

## GOV 373: POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

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Mondays 1:15-4:15

Office Hours: M/T/TH (10:30-11:30)

Hepburn 208

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### Purpose

This is a survey course that will examine the political development of the region since the fall of the Ottoman Empire in World War I through contemporary Middle East politics.

The course adopts both a thematic approach, comparing the various factors that have helped shape the emergence of political institutions across these countries so far – history, culture, religion and foreign intervention; as well as a country based approach, examining the politics of specific Arab and non-Arab countries in the region.

We will try to reach some conclusions about the prospects for future economic, socio-religious and political changes in the Middle East. The objective of the course is to provide students with an understanding of the challenges facing the region and those studying it. We examine the policies adopted by the various actors and assess the successes and failures of those policies.

I adopt a policy approach to my teaching, which requires students to critically examine, analyze and formulate policies regarding the challenges actors face in the region.

### Requirements\*

\* Requirements are at the discretion of the instructor and may be subject to change

This course is designed around a final simulation in which students will be broken up into team representing the various countries of the region and participate in a simulation involving a **political/military crisis in the region**.

To ensure the success of this simulation – students will be required to prepare **throughout the course of the semester**. The course requirements are designed to prepare students for this final simulation.

1. Teams may pick which country they want to represent among the following: Iran, Israel, Palestinian Authority, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt [Saudi Arabia and Iraq will be represented in the simulation by the instructor].
2. After you are designated a group – you will be studying and preparing assignment with that group.
3. **This is a reading intensive course.** If you are looking for an easy ride – this is not the course for you. During the crisis simulation – you will be required to make decisions on behalf of your country. You will be operating as the political and military decision maker of your country. In order to be able to make knowledgeable decisions that will play throughout the simulation you must **acquire knowledge about the politics of your country and the politics of the region.** You will not be able to participate effectively in the final simulation if you do not prepare thoroughly. This includes:
  - a. Students are expected to come prepared to class having read **ALL READINGS** allocated for each class as described in the syllabus. Discussion

questions for each week's readings will be posted on Angel and students will be expected to be able to answer those questions in class. Participation, which includes attendance and reading material, will count for **5% of final grade.**

- Every week in the beginning of class, a different team will be picked at random to answer the discussion questions to facilitate class discussion. Failure to answer those questions will result in a 0.25 grade reduction from your overall participation grade.
  - b. In preparation for the final simulation - beginning March 2 through April 6 we will cover each week the politics of a different country in the Middle East. Each country group will be required to prepare a 10-15 minute presentation in class of its country's profile. This will provide some country briefing for everyone in class and should include the geography of the state, its military capabilities, and leading figures. This will also give an opportunity for other groups to question the group presenting about their country. These country briefings will count for **10% of the final grade.** You will be graded as a group.
4. On **February 9** there will be a short quiz that will consist of a map quiz along with five open-ended questions. The quiz will be graded individually and will count for **10% of final grade.**
  5. **On March 6** Students will be required to tackle a "mini crisis" which will prepare you for the final simulation focusing on the politics of the two non-Arab states (Iran, and Israel). Students will receive a simulation, which will be handed out the week before the assignment is due. Each group will be required to submit a 3-5 page (12 font, times new roman, standard margins) policy memo, which must be submitted in **electronic copy** through email. The memo will prescribe a policy to deal with the crisis as described. This is a **group assignment** not an individual one. The policy memo will be a preparation for your final crisis simulation exercise, which will take place at the end of the semester. The policy memo will count for **10% of the final grade.**
  6. **On March 27** Students will be required to tackle a "mini crisis" which will prepare you for the final simulation focusing on the politics of the Arab states. Students will receive a simulation, which will be handed out the week before the assignment is due. Each group will be required to submit a 3-5 page (12 font, times new roman, standard margins) policy memo which must be submitted in **electronic copy** through email. The memo will prescribe a policy to deal with the crisis as described. This is a **group assignment**. The policy memo will be a preparation for your final crisis simulation exercise, which will take place at the end of the semester. The policy memo will count for **10% of the final grade.**
  7. **On April 6** each student will be asked to submit in writing (no more than 2 pages, 12 font, standard margins) a book review of Vali Nasr, **The Shia Revival**. Book review due in **hard-copy** in class. The Book Review will count for **10% of the final grade.**
  8. **Final crisis simulation:** As a final exercise of the semester, student will engage in a Middle East crisis simulation in which they will break into teams representing different states in the region. Students will be handed the description of the exercise in advance and will have time to prepare their country's objectives and policies to be acted out during the simulation.
    - a. In preparation for the exercise students will be required to submit a short 1-2 page outline of their country's objectives *in the crisis* and how they plan to achieve those objectives. In addition students will be required to submit their

FIRST MOVE in the simulation. One outline per team needs to be submitted. The country objectives outline must be submitted by **April 24** at noon via email. Country objective outline and first move will count for **15% of final grade**. You will be graded as a team.

