? How does Islam affect democratization and women's rights?

Student Learning Objectives

The goal of this course is to provide the students with the knowledge of the historical background and the theoretical tools needed to research questions regarding what accounts for current political developments in the region. The topics that will be covered in this course inform students with the context of the Middle Eastern politics necessary to make critical analysis about the Middle East in comparative politics perspective. The course is designed to stimulate class

discussions. Students are expected to read the assigned material and follow the day-to-day news coming from the Middle East to be able to actively participate in the discussions.

Course Structure

The course will proceed in three parts. The first part will focus on the historical context of the region, which you will provide you with proper understanding of the history, geography, peoples, religions, and cultures that formed in the region. The second part will include topics about the formation of the modern Middle Eastern states, surveying their governments and politics. We will also explore the influence of the Arab-Israeli conflict on the stability of the region. In the third part we will delve in the regional and international influences on the domestic politics of the state.

Required Textbooks and Materials

- Albert Hourani. 2002. A History of the Arab Peoples. Massachusetts. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- William L. Cleveland & Martin Bunton. 2013. A History of the Modern Middle East. Boulder. Westview Press.
- Jilian Schwedler & Deborah J. Gerner. 2008. Understanding the Contemporary Middle East. Boulder. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Bernard Lewis. 1995. The Middle East. New York. Scribner.

Journal articles will be incorporated into the reading assignments occasionally. An announcement about the additional reading assignments will be posted on elearning and made in-class. The weekly readings listed below are subject to change based on what the instructor deems relevant new or alternative material. Any new or alternative readings will be announced and made available ahead of time. Be sure to always check the elearning page for the latest on any such changes.

Instructor Policies

Attendance is mandatory. The course is designed to stimulate class discussions. Students are expected to read the assigned material and follow the day-to-day news coming from the Middle East to be able to actively participate in the discussions, as current affairs may be relevant to the topics covered in class. Contributions to the discussion shall be civil and respectful of other opinions. Uncivil discussion behavior will result in a grade of zero for the participation. Cell phones are expected to be turned off or set on silent. Below are some helpful online sources for news about the Middle East:

<http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/>

<http://www.america.aljazeera.com>

<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>

Grading Criteria

There will be two map pop quizzes during the semester. The lectures and discussions of this course hinge on the territorial mapping of this region. Therefore, such quizzes will insure that the students will have a full understanding of the geography of the Middle East. Written assignments include two mid-term exams and a group-work research paper. No make-up exams are allowed

Attendance and participation (15%)

Two in-class map quizzes (5% each)

Exam 1 (25%)

Exam 2 (25%)

Research paper and presentation (25%)

The grading scale is:

A+ = 97% and up A = 93–96% A- = 90–92% B+ = 87–89% B = 83–86% B- = 80–82% C+ = 77–79% C = 73–76% C- = 70–72% D = 65–69% F = 64% and lower

Timeline

August 27 – Introduction

Part I – The Geography & History of the Middle East

August 29 – The Ancient Middle East

- Bernard Lewis ch. 1&2
- UCME pp. 37-43
- Neil Asher Silberman. 1992. “Who Where the Israelites?”, *Archaeology*, Vol.45, No. 2

September 3– The Rise and Expansion of Islam

- Hourani ch. 1&2
- Cleveland & Bunton pp. 29-33
- Recommended: Lewis ch. 3

September 5- The Ottoman and Safavid Empires

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 3
- Hourani ch. 13

September 10 – The Beginning of the Era of Transformation

- Hourani ch. 15
- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 9

Part II- The Formation of the Modern Nation-State

September 12 – The Era of European Colonization

- Hourani pp. 315-319
- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 11

September 17 – The Ongoing Arab-Israeli Conflict

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 13
- Watch: in-class film

September 19 & 24 – The Ongoing Arab-Israeli Conflict

- UCME ch. 6
- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 17 & 23

September 26 – Pan-Arabism

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 15 & 16
- Hourani ch. 25

October 1 & 3– Regime Type

- UCME pp. 117-124
- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 20
- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 21
- Michael Herb. 2004. Princes and Parliaments in the Arab World. Middle East Journal. Vol. 58, No. 3

October 8 – EXAM 1

October 10 – Cold War Politics and the Middle East

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 14
- Watch: in-class film

Part III: Issues in the Middle East Politics

October 10 & 15 – Islam & Politics

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 18
- Samuel P. Huntington. 1993. The Clash of Civilizations?. Journal of Foreign Affairs. Vol. 72, No. 3
- Brian Grim and Roger Finke. 2007. Religious Persecution in Cross-National Context: Clashing Civilizations or Regulated Religion?. American Sociological Review. Vol. 72
- Tamir Moustafa. 2000. Conflict and Cooperation Between the State and Religious Institutions in Contemporary Egypt. pp. 3-22

October 17 – The International Context

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 25
- UCME ch. 5

October 22 – Economies of the Middle East

- Timur Kuran. 2004. Why the Middle East is Economically Underdeveloped: Historical Mechanisms of Institutional Stagnation. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. Vol. 18, No. 3
- UCME ch. 7

October 24 – The Politics of Oil

- Benjamin Smith. 2004. Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World. *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 48, no. 2
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October 29 – Civil Society and Political Culture

- Mark Tessler. 2002. Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes toward Democracy in Four Arab Countries. *Comparative Politics*.
- Reading TBA

October 31 – Respect for Human Rights

- Eva Bellin. 2004. The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East. *Comparative Politics*, pp. 139-157
- Eric Krueger and Steven C. Poe. 1998. Testing Models Of United States Foreign Policy: Foreign Aid During and After the Cold War. *Journal of Politics*. 60:63-85

November 5 – The Prospects of Democracy

- Reading TBA

November 7 – Guest Speaker

November 12 –Women's Rights

- M. Steven Fish. 2002. Islam and Authoritarianism. *World Politics*. Vol. 55, No. 1
- Daniela Donno and Bruce Russett. 2004. Islam, Authoritarianism, and Female Empowerment: What Are the Linkages?. *World Politics*. Vol. 56, No. 4
- Rokhsana Bahramitash. 2003. Islamic Fundamentalism and Women's Economic Role: The Case for Iran. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*. Vol. 16, No. 4
- Watch: in-class film

November 14 – The Arab Spring

- Cleveland & Bunton ch. 26
- Reading TBA

November 19 – The Arab Spring

- Reading TBA
- Watch: in-class film

November 21 – Exam 2

November 26, 28 – Fall Break / Thanksgiving. No Class.

December 3 – Presentations

December 5 – Presentations

December 10 – Research paper due

University Policies <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>