



Politics of the Middle East

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Course Website

<http://middleeastpolitics.weebly.com>

POL 2071

Department of Political Science

University of Cincinnati

Fall 2014-15

Course Overview

This course is an introduction to the Middle East, with specific focus on the political regimes, social movements, energy resources and their role in sustaining authoritarian regimes. We will consider the intersections of religion and politics, ethnic and territorial conflicts, and the dynamics of the social revolutions known as the Arab Spring, which have disrupted authoritarian regimes in last few years.

After a general introduction to the political history of the region, the course begins an intellectual exploration of three intriguing problems in the Middle East: the roots and dynamics of authoritarian regimes and the challenges to democratization in the region; the sources of political instability and the development of the Arab Spring revolutions; and political Islam and the emergence of radical religio-political movements, such as Salafism and ISIS in the region.

We will also apply and evaluate analytical tools and theories developed by social scientists. As part of our explanatory efforts, we will use the “continuity and breakdown” framework—a synthetic analytical tool formulated by Zagorski (2007)—to examine the emergence and the continuity of authoritarian regimes in the region. We will also rely upon various theories of social revolutions in analyzing the Arab Spring revolutions.

This course is designed as a flipped classroom and will make use of active learning techniques. Lectures will be largely replaced by other learning activities, but will not be abandoned completely. With the flipped classroom, you will be asked to learn the content at home; instead of listening to lectures, you will spend class practicing and reflecting upon what you've learned. Activities during class will include group projects, workshops, and simulations; your learning and that of your peers will suffer if you come to class unprepared. Thus, **one of the core requirements of this course is keeping up with the assigned material by working at home**. I will use pop quizzes and the online discussion boards both to encourage you to read the assigned material before classes and to enhance and extend our course discussions and activities. You will also write short self-evaluation reports reflecting on your learning experiences (what was learned, how it was learned, etc. Please see the attached form).

Student Learning Outcomes

In addition to learning course content— the Middle East's contemporary history, political regimes, and religion and social movements —students in this course will build their critical and analytical thinking skills. Students will:

- conduct independent research
- share their findings with other students
- communicate in collaborative settings
- analyze and evaluate new information.

Course resources, exams, assignments and learning activities are designed with these goals in mind.

Course Resources

- **Textbooks**

This course has two required texts:

- Ellen Lust (ed.), *The Middle East* (CQ Press, 2014, 13th Edition).
- Mohammed Ayoob, *The Many Faces of Political Islam* (The University of Michigan Press, 2008).

The books are available at the UC Bookstore. In addition, other materials will be distributed on the course Blackboard site.

- **Course Website**

In addition to Blackboard, the course also has a website where students can obtain information about course activities and assignments. The website also has links to supplementary resources, such as documentaries, regional newspapers, and magazines. Website: <http://middleeastpolitics.weebly.com>

- **Foreign Policy Magazine: Morning Briefs**

As student of Middle East politics, I strongly recommend you register for the free “Mideast Daily Brief” service of *Foreign Policy* magazine. This will keep you updated about important developments in the region.

Link: <https://id.foreignpolicy.com/identity/siteRegistration/addRegistration>

Course Activities

Course activities reflect the course objectives and goals. The activities include multiple learning methods: individual study; group study; class discussions; critical, analytical and creative thinking; presenting; and reflection. These activities encourage learning via doing, sharing, and self-analysis.

1. Analytic Team Project: Explaining Continuity and Change in the Middle East (15% of course grade)

The major task of the Analytic Teams is to try to explain a case with a theory drawn from course readings. Each student team, formed by the professor, will be assigned one of the countries in the Middle East region that experienced an Arab Spring revolution, such as Egypt or Tunisia. After individual study, team members will work together to explain the endurance of the old regime for decades and the dynamics that brought about regime change. Each team will write a short report demonstrating.

- I. Professor introduces group members and assigns case.
- II. **Homework:** everyone, individually, studies the assigned country and applies Zogorski's theory to explain the continuity and change in the country. The main sources for studying the countries are the country specific chapters in Ellen Lust's *The Middle East*. Students are encouraged to use external sources as needed.
- III. **Outline:** Everyone prepares an outline of how or if the theory explains the case. You are expected to bring evidence for each element of continuity and change as identified in Zagorski's theory.
- IV. Every student is required to submit an extra copy of the outline to the professor.
- V. **Group Workshop:** Students come together at the country focus workshop to share their findings with team members.
- VI. At the end of the workshop, each team is expected to prepare a poster covering the conclusions of the group study and what to anticipate next in the assigned country.
- VII. **Presentation:** All team members are expected to be prepared to make a brief presentation of their study on the day assigned to each country. Team members then take an active role in facilitating class discussion on the country.
- VIII. **Reflection paper:** Every student writes a short report on the learning experience (what was learned, whether thinking about the subject was changed, what learning methods were helpful, what questions remain, etc.), and submits a printed copy to the professor at the next class meeting (following the workshop).

Important note: Every student is required to study the countries other than the country assigned to his/her assigned group. This project and workshop provides students with an opportunity to study one case in depth, to work in small groups to brainstorm, and to practice using theory.

2. Group Investigation Project: Political Islam and Social Movements (15% of course grade)

Each group will be assigned one social movement, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and National Outlook Movement in Turkey.. The main task is to investigate the social, economic and political reasons behind the emergence and endurance of the social movement. In addition to using the textbook, students are expected to conduct outside research to learn more about the movement: each student is required to cite at least two peer-reviewed academic journal articles.

- I. Professor introduces group members and assigns social movement.
- II. **Homework:** everyone, individually, studies the assigned social movement. In addition to the assigned chapter, each student finds and reads two external sources.
- III. **Overview:** every student prepares an overview that includes the origins; main dates; and core persons, ideas, and beliefs of the movement. The specific

- focus of this overview is the reasons for the movement's founding and any factors that contributed to its development and/or change.
- IV. Every student is required to submit an extra copy of the overview to the professor.
 - V. **Group Workshop:** Students come together at the social movements workshop to share their findings with team members.
 - VI. At the end of the workshop, each team is expected to prepare a poster demonstrating the interaction of the factors that gave birth to the movement. This poster should also indicate the core dates, persons, and ideas.
 - VII. Each team has to be prepared to make a brief presentation on the day the assigned social movement is discussed.
 - VIII. **Reflection paper:** Every student writes a short report on the learning experience (what was learned, whether thinking about the subject was changed, what learning methods were helpful, what questions remain, etc.), and submits a printed copy to the professor at the next class meeting (following the workshop).

Important note: Every student is required to read and study the cases other than the assigned one. This group project and workshop provides students with an opportunity to study one social movement in depth, to work in small groups to brainstorm, and to practice group presentations.

3. Problem-Solving Project: Finding a Road to Peace (15% of course grade)

In the Problem-Solving Project, students, organized as groups, work together to identify the core problems in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Working as teams, students will prepare a “road map” to peace. The key components of the project are:

- I. Professor introduces group members.
- II. **Homework:** everyone studies the assigned material and conducts independent research to learn details of the conflict. The primary resource is the Ellen Lust’s chapter on Israeli-Palestinian question.
- III. **Report:** Everyone is expected to prepare a short report that identifies the problems and solutions.
- IX. Every student is required to submit an extra copy of the outline to the professor.
- IV. **Group Workshop:** Students come together at the group workshop to share their findings and to create a the “road map.”
- V. At the end of the workshop, each group prepares a poster demonstrating their “road map.”
- VI. The following day, the class assumes the role of the UN General Assembly and each group in turn presents their project to the class and answers questions.
- VII. **Reflection paper:** Every student writes a short report on the learning experience (what was learned, whether thinking about the subject was

changed, what learning methods were helpful, what questions remain, etc.), and submits a printed copy to the professor at the next class meeting (following the workshop).

4. Guest Speakers

The class will be hosting several guest speakers this semester. Speakers will be people with expertise in Middle East issues, or people from the region who will share their experience and observations.

