

# *PLSC 380V: International Politics in the Middle East*

Summer 2015, 05.26.2015 – 06.26.2015, Online Class

**Instructor:** Ihsan Efe Tokdemir - [itokdem1@binghamton.edu](mailto:itokdem1@binghamton.edu)

**Office Hours:** LNG 278, