

PSC 371 Middle Eastern Politics

Fall 2009

Instructor: Fait Muedini

Class Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2:00pm-2:50pm

Classroom: 6 Clemens

Office: 414 Park Hall

Office Hours: Monday 12:00am-2:00pm; Wednesday 3:00pm-4:00pm, or by appointment

Contact: fmuedini@buffalo.edu

Course Objectives

How do events in Arab and Islamic history impact current events in the Middle East? What is Political Islam, and how have different groups used Islam to reach their political objectives in the Middle East? What are the theoretical arguments for and against Islam co-existing with democracy? What factors may be related to the lack of democracy in much of the Middle East? What are the various Islamic interpretations of the concept of human rights as known in the West? How have states in the Middle East upheld or failed to uphold human rights, including but not limited to women's rights? What were the U.S. policies and actions that led to the most recent Iraq war? What are the events that lead to the most recent conflict in Israel and the Palestinian Occupied Territories? These are just some of the issues that we will be discussing.

This course aims to introduce students to the complexity and historical roots of Middle Eastern politics. This course will focus on various themes including examining factors for political change, the role of secularism and religion in politics, issues of Islam and politics, democracy, human rights, and women's rights in the Middle East. From this course, students should develop an understanding of various social and political science theories and empirical analyses that are related to the course. This course encourages individual thought on various issues, and will be an inviting atmosphere for students to express their opinions, and expects objectiveness and an open forum for a free exchange of ideas.

This class is meant for students to not only grasp historical examples of political events in the Middle East, but is also designed to allow students to critically think and to examine current trends in Middle Eastern politics. This course will give you the opportunity to 1) develop problem solving and analytical skills; 2) improve your capacity to think independently; 3) strengthen your proficiency in reading, listening, speaking, and writing; and 4) make your own choices about political and ethically difficult situations.

Required Readings: We will be using one main required book, which is available at the north campus bookstore, along with other articles which will be available online. I have also ordered a recommended book, "Islam and the Challenge of Democracy," which is not required but is an excellent resource for a more detailed discussion of Islam and democracy. Access to a print (or online) news source that covers the Middle East will also be required. The required book is:

Cleveland, William L (2008). A History of the Modern Middle East, 4th Edition. Westview Press. ISBN 0813343747

Recommended

El Fadl, Khaled Abou, Cohen, Joshua, & Chasman, Deborah (2004). "Islam and the Challenge of Democracy." Princeton University Press. ISBN 0-691-11938-4

Assignments and Grading:

This course contains a number of requirements.

I. Participation. 15%. Students are expected to come to every class on time, and to be prepared to actively engage and discuss the assigned reading. Students should expect to be asked questions during the class discussion. Students should also feel free to ask any questions to the instructor that they may have. Furthermore, attendance will be taken, and absences from lecture will impact the attendance and participation portion of the overall grade. Participation is a very important component of the overall grade. If a student knows that s/he will not be able to attend a class, the student should notify me ahead of that specific day, so that any needed arrangements may be made for the material covered in class.

II. Quizzes. 30%. Throughout the semester, I will be giving a number of pop-quizzes (not announced prior to the start of the said class) at the beginning of the class. The quizzes may be given on any day, and may or may not follow one another. Students will be given sufficient time to complete each quiz. The quizzes will be based off of the reading material assigned for that given day, regardless if the material is being covered in lecture. The quizzes may be multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, essay, or a combination of these formats, of which the formats may or may not differ from quiz to quiz. If a student shows up to class while the quiz is taking place, s/he will still be given the quiz, but will only have the remainder of the designated time to complete the quiz. If a student comes into class after the allotted time for completing the quiz, s/he will not be able to complete a quiz, and will receive a "0" for that quiz grade. If a student knows s/he will not be attending a class for a particular day, it is her/his responsibility to let the instructor know. Only under these conditions of notifying the instructor ahead of time will a makeup quiz be allowed. Along with the random reading quizzes, **one Middle East map quiz** will be given at some point in the semester. This quiz may or may not be on the same day of another reading pop quiz, and will be included with the other quizzes to determine the overall quiz grade. When calculating the quiz grade total, I will drop the lowest quiz grade.