- **Graham Fuller: November 10th**

Graham E. Fuller is a former vice chairman of the National Intelligence Council at the CIA, a former senior political scientist at RAND, and a current adjunct professor of history at Simon Fraser University. He is the author of numerous books about the Middle East, including *The Future of Political Islam*, *A World Without Islam*, a memoir *Three Truths and a Lie*, and the forthcoming *Turkey and the Arab Spring*. He has lived and worked in the Muslim world for nearly two decades. Mr. Fuller will speaker to our class about ISIS and his latest book, *Turkey and the Arab Spring*.

- **Fatih Muslu: Date: TBD**

Fatih Muslu is a Ph.D. student in the Political Science Department at Georgia State University. His doctoral research focuses on Salafism in the Middle East. Fatih will talk about Salafism and share observations from his trips to Syria and Morocco.

- **Anwar Mhajne: November 26, Wednesday**

Anwar Mhajne is a Ph.D. student in the Political Science Department at UC. She will talk about latest developments in Gaza and share personal observations and experiences from her time in Israel and Palestine.

- **Turkar Gasimzada: September 26, Friday**

Dr. Gasimzada is a composer and a visiting professor at the College of Conservatory Music. He also teaches Middle Eastern Music courses at UC. In addition to his live music performance with his Taar, he will offer a presentation on Middle Eastern music.

5. Art of Political Science

Art of Politics Science activities are non-graded class activities in which students will work in groups to express their ideas using artistic methods. All students will have read and studied the assigned material prior to class. In class, students will work as teams to discuss the topic of the day,

and then attempt to express their ideas artistically. Relevant art materials, such as posters and colored markers, will be provided. The class may start with a pop-quiz.

Two Art of Political Science activities are scheduled for the Fall 2014-14 Semester:

- **Adventures of the Middle East: 1914-2014: September 10, Wednesday**

Student teams will discuss and decide on the milestones, core actors, processes, and ideas that shaped the region in the last hundred years. Each team will prepare a poster that demonstrates the Adventures of the Middle East, 1914-2014. Students are encouraged to demonstrate their evaluative and artistic skills in selecting and fitting the key information on one piece of poster paper. At the end of the class, teams will vote for the best poster, and the winning poster will be published at the course website.

- **Oil and Politics in the Middle East: October 24, Friday**

What is the political value of oil for the Middle East? What role has oil played in shaping domestic and international politics in the Middle East? What would the region and its political regimes look like in the absence of oil?

Students will work as teams to discuss the political role of oil resources in the Middle East. They will then attempt to express their ideas as a caricature or political cartoon. At the end of the class, students will vote for the best design.

6. Roundtables

Two of the class sessions will be organized as roundtable discussions. All students will participate in discussing and debating the selected topics: Democracy in the Middle East, Islam and Political Islam, and Islam and Terror (see the course schedule below for dates). After studying the assigned material prior to class, students will then share their own ideas and comment on the perspectives of other students.

7. Class Dinner

I am planning to organize a dinner for the class at one of the Middle Eastern restaurants in Cincinnati. Participation in this activity is optional; as a class, we'll do our best to settle on a good time and place.

Exams and Assignments

- **Midterm (15% of course grade): October 27**
- **Final exam (20% of course grade): December 10**

This course has two exams and one research assignment. The midterm and final will be take-home exams. A review sheet and sample questions will be provided as the dates approach.

- **Media Report: Due November 24**

You will conduct research on how media organizations and newspapers from different parts of the world covered the Egyptian *coup d'état* staged by the Egyptian army chief General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi on July 3, 2013. The purpose of this assignment is to see how interests and power relations are reflected in news coverage. You are required to find and read at least SEVEN different newspapers/magazines from at least THREE different countries of the world and submit a three-page report reflecting your findings. This report is due at the last class of the term; please bring a printed copy of your assignment to class. We will then spend the last class discussing findings.

- **Pop Quizzes: 5% of course grade**

Please be prepared for a few pop quizzes during the term, especially when we start a new topic. The purpose of these quizzes is to encourage you to read the assigned material before we discuss it in class and to provide me with feedback about your understanding of course concepts.

Attendance: 15% of course grade

Attendance is mandatory. Students missing more than TWO WEEKS without an official excuse will receive no credit for the entire attendance portion of the grade (15%). There is no chance for a make-up for group activities and workshops. Students with medical emergencies are required to present official report from a doctor. If you have to miss a class due to an official university event, please notify me in advance and provide official documentation describing the event and your role.

