

## POLS 320

## International Relations in the Middle East &amp; North Africa

**Credits:** 3.0

**Contact Hours:** 45

*This is a syllabus based on a popular course in our Cairo program prior to the program's suspension in mid-2013. In reopening our Cairo program, we are both developing new courses and updating successful courses from past semesters. This syllabus is meant to be representative of this course. A fully updated version with new content and materials will not be available until closer to the start of the term in which it will run.*

**Aims and Objectives of the Course:** This course will seek to provide an objective and balanced perspective that takes into account not only the development of regional and international politics in the Middle East, but also how it shaped the political and historical development of its countries.

**Course Description:** This course is designed to provide a general overview of some of the issues critical to contemporary international relations in the Middle East. Consequently, it will examine the interplay of numerous factors that help us better understand and critically analyze the Middle East. These include modern state-system formation, the impact of colonialism, nationalism and nation-state formation, regional crises, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the politics of oil, military conflicts, globalization, regional integration and dynamics of the Arab Spring and its aftermath. Special attention will be given to the historical and contemporary interaction between the Middle East and the United States, interactions among MENA region countries, and the international community's interaction with the MENA region as part of the "Global South."

**Learning outcomes for the course**

By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain Arab countries' foreign policies as an interplay of complicated dynamics and processes
- Critically compare and contrast nuanced approaches to international and regional politics in the MENA region and the elements of continuity and changes that punctuated their development
- Identify a more sophisticated picture of the inter-state relations and super power politics in the Middle East when put in structural perspective as resting on nested layers of concepts, ideas, notions, methodologies, and approaches

**Knowledge**

This course is designed to assist students to acquire and demonstrate knowledge about:

- History of inter-state relations and state formation in the Middle East
- Key themes in regional and international politics in the Middle East
- Political value-systems in the Middle Eastern foreign policies: objectives and means
- Role of ideas in shaping Arab-American relations and International politics
- Contemporary political dynamics in the making of international politics in the Middle East

## **Skills**

This course is designed to assist students in acquiring or enhancing the following skills:

- Comparative historical and political analysis
- Presentation
- Engagement with political events and issues
- Academic writing and production

## **Attitudes**

This course is designed to encourage development of the following attitudes:

- Critical thinking
- Comparative approach
- Balanced reasoning
- Escaping prejudice in analysis
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## **Assessment Overview**

| <b>Description</b>                 | <b>Weight</b> | <b>Due Date</b> |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Attendance and Participation       | 20%           | Continuous      |
| 4 Reaction papers                  | 30%           | TBD             |
| First paper                        |               |                 |
| Second paper                       |               |                 |
| Third paper (Interviews)           |               |                 |
| Fourth paper                       |               |                 |
| Final Policy Paper:                | 50%           | TBD             |
| Abstract                           | 5%            | TBD             |
| Outline and bibliog.               | 5%            | TBD             |
| First draft                        | 15%           | TBD             |
| Class Presentation and Final Draft | 25%           | TBD             |

## **Attendance and Participation:**

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes. In this course you are permitted one (1) unexcused absence (absence not caused by illness). If you have more than one unexcused absence, your total grade for the course will be lowered by 3% for each additional unexcused absence. In other words, two unexcused absences will lower your final grade by 3%, three unexcused absences by 6%, etc. You are expected to make up for any missed work during your absence. All students are expected to have read thoughtfully the assigned readings and come to class prepared to participate and make substantive contribution to the class discussions. Participation grade will depend on both the quality and the quantity of student's comments and questions.

## **Reaction Papers:**

Reaction papers are short papers (500 words each) where students are supposed to react to one or more of the assigned readings. A short book or article review, where students express their assessment of the reading, its approach, assumptions, findings and conclusions, is expected. Third reaction paper should be a report or a feature story of an interview with a political figure in Egypt relevant to the course. Guidelines will be discussed with students over the course. Deadlines are listed above and in the course schedule.

## **Final Policy Paper:**

The final group project is a long research paper (3000-4500 words) that should conform to academic standards of proper citation, an elaborate research puzzle, relevant bibliography and a hypothesis. The

paper should consist of two parts, background analysis and policy recommendation. Groups will select from one of four topics, TBD.