III. Exams. 20% each (40% total). A total of two in-class exams will be given in this course. The first exam will be given on **Monday October 26th, 2009** and will be worth 20% of the total grade. The second exam will be administered on **Friday December 11th, 2009**, the last day of class, and will be worth 20% of the total grade. If for any reason a student knows ahead of time that s/he will be unable to attend class during any of these times, arrangements can be made to take the exam at another time. The format of the exams may be multiple choice, essay, fill in the blank, short answer, or a combination of the above.

IV. Newspaper Assignments. 15%. Students will be expected to follow current events in the Middle East, and will thus be required to read and write a summary on a news article related to Middle Eastern politics due every Monday except for when there is an exam (one will not be due the week of either exam), and when otherwise noted. The summaries will be 12 in total, of which the first one will be due beginning Wednesday, September 9th, 2009 (because of no class on Monday, September 7th, 2009 (Labor Day)). The news summary should be roughly ½ to no more than 1 page single spaced. In the summary, students should identify the title, author, publication, and publication date of the newspaper article. The summary should also include a brief paragraph summarizing the main points of the article, and specifically how the article relates to Middle Eastern politics. The last section of the summary should include your thoughts/opinions on the article. The newspaper article will be expected to be turned at the beginning of class, and will need to be a story from the previous week. Summaries must be turned in by the end of class, or will not be accepted.

* Note: It is quite possible that a pop-quiz may be given out on the same day a newspaper article summary is due.

Grading Scale

94-100	A	74-76	C
90-93	A-	71-73	C-
87-89	B+	68-70	D+
83-85	B	65-67	D
80-82	B-	61-64	D-
77-79	C+	0-60	F

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings *

1). Monday, August 31st, 2009

Introduction

2). Wednesday, September 2nd, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 1-35

3). Friday, September 4th, 2009

NO CLASS (APSA CONFERENCE)

4). Monday, September 7th, 2009

NO CLASS (LABOR DAY OBSERVED)

(newspaper assignment for the week will be due Wednesday)

5). Wednesday September 9th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 37-80

6). Friday September 11th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 81-102

7). Monday, September 14th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 103-132

8). Wednesday, September 16th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 103-132, continued...

9). Friday, September 18th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 133-170

10). Monday, September 21st, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 175-215

11). Wednesday, September 23rd, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 175-215 continued...

12). Friday, September 25th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 217-237

13). Monday, September 28th, 2009

NO CLASS (YOM KIPPUR OBSERVED)

(Newspaper Assignment Summary Due Wednesday)

14). Wednesday, September 30th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 273-300

15). Friday October 2nd, 2009

NO CLASS

16). Monday October 5th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 301-344

17). Wednesday, October 7th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 301-344 continued...

18). Friday, October 9th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 373-395

19). Monday, October 12th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 397-421

20). Wednesday, October 14th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 423-450

21). Friday, October 16th, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 451-472; (527-556 (skim))

22). Monday, October 19th, 2009

Israel and Palestine

Cleveland, pp. 239-271

23). Wednesday October 21st, 2009

Cleveland, pp. 345-367

24). Friday, October 23rd, 2009

Cleveland pp. 473-517

25). Monday, October 26th, 2009 (no newspaper summary due this week)

Exam #1

26). Wednesday, October 28th, 2009

Political Islam

Woltering, Robbert A.F.L. (2002). "The Roots of Islamist Popularity." *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 6, pp 1133-1143.

Langohr, Vickie (2001). "Of Islamists and Ballot Boxes: Rethinking the Relationship between Islamists and Electoral Politics." *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 591-610.