Academic Integrity

The UC Student Code of Conduct and other departmental, college, and university policies related to academic integrity will be enforced. Any violation of these regulations, including acts of plagiarism or cheating, will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the severity of the misconduct.

For more information, please visit: http://www.uc.edu/conduct/Code_of_Conduct.html

Special Needs & Accommodations Policy

If you have any special needs related to your participation in the course, including identified visual impairment, hearing impairment, physical impairment, communication disorder, and/or specific learning disability that may influence your performance in this course, you should meet with the

instructor to arrange for reasonable provisions to ensure an equitable opportunity to meet all the requirements of this course. At the discretion of the instructor, some accommodations may require prior approval by Disability Services.

Assessment & Grading Policy

Group Investigation	% 15
Group Investigation	% 15
Problem-Solving	% 15
Midterm:	% 15
Final:	% 20
Attendance:	% 10
Media Report	% 5
Quizzes:	% 5

Course Schedule

PART I: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Week 1	Title	Reading Material	Activity
Aug. 25, Monday	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why Active Learning Critical Thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Critical Thinking: Where to Begin,” www.criticalthinking.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Expectations Survey
Aug. 27, Wednesday	Essentials of Islam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The Foundations of Islam,” Andersen, et.al, pp. 11-27. <p><i>Recommended</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video: PBS Documentary: Islam: Prophet Muhammad & Rise of Islam (Part 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture & Discussion
Aug. 29, Friday	Rise of Islamic Civilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>: Chapter 1, pp. 1-5. <p><i>Recommended</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video: PBS Documentary: Islam: Awakening (Part 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture & Discussion
Sep. 1, Monday	Holiday: Labor Day		
Sep. 3, Wednesday	Ottoman and Safavid Empires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>: Chapter 1, pp. 5-25. <p><i>Recommended</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video: PBS Documentary: Islam: Ottomans (Part 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture and Discussion

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Sep. 5, Friday	Making of the New Middle East	• Lust, <i>The Middle East</i> : Chapter 1, pp. 26-39.	• Discussion
Sep. 8, Monday	Middle East after the Second World War	• Lust, <i>The Middle East</i> : Chapter 1, pp. 26-67.	• Discussion
Sep. 10, Wednesday	Art of Political Science: Adventures of the Middle East: 1914-2014		• Group study & activity

**PART II:
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE: STATES AND SOCIETIES**

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Sep. 12, Friday	Elements of Continuity & Change: A Theoretical Framework	• Zagorski, "Continuity and Breakdown," <i>Comparative Politics</i> , pp. 1-53.	• Lecture & Discussion
Week 4			
Sep. 15, Monday	Social Revolutions	Zagorski, "Revolutions: Breakdown in the Face of Social Revolutions," <i>Comparative Politics</i> , pp. 181-221.	• Lecture & Discussion
Sep. 17, Wednesday	Analytic Team Workshop: Explaining Continuity and Change in the Middle East		• Group Workshop • Journal Writing
Sep. 19, Friday	Continuity and Change in Tunisia	• "Tunisia" in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i> , pp. 789-830.	• Discussion

Week 5	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Sep. 22, Monday	Egypt before the Arab Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Egypt” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 448-477. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Sep. 24, Wednesday	Egypt: Revolution and Counter Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Egypt” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 448-477. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Sep. 26, Friday	Turkar Gasimzada: “Music in the Middle East” & Live “Tar” Performance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest Speaker • “Tar” Performance • Journal Writing
Week 6	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activities</i>
Sep. 29, Monday	Qaddafi’s Libya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Libya” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 631-659. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Oct. 1, Wednesday	Libya after the Arab Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Libya” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 631-659. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Oct. 3, Friday	Syria: Rise of the Asad Regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Syria” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 764-788. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Week 7	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activities</i>
Oct. 6, Monday	Syria in Civil War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Syria” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 764-788. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Oct. 8, Wednesday	Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Iran” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 478-506. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Oct. 10, Friday	Holiday: Fall Reading Days		

