CPO3403: Politics of the Middle East

Department of Political Science, Middle East Studies

Instructor:	David Dumke	Term:	Spring 2014
Office:	Chemistry Building, Suite 117	Class Meeting Days:	Tuesday/Thursday
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Office Hours:	By appointment	Class Facilitators:	Amal Khan, Andrea de la Camara

Introduction

The Middle East is a broad region that eludes precise definition. For academic purposes, however, it is generally defined as the Arab countries in North Africa, Asia, Israel, Iran, and Turkey. While some academics and practitioners also include the "Broader Middle East" encompassing Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the former Soviet nations of Central Asia, this class will primarily focus on the more narrow definition – countries with much more commonality in terms of language, culture, or modern history. Obviously, the Middle East has witnessed, and continues to witness, significant change, most recently the "Arab Spring" – which some call Autumn of the Despots – and turmoil resulting from non-state actors, sectarianism and the pull and push of both external and internal challenges. This course attempts to explain the current political landscape, dwelling heavily on history since World War II, the influence of and on global affairs, economics, political ideology, religion, and social change. The overall purpose, then, is to acquaint students with the dynamics of Middle Eastern politics, key issues, and contemporary challenges.

Textbooks & Resources

The course will require one textbook, with the instructor providing multiple handouts in class or via email to supplement the text. Handouts will include recent article, government documents, and special reports. The class will also benefit from a variety of guest lecturers. The instructor will also provide a recommended reading list to interested students.

Text: *The Middle East*, 13th Edition, Ellen Lust, Editor. http://www.cqpress.com/product/Middle-East-13th-Edition.html

Students are also directed to use multiple websites, such as https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/ (CIA World Factbook) and http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle_east/ (BBC News Middle East, including both news wire and country profiles).

Finally, students are encouraged to browse international news sources on a regular basis – including key regional newspapers. Sources could include the following:
-New York Times: http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html
-Al Ahram (Egypt): http://english.ahram.org.eg/Index.aspx
-Haaretz (Israel): http://www.haaretz.com/
-Saudi Gazette (Saudi Arabia): http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/

Course Requirements and Grading

The table below outlines how final grades will be determined. In addition, there will be opportunity for extra credit based on participation at special events sponsored by the UCF Office of Global Perspectives and Prince Mohammad bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies. "Participation" includes both attendance and a willingness to participate in class debate and discussion. A portion of every class will be devoted to questions either asked by students or prompted by the instructor.

In addition to the midterm and final, there will be a class simulation project and a research paper. For the simulation, the class will be divided into four teams, with each assigned one party involved (or interested actor) in the Iranian nuclear discussions – Iran, the United States, Israel, and Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Each group will be required to complete a position paper of at least 8 pages, a 1 page brief, and be prepared to defend and debate their position in class. Further explanation will be made in class.

The essay will focus on a specific country or issue as assigned by the instructor, or if the student has a preference, as agreed upon between the student and instructor. This essay topic will be determined within the first three weeks of class. The research paper must be between 8-12 pages.

Assessment	Percent of Final Grade
Class Simulation	15%
Midterm	20%
Participation	10%
Research Paper	25%
Final Exam	30%
	100%

The grading system of A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), etc., is used in class, with pluses and minuses.

Schedule and Readings

While the class schedule is subject to change, the following schedule will be the basis of class discussion and work. Readings are assigned prior to class and should be completed beforehand. For example, homework assigned for 1/9 should be completed before the 1/14 class.

1/7 – Class begins, introduction by Professor John Bersia
Homework: None

1/9 – Special issue focus on terrorism by Professor Ted Reynolds
Homework: Lust, Chapter 1

1/14 –Historical Overview 1945-1990
Homework: Lust, Chapter 3

1/16 – Political Development and Institutions in the Middle East
Homework: Handout

1/21 – Arab Spring Overview
Homework: Lust Chapter 11, Handout

1/23 – Egypt: The Nasser and Sadat Era
Homework: Handout

1/28 – Egypt: The Mubarak Years
Homework: Handout

1/30 – Egypt: The Muslim Brotherhood Experiment
Homework: Lust, Chapter 18, 24, Handout

2/4 – North Africa
Homework: Handout

2/6 – Special Guest, Max Rodenbeck, lead Middle East correspondent, *The Economist*
Homework: Lust, Chapter 7

2/11 – Israel & Palestine I: The Establishment of Israel and the Arab-Israel Conflict
Homework: Handout

2/13 – Israel & Palestine: The Quest for Peace
Homework: Lust, Chapter 15

2/18 – Jordan

Homework: Lust, Chapter 17, Handout

2/20 – Lebanon

2/25 – Midterm Exam
Homework: Lust, Chapter 23

2/27 – Syria: Post World War II order
Homework: Handout

3/11 – Syria: The Civil War
Homework: Lust, Chapter 13

3/13 – Iraq
Homework: Lust, Chapter 12

3/18 – The Islamic Republic of Iran
Homework: Lust, Chapter 22

3/20 – Political Development of Saudi Arabia
Homework: Lust, Chapter 21

3/25 – Modern Saudi Arabia Today and the GCC
Homework: Lust, Chapter 26

3/27 – Yemen (**Research Papers due)**
Homework: Lust, Chapter 25

4/1 – Turkey
Homework: Handout

4/3 – Arab World and the United States
Homework: Handout

4/8 – The Role of Petroleum and Energy Politics

4/10 – Class Simulation on Iranian nuclear issue
Homework: Handout

4/15 – Identifying key challenges and solutions

4/17 – Class Review

4/29 – Final Exam, 10:00-12:50