27). Friday October 30th, 2009

Islamist Movements and Organizations in the Middle East

Norton, Augustus Richard (2007). "The Role of Hezbollah in Lebanese Domestic Politics." *The International Spectator*, Vol. 42, No. 4, pp. 475-491.

28). Monday, November 2nd, 2009

Munson, Ziad (2001). "Islamic Mobilization: Social Movement Theory and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood." *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 4. pp. 487-510.

29). Wednesday, November 4th, 2009

Blanchard, Christopher M. (2008). The Islamic Traditions of Wahabbism and Salafiyyah. Available Online: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS21695.pdf>

(In class) PBS Documentary: Jihad: The Men and Ideas Behind Al-Qaeda (2007).

30). Friday, November 6th, 2009

(In class) PBS Documentary: Jihad: The Men and Ideas Behind Al-Qaeda (2007).

31). Monday, November 9th, 2009

(In class) PBS Documentary: Jihad: The Men and Ideas Behind Al-Qaeda (2007).

32). Wednesday, November 11th, 2009

Democracy in the Middle East

Goddard, Hugh (2002). "Islam and Democracy." *The Political Quarterly* pp. 1-9 (PDF File on UB Learns).

33). Friday, November 13th, 2009

Huntington, Samuel (1993). "Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*. Vol. 72 No. 3, pp. 22-49.

34). Monday, November 16th, 2009

El Fadl, Khaled Abou (2003). Islam and the Challenge of Democracy: Can Individual Rights and Popular Sovereignty Take Root in Faith? The Boston Review.

Available Online: <http://www.bostonreview.net/BR28.2/abou.html>

(For additional reading on the issue of Islam and Democracy, the Book "Islam and The Challenge of Democracy" is available at the bookstore).

35). Wednesday, November 18th, 2009

Nasr, Vali (2005). "The Rise of Muslim Democracy," *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 16. pp 13-27.

36). Friday, November 20th, 2009

Does Islam Hinder Democracy?

Stepan, Alfred, & Robertson, Graeme (2003). "An 'Arab' More than Muslim' Electoral Gap,"

Journal of Democracy Vol. 14, no. 3: pp. 30-44.

Midlarsky, Manus (1998). "Democracy and Islam: Implications for Civilizational Conflict and the Democratic Peace." *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 42, pp. 485-511. (skim)

37). Monday, November 23rd, 2009

Smith, Benjamin (2004). "Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World, 1960-1999." *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 48, No. 2, pp-232-246.

38). Wednesday, November 25th, 2009

NO CLASS (FALL RECESS)

39). Friday, November 27th, 2009

NO CLASS (FALL RECESS)

40). Monday, November 30th, 2009

The War in Iraq

Cleveland, pp. 557-576

(in class) PBS Documentary: *Bush's War* (2008).

41). Wednesday, December 2nd, 2009

(in class) PBS Documentary: *Bush's War* (2008).

42). Friday, December 4th, 2009

(in class) PBS Documentary: *Bush's War* (2008).

43). Monday, December 7th, 2009

Human Rights in the Middle East

Shah, N. (2006). "Women's Human Rights in the Koran: An Interpretive Approach." *Human Rights Quarterly*. Vol. 28 No. 4, pp. 868-903.

Boroumand, Laden (2007). "The Untold Story of The Fight for Human Rights: Iran's Resilient Civil Society." *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 64-79. (skim)

44). Wednesday, December 9th, 2009

Conclusion

45). Friday, December 11th, 2009

Exam #2

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to fully adhere to the academic integrity regulations set forth by the university. Any violation of the regulations will result in appropriate disciplinary action as set forth in university policy. For further information, please visit www.advising.buffalo.edu/student/academicintegrity.php.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to also follow the University Classroom Conduct regulations. For further information, please visit www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/judicial/classroom.pdf.

Americans with Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination law that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. The legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring accommodation, please feel free to notify me immediately.

*Readings/Assignments are subject to change.

**Note that the syllabi and the schedule, assignments, and expectations are tentative, and are subject to change and modification.