- b. Students will be graded on their level of participation during the crisis simulation. Participation will count for **10% of final grade**. You will be graded as a team.
    - Students will be asked to rate each member in their teams in terms of their participation and contribution to team assignments throughout the semester. These ratings will figure into the final individual grade for each participant. This will also ensure no free riding of any member of the team.
    - Students will be asked to submit a 1-2 page post-simulation briefing outlining their moved during the simulation and what objectives that they initially charter out did they actually achieve. This briefing will count for **5% of the final grade**. You will be graded as a team.
  - c. Finally, after the crisis simulation exercise, students will be asked to submit a 5 page summary debriefing their team's role in the crisis and summarizing their stated objectives outlined previously. The briefing should include how groups prepared for the simulation and how that preparation contributed or did not contribute to their success in the simulation. This is a *reflective journal* in which each student individually will be asked to assess their preparation and performance during the simulation. You will be required to reflect on the successes and failures and try and explain, as a matter of policy, why you think you achieved or did not achieved your objectives. This final journal will count for **15% of the final grade** and is due in hard copy to office Hepburn 208 by **May 4**, 5pm. You will be graded individually, each student must submit one journal.
9. Tardiness: all written work must be submitted ON TIME. Only **serious medical reasons** (accompanied by doctor's note) or family illness/crisis will be grounds for extensions. Work that is not submitted on time will be penalized by a 1/3 of a grade for every 24 hours. For example, a policy memo submitted within the first 24 hours after the due date will start from a 3.75 rather than a 4.0 grade, if submitted between 24 and 48 hours of due date, policy memo grade will start from a 3.5. I will not accept work submitted later than 72 after original deadline and will assign a zero for the grade for that assignment.

#### Summary of grading criteria:

- ❖ Participation – 5%
- ❖ Group in-class presentation of country profile – 10%
  - ❖ Quiz – 10%
- ❖ 2 “mini crisis” group policy memo - 10% for a total of 20%
  - ❖ Individual book review – 10%
- ❖ Group Country objectives and first move in simulation – 15%
  - ❖ Participation in simulation – 10%
  - ❖ Group post-simulation debriefing – 5%
  - ❖ Individual Final Reflective Journal – 15%

## Readings

The following books (indicated in **bold** in the Course Outline) should be purchased at the Brewer Bookstore or online:

1. Monte Palmer. The Politics of the Middle East (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (Wadsworth publishing)
2. John L. Esposito. Islam: The Straight Path (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (Oxford Press)
3. Vali Nasr, The Shia Revival (W.W. Norton books)
4. John Esposito, Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam (Oxford University Press, 2002).
5. John Esposito, Who Speaks For Islam: What a Billion Muslims Think (Gallop Press, 2007)

**NOTE** - If the readings are not in your books and there is no online link to the readings, they are available on the course Angel website under **“course materials”** tab.

Current Events: the following are suggestions on where to find current events:

- BBC      <http://news.bbc.co.uk>
- CNN      <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/>
- NYT      <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/index.html>

❖ **For up-to-date country news reports:**

<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/index.html>

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **(19 January): Introduction**

General review of course requirements, expectations, divide into working groups.

Broad discussion of the Middle East region, its characteristics and challenges.

### **(26 January): Comparative Politics and State Building**

- **Palmer:** chapter 1.
- Benedict Anderson, “Imagined Communities,” in *Nationalism* eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford University Press, 1994), 89-96. [On Angel]
- Mark Juergensmeyer, “The New Religious State” in Patrick O’Neil and Ronald Rogowski, *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics* (W.W.Norton, 2006), pp. 37. [On Angel]

### **(February 2): Political Culture and Islam**

- **Esposito:** Islam: The Straight Path, Chapter 2 and 3.
- **Esposito** – who speaks for Islam - what a billion Muslims think – chapter 1
- Edward Said, Orientalism: pp. 1-49; 73-92; 284-328. [On Angel]

### **(February 9): Arab Nationalism and Modernism**

#### **❖ Map and short answer quiz (In class)**

- Francis Robinson, “Islam and Nationalism,” in *Nationalism* eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford University Press, 1994), 214-217.
- Sami Zubaida. “The Nation State in the Middle East.” Islam, The People and The State (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 121-182.
- **Esposito:** Chapter 4 (**excluding** pp. 122-125; 134-141) and chapter 5.
- Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/1* (Vintage, 2006), Prologue and chapter 1: The Martyr, pp. 3-37.

