CPO3403: Politics of the Middle East

Department of Political Science, Middle East Studies

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Introduction

The Middle East is generally defined as the Arab countries in North Africa and Asia, plus Israel, Iran, and Turkey – countries with much more commonality in terms of language, culture, modern history, or political climate. Obviously, the Middle East has witnessed significant change in recent years, including the fight against terrorism, proxy wars, and political turmoil stemming from the "Arab Spring" and reaction to it. 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/
-Jordan Times: https://www.jordantimes.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 based on current events.

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 five teams, with each assigned one key political figure – Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, King Mohammed VI of Morocco, Isaac Herzog of Israel, Beji Caid Esebsi of Tunisia, or Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority. 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 individual research paper 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 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.

Key Dates

February 23: Midterm Exam
March 30: Research Papers Due
April 13: Class Simulation
May 2: Final Exam (10:00 am-12:50 pm)

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.

DATE	TOPIC	HOMEWORK
January 10	Introduction	Lust, Chapter 1
January 12	Historical Overview 1945-1990	Lust, Chapter 2, 4
January 17	Political Development and Institutions in the Middle East I	
January 19	Political Development and Institutions in the Middle East II	Handout
January 24	Middle East Resources: Water, Energy, and Subsidies	Lust Chapter 10, Handout
January 26	Egypt: The Nasser and Sadat Era	Handout
January 31	Egypt: The Mubarak Years	Handout
February 2	Egypt: The Brotherhood Experiment and Sisi	Lust, Chapter 17, 24, Handout
February 7	Tunisia and Libya	Lust, Chapter 9, 19
February 9	Morocco and Algeria	Lust, Chapter 7, 13
February 14	Israel & Palestine I	
February 16	Israel & Palestine II	Lust, Chapter 14
February 21	Jordan	
February 23	MIDTERM EXAM	Lust, Chapter 16
February 28	Lebanon	Lust, Chapter 23
March 2	Syria	Lust, Chapter 12
March 7	Iraq	Lust, Chapter 11
March 9	Iran	Lust, Chapter 21
March 14	SPRING BREAK	
March 16	SPRING BREAK	
March 21	The Development of Saudi Arabia	
March 23	Modern Saudi Arabia	Lust, Chapter 18
March 28	The Gulf Nations	Handout
March 30	The Kurdish Question (research paper due)	Lust, Chapter 25
April 4	Turkey	Lust, Chapter 26
April 6	Yemen	Handout
April 11	U.S. Middle East Policy	
April 13	Class Simulation I	
April 18	Class Simulation II	
April 20	Class Review	
May 2	FINAL EXAM, 10:00 am-12:50 pm	