**Course Schedule**

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Topic(s) to be covered</b>   | <b>Learning Outcome(s) Addressed</b>  | <b>Preparation/ Readings</b>   | <b>Work Due</b>                    |
|-------------|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>    | Historical formative context of the modern Middle East by the mid and late 19 <sup>th</sup> century | Historical perspective, encountering the usage of terms and states as actors:<br><br>This is the dime-store tour of pre-20th century Middle East history, with an emphasis on issues that have enduring relevance: What is the Middle East? Who were the Ottomans and the Safavids and why should I care? How did Europe come to dominate the Middle East by the early 20th century?  | Cleveland, A History of the Modern Middle East, parts 1 and 2<br><br>Andersen, Politics and Change in the Middle East, chapter 4   |                                    |
| <b>2</b>    | European colonialism and rise of the modern state system  | Why is there a Jordan, or an Iraq, or a Lebanon, or an Israel? Why did the map end up looking like it does? This section will look at the enduring consequences of the division of the region by the colonial powers  | Roger Owen, State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East, ch. 1<br><br>Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, edited, The Foreign Policies of the Modern Middle East, Raymond Hinnebusch, The Middle East Regional System<br><br>Anderson, ch.5  |                                    |
| <b>3</b>    | Politics of the Cold war: Challenging and restructuring the regional order- 1950s-1970s             | How the local transnational movement of Pan-Arabism or Arab nationalism challenged the regional map bequeathed by the colonial period and affected regional conflict and alliance patterns. The hot wars of this time were Arab-Israeli (1956, 1967), but there were also civil wars (Yemen), domestic upheavals (Iraq and Lebanon in 1958, Syria pretty much constantly) and inter-Arab conflicts. Both the U.S. and the USSR had to deal with this phenomenon in the context of their own | Fred Halliday, the Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology, ch. 4<br><br>Louise Fawcett, ed, International relations of the Middle East , ch.3: Peter Sluglett, The Cold War in the Middle East<br><br>Optional: Andersen, Politics and Change in Middle East, chs. 12 and 13 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Reaction Paper Due |

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|   |   | contest for influence in the region. By the end of the 1960's, Arab nationalism had lost much of its transnational appeal and power. |  |                          |
| 4 | Politics of war and identity in the Middle East: the Arab-Israeli conflict as a case-study: I | Understanding the developments of the Arab-Israeli military conflict (1948-1973)   | <p>Joel Beinin and Lisa Hajjar, "Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Primer," available at:<br/> <a href="http://www.merip.org/palestine-israel_primer/toc-pal-isr-primer.html">http://www.merip.org/palestine-israel_primer/toc-pal-isr-primer.html</a><br/> <a href="http://www.democracynow.org/finkelstein-benami.shtml">http://www.democracynow.org/finkelstein-benami.shtml</a></p> <p>Benni Morris, Righteous victims: A history of the Zionist-Palestinian conflict, chs. 4 to 9</p> <p>Louise Fawcett, International Relations of the Middle East, ch. 2</p> <p>Edward Said, the question of Palestine, chs. 1 &amp; 2</p> <p>Optional:<br/> Arthur Goldschmidt Jr. and Shibley Telhami, The Contemporary Middle East, chs. 4 to 6</p> <p>Deborah J. Gerner, Understanding the Contemporary Middle East, ch. 6</p> | Final Paper Abstract Due |
| 5 | Politics of war and identity in the Middle East: the Arab-Israeli conflict as a case-study II | Understanding the key parameters and dynamics of the Arab-Israeli peace I (1973-early 1983) and Arab-Israeli Peace II (1993-2000)    | <p>Fawcett, ch.12</p> <p>Charles Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 7th edition, Ch 7 to 11</p> <p>Benni Morris, righteous victims, chs. 10 to 13</p> <p>Ilan Pappé, A history of Modern Palestine: One Land , Two peoples, ch.7</p> <p>Edward Said, "The One-State Solution: Why the only answer to Middle East peace is Palestinians and Israelis living as equal citizens under one flag," New York Times Magazine (January 10, 1999): 36-39.</p>  |                          |

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|           |  |   | <a href="#">The Debate at Camp David over Jerusalem's Holy Places</a> (July 2000) - (Middle East Media Research Institute<br>Optional: Smith, pp. 66-87, 96-105, 142-145, & chs. 4 to 6  |                                      |
| <b>6</b>  | Politics of Oil in the Middle East   | Historical and geostrategic analysis of the 1970s Oil revolution and politics of the Persian gulf   | Douglas Little, American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945, ch. 2<br>Fawcett, chs. 4 and 13  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reaction Paper Due   |
| <b>7</b>  | 9/11, the Iraq-war and Pax-Americana   | Understanding the making of the American imperial policy in the aftermath of 9/11 and its adventure in Iraq   | Rashid Khalidi, Resurrecting Empire, ch. 5<br>Arthur Goldschmidt Jr. and Shibley Telhami, The Contemporary Middle East, ch 13<br>Fawcett, ch. 14   |                                      |
| <b>8</b>  | Islam and International relations in the Middle East                               | Capturing the role played by the Islamic religion, culture and Islamist movements in shaping the East/west relations and foreign policy making in the Middle East | Fawcett, ch. 8<br>Mamdani, Mahmoud. Good Muslims, bad Muslims: America, the cold war and war of terror chs. 1, 4 and conclusions<br>Halliday, Islam and the Myth of Confrontation, ch.4<br>Optional:<br>Arthur Goldschmidt Jr. and Shibley Telhami, The Contemporary Middle East, ch.18.<br>Juan Cole, Engaging the Muslim World, ch.3 | Final Paper Outline and Bibliog. Due |
| <b>9</b>  | Spring Break   | No Classes  |  |                                      |
| <b>10</b> | Foreign policies of key Middle Eastern countries: Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia | Putting foreign policy decision-making in several Middle eastern countries in critically analytical perspective: Processes, inputs and outcomes                   | Korany, The foreign Policies in the Arab World, chs. 6,10,12<br>Optional: Stephen Humphrey, Between Memory and Desire: The Middle East in a troubled age, ch.4   | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Reaction Paper Due   |
| <b>11</b> | Globalization and the Middle East: Economic  | A better grasp of the current economic integration of the Middle East into the International system and the cultural repercussions                                | Fawcett, ch. 5<br>Laura Guazzone, The Arab State and Neo-Liberal Globalization, ch. 13.  |                                      |