Week 8		Topic	Reading Material	Activities
Oct. 13,	Monday	Saddam's Iraq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Iraq" in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 507-536. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion
Oct. 15,	Wednesday	Iraq: Iraq after the US Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Iraq" in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 507-536. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion

PART III: DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Oct. 17,	Friday	Democracy in the Middle East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kuru, "Authoritarianism and Democracy in the Muslim Countries: Rentier States and Regional Diffusion," <i>Political Science Quarterly</i>, Summer 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundtable Discussion
Week 9		Topic	Reading Material	Activity
Oct. 20,	Monday	Rentier State: Oil and Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" <i>World Politics</i>, April 2011. <p><i>Recommended</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ross, "Will Oil Curse Drown the Arab Spring?" <i>Foreign Affairs</i> [PDF]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture & Discussion Journal Writing
Oct. 22,	Wednesday	Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Saudi Arabia" in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp. 507-536. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion
Oct. 24,	Friday	Art of Political Science: Oil and Politics in the Middle East		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Activity Journal Writing

Week 10	
Oct. 27, Monday	Midterm Exam
Oct. 29, Wednesday	No class: Professor at the ASMEA Conference
Oct. 31, Friday	No class: Professor at the ASMEA Conference

PART IV: POLITICAL ISLAM

Week 11	Topic	Reading Material	Activity
Nov. 3, Monday	Group Investigation Workshop: Political Islam		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Workshop Journal Writing
Nov. 5, Wednesday	Islam and Political Islam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, "Defining Concepts. Demolishing Myths," <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam</i>, pp. 1-23. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundtable Discussion
Nov. 7, Friday	Self Proclaimed Islamic States: Saudi Arabia & Iran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, "Self Proclaimed Islamic States," <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam</i>, pp. 42-63. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation Team Presentation: Wahhabism & Shi'a Islam Discussion
Week 12			
Nov. 10, Monday	Guest Speaker: Graham Fuller: "Arab Spring and Turkey"		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal Writing

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Nov. 12, Wednesday	Between Ideology and Pragmatism: Pakistan & Egypt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, "Between Ideology and Pragmatism," <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam</i>, pp. 64-90. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation Team Presentation: Muslim Brotherhood Discussion
Nov. 14, Friday	Liberal Muslims: The Hizmet Movement in Turkey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, "Muslim Democracies," <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam</i>, pp. 90-111. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation Team Presentation: The Gulen Movement Discussion
Week 13	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Nov. 17, Monday	Islamist National Resistance: Hizbullah & Hamas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, "Islamist National Resistance," <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam</i>, pp. 112-130. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation Team Presentations: Hamas and Hezbollah Discussion
Nov. 19, Wednesday	Islam & Terror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aktan, "Acts of Terror and Suicide Attacks in the Light of the Qur'an and the Sunna," in Ergun Capan (ed.), <i>Terror and Suicide Attacks: An Islamic Perspective</i>, 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundtable Discussion
Nov. 21, Friday	Transnational Islam: Al Qaeda and the ISIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, "Transnational Islam," <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam</i>, pp. 112-130. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation Team Presentations: Al-Qaeda and ISIS
Week 14			
Nov. 24, Monday	Viewing Through the Lenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Media Report" due! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundtable Discussion
Nov. 26, Wednesday	Guest Speaker: Anwar Mhajne: "Being Palestinian in Israel"		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journal Writing

Nov. 28, Friday	Holiday: Thanksgiving		
Week 15	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading Material</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Dec. 1, Monday	Workshop: Search for Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict” in Lust, <i>The Middle East</i>, pp.287-367. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop • Journal Writing
Dec. 3, Wednesday	Presentations & Voting for Peace Proposals		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Study • Simulation • Journal Writing
Dec. 5, Friday	Review		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions & Answers • Student Evaluations
December 10	Final Exam:		

Student Name:

Student Learning Portfolio

Course: Politics of the Middle East

Activity:

Topic:

Date:

What did you learn?

How did you learn, i.e., what did and did not help you learn?

(What does this tell about yourself as a learner?)

What is the value of what you learned?

What are your plans for future learning?

Notes: