CPO3403: Politics of the Middle East

Department of Political Science, Middle East Studies

Instructor:	David Dumke	Term:	Fall 2016
Office:	Chemistry Building, Suite 117	Class Meeting Days:	Tuesday/Thursday
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Office Hours:	By appointment	Class Facilitators:	Amal Khan

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," breakdown of old regimes, and inevitable blowback. 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, who will be announced later. The instructor will also provide a recommended reading list to interested students.

Text: *The Middle East*, 14th Edition, Ellen Lust, Editor. https://www.amazon.com/Middle-East-Fourteenth-Ellen-Lust/dp/1506329284/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1471893757&sr=8-1&keywords=ellen+Lust

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

Course Requirements and Grading

The table below outlines how final grades will be determined. There will also be an opportunity for extra credit based on participation at special events. "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 key political leader – Abdel Fattah El Sisi of Egypt, King Salman of Saudi Arabia, Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, or Hassan Rouhani of Iran. Each group will be required to complete a position paper of at least 8 pages, a 1 page profile brief, and be prepared to explain their respective political agenda – domestic policies, foreign policy, and political strengths and weaknesses. 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 8-10 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 8/23 should be completed before the 8/25 class.

8/23 – Introduction
Homework: Lust, Chapter 1

8/25 – Historical Overview 1945-1990
Homework: Lust, Chapter 2, 4

8/30 – Political Development and Institutions in the Middle East I

9/01 – Political Development and Institutions in the Middle East II
Homework: Handout

9/06 – Middle East Resources: Water, Energy, and Subsidies
Homework: Lust Chapter 10, Handout

9/08 – Egypt: The Nasser and Sadat Era
Homework: Handout

9/13 – Egypt: The Mubarak Years
Homework: Handout

9/15 – Egypt: The Brotherhood Experiment and Sisi
Homework: Lust, Chapter 17, 24, Handout

9/20 – Tunisia and Libya
Homework: Lust, Chapter 9, 19

9/22 – Morocco and Algeria
Homework: Lust, Chapter 7, 13

9/27 – Israel & Palestine I: The Establishment of Israel and the Arab-Israel Conflict
Homework: Handout

9/29 – Israel & Palestine: The Quest for Peace
Homework: Lust, Chapter 14

10/4 – Jordan
Homework: Lust, Chapter 16, Handout

10/06 – Lebanon

10/11 – Midterm Exam
Homework: Lust, Chapter 23

10/13 – Syria: Post World War II order
Homework: Handout

10/18 – Syria: The Civil War
Homework: Lust, Chapter 12

10/20 – Iraq
Homework: Lust, Chapter 11

10/25 – The Islamic Republic of Iran
Homework: Lust, Chapter 21

10/27 – Political Development of Saudi Arabia
Homework: Lust, Chapter 18

11/01 – Modern Saudi Arabia Today and the GCC

11/03 – The Middle East and United States elections (**Research Papers due)**

11/08 – Guest speaker
Homework: Lust, Chapter 26

11/10 – Yemen
Homework: Lust, Chapter 25

11/15 – Turkey

11/17 – Class Simulation
Homework: Handout

11/22 – The Role of Petroleum and Energy Politics
Homework: Handout

11/29 – The Kurdish Issue

12/01 – Class Review

12/08 – Final Exam, 7:00-9:50 a.m.