**No class on February 16**

[I am presenting a paper at the International Studies Association (ISA) annual conference]

**(February 23): Islamist Responses to Modernity: Islam, Islamism and Democracy**

- Fared Zakaria, “Islam, Democracy, and Constitutional Liberalism,” Political Science Quarterly (Spring 2004), 1-20.
- Fared Zakaria, “The Politics of Rage: Why do They Hate Us?” Available at: [http://www.fareedzakaria.com/ARTICLES/newsweek/101501\\_why.html](http://www.fareedzakaria.com/ARTICLES/newsweek/101501_why.html)
- F. Gregory Gause III, “Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?” in Robert Art and Robert Jervis ed. *International Politics: Enduring Concepts and Contemporary Issues*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York, Pearson Longman, 2009).
- John Voll, "Islam and Democracy: Is Modernization a Barrier?" Modernization, Democracy, and Islam. Ed. Shireen Hunter and Huma Malik. New York City: Praeger, 2004.
- **Esposito** – who speaks for Islam - what a billion Muslims think – chapter 2
- Marina Ottaway, Amr Hamzawy, “Islamists in Politics: The Dynamics of Participation” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* (December 2008). Available at: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=22540&prog=zgp&proj=zme>

**(March 2) Politics of non-Arab States: Iran and Israel**

Iran

- **Palmer:** chapter 7.
- Vali Nasr. “The New Hegemon,” The New Republic (18 December 2006).
- “Iran,” in The Middle East (CQ Press, 2007)
- Elizabeth Wasserman, “Iran on the Brink,” *The Atlantic* (July 25, 2007). Available at” <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200208u/iran-flashback>
- Jonathan Rauch, “Containing Iran, *The Atlantic* (July 2006) <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200607/rauch>

- James Fallows, “The Nuclear Power Beside Iraq” *The Atlantic* (May 2006), available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200605/fallows-iran>
- Seymour M. Hersh, “Shifting Targets: *The Administration’s plan for Iran.*” *The New Yorker* (Oct. 8, 2007) available at: [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/10/08/071008fa\\_fact\\_hersh?printable=true](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2007/10/08/071008fa_fact_hersh?printable=true)

## Israel

- **Palmer:** chapter 3 (only pp. 87-132)
- “Israel,” in *The Middle East* (CQ Press, 2007)
- Trita Parsi, “Iran and Israel: The Avoidable War,” *Middle East Policy* (Fall 2007).
- Yitzhak Benhorin, “Israel’s international image a far cry from reality.” Available at: <http://www.ynetnews.com/Ext/Comp/ArticleLayout/CdaArticlePrintPreview/1,2506,L-3518434,00.html>
- Gideon Levi, “The Neighborhood Bully Strikes Again” *Haaretz* (December 28, 2008). Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1050459.html>
- “Ahmadinejad tells West: Accept Israel’s ‘imminent collapse’” *Haaretz* (Jan. 30, 2008). Available at: <http://www.haaretz.co.il/hasen/spages/949628.html>
- Barak Ravid, “PM: Israel has strength, might to defend itself against Iran,” *Haaretz* (March 4, 2008). Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/960457.html>

## ❖ **FIRST GROUP POLICY MEMO DUE VIA EMAIL ON MARCH 6.**

### **(March 9): Arab Politics: Egypt and Palestine**

#### Palestinian Authority

- **Palmer:** chapter 3, pp. 133-143.
- “Palestinian Authority,” in *The Middle East* (CQ Press, 2007)
- Hussein Agha and Robert Maley, “ Hamas: The Perils of Power,” *The New York Review of Books*, February 8, 2006. Available at: [http://www.fmep.org/analysis/articles/hamas\\_the\\_perils\\_of\\_power.html](http://www.fmep.org/analysis/articles/hamas_the_perils_of_power.html)
- Zvi Bar’el, “ Hamas Ups The Ante” *Haaretz* (December 28, 2008). Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1050468.html>

- Bernard Avishai and Sam Bahour, “Playing into the hands of Hamas” *Haaretz*, January 10, 2009. Available at: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/ShArt.jhtml?itemNo=1054157&contrassID=2&subContrassID=4&sbSubContrassID=0>
- Steven Le Myers, “The New Meaning of an Old Battle” *NY Times*, January 3, 2009. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/04/weekinreview/04myers.html?emc=eta1>

## Egypt

- **Palmer:** chapter 2.
- “Egypt,” in *The Middle East* (CQ Press, 2007)
- Dr. Abdel Monem Said Aly, “Understanding the Muslim Brothers in Egypt,” *Middle East Brief*, (December 2007). Available at: <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications1/meb/MEB23.pdf>

