

## **POLI 121 – Government and Politics of the Middle East**

Syllabus – Summer Session II 2017

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Social Sciences Building (SSB) 348

Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 pm and by appointment

### ***Course Description and Goals:***

This course will introduce you to the government and politics of the contemporary Middle East. It is a course in “comparative politics,” meaning that we will focus primarily on the domestic politics of various countries, their institutions, their political cultures, and the way in which these differ between countries. We will spend very little time discussing interactions between countries; this would fall under “international relations.” The course assumes minimal knowledge of the region. You may find it helpful to have taken an introductory course in comparative politics (POLI 11), but it is not a required prerequisite.

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Identify key characteristics of the current government of most “major” Middle Eastern countries, including whether the country is democratic or authoritarian (and the nuances between different types of authoritarian governments), the current economic situation in the country, the religious makeup of the country and religion’s role in politics, and the most important political issues facing citizens.
- Identify the religious and ethnic cleavages that are politically relevant in the Middle East, explain their origins, and analyze how these divisions affect contemporary politics.
- Explain the degree to which different countries do or do not rely on oil revenues, and how this reliance affects their political situations.
- Be able to analyze isolated events, like those you might find in a newspaper article, in a broader context. Explain the background of the event in question, identify the key players and their preferences, and predict what we might expect to happen next.

This final goal is the most important. Above all else, I hope that this class will provide you with the knowledge and skills to take an isolated piece of information and expand on it to provide useful analysis.

### ***Attendance Policy:***

Attendance and active participation are expected. A large portion of the material covered in this course will be presented only in class. I also expect that we will have a lively discussion in class on certain topics, and you will benefit from being exposed to the wide variety of experiences and perspectives of your classmates. Given the abbreviated format of summer session, you are allowed 1 unexcused absence with no penalty. You do not need to provide an excuse – simply don’t show up. Additional absences will be excused only with documentation of a genuine need that is beyond your control. Each unexcused absence will result in a 5 point penalty on your final course grade.

### ***Grading and Assignments:***

The assignments are intended to evaluate you based on the course goals listed above, with an emphasis on a) your retention of useful facts, and b) your ability to use those facts to provide intelligent analysis of contemporary politics in the Middle East.

1. MAP QUIZ, August 14<sup>th</sup> (second Monday) – 10%
2. COUNTRY PRESENTATION – 10%
3. ARTICLE ANALYSIS 1 – 15%
4. ARTICLE ANALYSIS 2 – 25%
5. FINAL PAPER (take home) – 40%

There is no final exam. Details about each assignment will be provided with ample time before the due date.

### ***Making the Most of Lectures:***

Lectures are intended to help you in several ways:

- a. Provide exposure to a breadth of attitudes, perspectives, and experiences from your classmates.
- b. Present background information about the countries and topics as efficiently as possible. There is certain information, for example a brief overview of each country's history, that you do not need to know in significant detail. I will try to present only the information that you need.
- c. Highlight the most important parts of the readings (but we will NOT cover all of the readings)

This class deals with topics that may be sensitive, emotionally-charged, and of course “political.” I expect that you will find yourself outside of your comfort zone at least once, either due to something in the readings, something I say, or something a classmate says. This is a normal part of the learning experience. So long as we remain open-minded and respectful of these differences they can be a source of learning. You should feel free to challenge ideas or statements that you disagree with, regardless of whether they come from me or from a classmate. Just be sure that you do so in a respectful manner. Be open to the possibility that you're both right (or both wrong). Always make sure to challenge the statement, not the person who said it.

### ***Readings and Resources:***

There are no textbooks for this class. All readings will be made available to you on TED. It would be beneficial for you to follow the news in the Middle East while you are taking this class. Some resources that provide a good place to start:

*New York Times:* <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>

*Al-Jazeera English (make sure you're not redirected):* <http://www.aljazeera.com/>

*Al-Monitor:* <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/home.html>

*Ynet News (Israel-specific):* <http://www.ynetnews.com/home/0,7340,L-3083,00.html>

There is a lot of “biased” news (or perhaps biased “news”) on the internet. Read broadly, but always consider the source and the perspective of that source when interpreting new information. Also remember to check whether you are reading news or analysis.

### ***Academic Integrity:***

I take academic integrity very seriously. It is my intention to make the guidelines for each assignment crystal clear with regard to collaboration and the use of outside help. If you are not sure what is allowed on a particular assignment, it is your responsibility to contact me for clarification. Unless I specify otherwise, assignments should be completed on your own with no input from anyone else. Also unless otherwise specified, all assignments are closed-book and

you may not use any resources to help complete them. Any violation of academic integrity will result in an automatic F in the class AND a referral to the academic integrity office.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

Students with disabilities are entitled to accommodations. Please visit the Office for Students with Disabilities website (<https://disabilities.ucsd.edu/students/index.html>) for details. Contact me as soon as possible if you wish to discuss any of these options.

## **1. Introduction to the Modern Middle East**

- End of colonialism, creation of Israel, overview of how major countries came into existence
- *Readings*
  - Al Jazeera: Sykes-Picot a Century On  
<http://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2016/sykes-picot-100-years-middle-east-map/index.html>
  - Jacobs, Frank (2012), “Winston’s Hiccup.” *New York Times*  
[http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/06/winstons-hiccup/?\\_r=0](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/06/winstons-hiccup/?_r=0)

## **2. Religion and Sectarianism**

- *Readings*
  - Cook, Michael. “The Koran: A Very Short Introduction.” Oxford University Press 2000. Pages 5-7, 127
  - NPR: The origins of the Shiite-Sunni Split,  
<http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2007/02/12/7332087/the-origins-of-the-shiite-sunni-split>
    - Browse for more information if interested: [http://www.cfr.org/peace-conflict-and-human-rights/sunni-shia-divide/p33176#!/?cid=otr-marketing\\_url-sunni\\_shia\\_infoguide](http://www.cfr.org/peace-conflict-and-human-rights/sunni-shia-divide/p33176#!/?cid=otr-marketing_url-sunni_shia_infoguide)
  - Abdo, Geneive (2000), *No God but God: Egypt and the Triumph of Islam*. Chapter 1, p. 3-18.
  - [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/01/04/world/middleeast/sunni-shiite-map-middle-east-iran-saudi-arabia.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/01/04/world/middleeast/sunni-shiite-map-middle-east-iran-saudi-arabia.html?_r=0)
  - Al Jazeera.com (2016), “Saudi Arabia Strips Religious Police of Arresting Power.” <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/04/saudi-arabia-strips-religious-police-arresting-power-160413141418824.html>

## **3. Oil and OPEC**

- Map Quiz
- *Readings*
  - Ross 2012, “The Oil Curse.” Chapters 1 (p. 1-14), 2 (p. 27-62), 3 (p. 63-93)
    - RECOMMENDED: Chapter 4
  - Kinzer, Stephen. “All the Shah’s Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror.” Wiley 2008. Pages 1-16

#### 4. Strong-Men, Pharos, and Kings

- *Readings*
  - Blaydes, Lisa. *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*. Cambridge University Press 2013. Chapter 1, "Introduction" and Chapter 8, "Elections and the Muslim Brotherhood"
  - Bellin 2004, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East." *Comparative Political Studies*

#### 5. Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

- First article analysis ASSIGNMENT DUE (beginning of class)
- *Readings*
  - 1988 Hamas Charter: <http://fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/880818.htm>
    - alternate translation for reference:  
[http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/hamas.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp)
  - Excerpts from Hamas leader Khaled Meshal's 2014 speech in Gaza: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DiQRO\\_49M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DiQRO_49M)
  - <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/hamas-accepts-palestinian-state-1967-borders-170501114309725.html>
  - Berrebi and Klor 2008, "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate." *American Political Science Review*. All pages, but don't get hung up on the statistics. Limit yourself to about 30 minutes on this article.

#### 6. Domestic Israeli Politics (cont.); Regional Conflict in the Middle East: Qatar, UAE

- *First Half: Israeli and Palestinian Politics*
  - Grossman et al 2015, "Descriptive Representation and Judicial Outcomes in Multiethnic Societies." *American Journal of Political Science*. Pages 1-8 and 16-18, also skim sections in the middle.
  - <http://972mag.com/israels-deepest-divide/117987/>
- *Second Half: Regional Conflict in the Middle East: Qatar, UAE*
  - TBA [expect 2-3 news articles about the current situation in the Persian Gulf]

#### 7. Sectarian Conflict

- *Readings*
  - Habyarimana, Humphreys, Posner, and Weinstein (2008), "Better Institutions, Not Partition." *Foreign Affairs*.
  - Patel, David (2015), "ISIS in Iraq: What We Got Wrong and Why 2015 is not 2007 Redux."
  - Pick 1 of 2:
    - Wimmer, Andreas (2003), "Democracy and Ethno-Religious Conflict in Iraq."
    - Galbraith, Peter W. "Kurdistan in Federal Iraq." In O'Leary, McGarry, and Salih (2005), *The Future of Kurdistan in Iraq*. p. 268-281
  - <http://fares.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/03/lebanon-elections-law-parliament-extension.html>

## 8. Terrorism, Insurgency, and Counterinsurgency

- Second analysis ASSIGNMENT DUE
- *Readings*
  - Berman et al 2011, “Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq.” *Journal of Political Economy*. Pages 766-774, bottom of 789-798, 809-811
  - Kydd and Walter 2006, “The Strategies of Terrorism.” *International Security*.

## 9. Transformative Civil Wars in the Levant

- *Readings*
  - Sadowski, Yahya (2002), “Chapter 6: The Evolution of Political Identity in Syria.” In Telhami and Barnett (eds.), *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East*.
  - Knudsen, Are and Michael Kerr. “Introduction: The Cedar Revolution and Beyond.” In *Lebanon After the Cedar Revolution*. London: Hurst and Company 2012. Pages 3-15.
  - <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2015/05/syria-country-divided-150529144229467.html>
  - <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/06/hezbollah-send-fighters-syria-aleppo-160624180847854.html>
  - <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2017/06/russia-dead-syria-170622113411176.html>

## 10. Life and Culture in the Modern Middle East

- *Readings*
  - Rossingh (2016), “Qatar World Cup 2022: FIFA Ignoring Migrant Worker Abuses, Says Amnesty.” <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/03/30/football/fifa-world-cup-qatar-migrant-worker-abuse-amnesty-international/>
  - Tennant (2015), “Who Will Take Over from Sultan Qaboos, Arab World’s Longest Serving Ruler?” <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/who-will-take-over-sultan-qaboos-arab-worlds-longest-serving-ruler-1530757>
  - Sweis (2016), “Jordan Struggles Under a Wave of Syrian Refugees.” [http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/14/world/middleeast/jordan-syria-refugees.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/14/world/middleeast/jordan-syria-refugees.html?_r=0)
  - Gambrell (2016), “In Image-Conscious Dubai, Even Police Patrol in Luxury Cars.” <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/image-conscious-dubai-police-patrol-luxury-cars-39387536>
  - Ghanem (2016), “Will short-term solution help Lebanon solve trash crisis?” <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/03/lebanon-trash-crisis-government-plan-landfills.html>