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|    | neo-liberalism and war of cultural ideas                                 |   | Korany, ch.3  |                                |
| 12 | The Current configuration in the Middle East: The Arab-Israeli situation | Capturing the aspects of the current impasse in Peace process and possible ways out | <p>Ilan Pappé, A history of Modern Palestine: One Land , Two peoples, chs.8, 9 and Post-script</p> <p>Charles Smith, Palestine and Arab-Israeli Conflict, ch.11</p> <p>Tony Judt, “The Country that wouldn’t grow up,” Haaretz.com (May 5, 2006).</p> <p>Roger Cohen, “Her Jewish State,” New York Times Magazine_(July 8, 2007): 32-41.</p> <p>The Debate at Camp David over Jerusalem's Holy Places (July 2000) - (Middle East Media Research Institute) <a href="http://chenry.webhost.utexas.edu/aip/Cclass%20materials/israel_state_of_israel_part_3-8.29.2000.html">http://chenry.webhost.utexas.edu/aip/Cclass%20materials/israel_state_of_israel_part_3-8.29.2000.html</a></p> <p>An official Israeli view: Basic Law and links to legal background and other papers.</p> <p>Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research <a href="http://www.pcpsr.org/index.html">http://www.pcpsr.org/index.html</a></p> <p>Survey Research Unit: Poll of 5-7 June 2008 <a href="http://www.pcpsr.org/survey/polls/2008/p28e.html">www.pcpsr.org/survey/polls/2008/p28e.html</a></p> <p>Israeli Knesset as a result of the March 2006 elections <a href="http://www.knesset.gov.il/elections17/eng/Results/main_results_eng.asp">http://www.knesset.gov.il/elections17/eng/Results/main_results_eng.asp</a></p> <p>Compare with previous January 2003 elections: <a href="http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0n130">http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/go.asp?MFAH0n130</a></p> <p>home pages of Israel's principal political parties (along with a few other marginal ones).</p> <p>Optional:</p> | First draft of final paper due |

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|           |  |  | <p>Ian Bickerton, A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict in Post-9/11 world, epilogue</p> <p>Neve Gordon, Israel's Occupation pp. 169-222</p>   |                                    |
| <b>13</b> | Current configuration in the Middle East: The US                               | Putting the Arab-American relations and US Middle eastern policy in strategic, political and cultural perspective  | <p>Douglas Little, American Orientalism, ch. 1</p> <p>Khalidi, Resurrecting empire, chs. 2, 4 and 5</p> <p>Optional:</p> <p>Arthur Goldschmidt Jr. and Shibley Telhami, The Contemporary Middle East, chs. 13, 16, 20 and 21</p> <p>Andrew Hammond, What the Arabs think of America, chs.1 and 2,</p> <p>Larbi Sadiki, Rethinking Arab Democratization, ch.4</p> <p>Roger Ower, state, Power and Politics, ch.12</p> <p>Douglas Little chs. 8 and 9</p> | 4 <sup>th</sup> Reaction Paper Due |
| <b>14</b> | Middle East and the international system: Future prospects and the Arab Spring | Approaching the sophistication of the potential fluctuations in regional and international relations in the Middle East in the wake of the Arab spring and the confused super power politics, domestic instabilities and threats of wars and fragmentation | <p>Marc Lynch, the Arab Uprising: Unfinished revolutions in the New Middle East, chs. 5, 6, 7 and 8</p> <p>Optional:</p> <p>Cole, ch.1</p> <p>Andersen, Politics and Change in the Middle East, ch.15</p>   |                                    |
| <b>15</b> | Class Presentations  | Peer's discussion and review of each other's paper in an integrative analysis  |   | Final Paper Due                    |
| <b>16</b> | Reflection Week  | Reflect on Learning Objectives   |   |                                    |