## **(March 23): Arab Politics: Syria and Lebanon**

### Syria

- **Palmer:** Chapters 4
- “Syria,” in *The Middle East* (CQ Press, 2007)
- Zvi Bar’el, “Isolating Syria Serves to Highlight its Importance,” *Haaretz*, (March, 28, 2008). Available: <http://news.haaretz.co.il/hasen/spages/969518.html>
- Seymour M. Hersh, “A Strike in the Dark: *What did Israel bomb in Syria?*” *The New Yorker* (Feb. 11, 2008). Available at: [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/02/11/080211fa\\_fact\\_hersh?printable=true](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/02/11/080211fa_fact_hersh?printable=true)

### Lebanon

- “Lebanon” in *The Middle East* (CQ Press, 2007)
- Mike Davis, “The Beirut Hilton,” in *Buda’s Wagon: A Brief History of the Car Bomb* (Verso, 2007).
- Robert F. Worth, “Hezbollah Seeks to Marshal the Piety of the Young” *NYT* (November 21, 2008), available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/21/world/middleeast/21lebanon.html?\\_r=2&oref=slogin&ref=middleeast&pagewanted=print](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/21/world/middleeast/21lebanon.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&ref=middleeast&pagewanted=print)

- Ussama Makdisi, “Understanding Sectarianism” in The War on Lebanon, ed. Nubar Hovsepian (Interlink Publishing Group, 2008), 20-27.
- Nubar Hovsepain, “State-Society Relations and the Reproduction of the Lebanese Confessional System,” in The War on Lebanon, ed. Nubar Hovsepian (Interlink Publishing Group, 2008), 28-49.

### ❖ **SECOND GROUP POLICY MEMO DUE VIA EMAIL ON MARCH 27**

#### **(March 30): Iraq and Saudi Arabia**

##### Iraq

- **Palmer:** chapter 6
- “Iraq,” in The Middle East (CQ Press, 2007)
- Noah Feldman, “Indecisive Moments” *New York Times*, april 6, 2008. Available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/06/magazine/06wwln-lede-t.html?ref=middleeast&pagewanted=print>

##### Saudi Arabia

- **Palmer:** chapter 5.
- “Saudi Arabia” in The Middle East (CQ Press, 2007)
- Thomas Hegghammer, “Terrorist Recruitment and Radicalization in Saudi Arabia,” *Middle East Policy* (Winter 2006).
- Gawdat Bahgat, “Saudi Arabia and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process,” *Middle East Policy*, (Fall 2007).

#### **(April 6): the Shia-Sunni Divide**

### ❖ **Book Review: The Shia Revival Due in Class in Hard-Copy**

- **Nasr:** The Shia Revival.
- Dror Zeevi, “The Present Sunni-Shia Divide: Remaking Historical Memory,” *Middle East Brief* (April 2007). Available at: <http://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications1/meb/MEB19.pdf>
- Alissa Rubin, “Iraqi City Poised to Become Hub of Shiite Power,” *NYT*, December 16, 2007. Available at: [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/16/world/middleeast/16najaf.html?\\_r=1&hp=&oref=slogin&pagewanted=print](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/16/world/middleeast/16najaf.html?_r=1&hp=&oref=slogin&pagewanted=print)

- Amal Saad Ghorayeb, “Questioning the Shia Crescent,” 841 *Al-Ahram Weekly* (April 2007). Available at: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/print/2007/841/op122.htm>

**(April 13): Islam and Global Terrorism**

- **Esposito:** Unholy War (entire book)
- **Esposito:** Epilogue (Islam: The Straight Path)
- **Esposito:** who speaks for Islam - what a billion Muslims think – chapter 3
- John Voll. "Bin Laden and the New Age of Global Terrorism." *Middle East Policy* 8.No. 4 (2001).
- The Impact of 9/11 on the Middle East, *Middle East Policy* (December 2002).

**(April 20): Conclusions and Prospects**

**FIRST MOVE IN SIMULATION DUE APRIL 24 BY NOON VIA EMAIL**

- **Esposito:** Chapter 6 and Epilogue.
- Samuel P. Huntington. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993), pp. 22-49.
- Alan Wolfe, “And the Winner Is...” *The Atlantic Monthly*, (March 2008). Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200803/secularism>
- John L. Esposito. "Muslims and the West: A Culture War?" *Islamica Magazine Issue # 14, IslamOnline.net, Wajhat, poll.gallup.com* (2006). Available at: <http://www.unaoc.org/repository/3840Muslims%20and%20the%20West%20A%20Culture%20War,%20J.%20Esposito.doc.pdf>
- Esposito – who speaks for Islam - what a billion Muslims think – chapter 5

**(April 27) Preparation for final crisis simulation – FIRST MOVE IN SIMULATION PLAYED OUT**

**FINAL CRISIS SIMULATION – FRIDAY, MAY 1, 4-8PM – SECOND AND THIRD MOVES.**

**FINAL REFLECTIVE JOURNAL DUE MAY 4, 5PM IN OFFICE H208.**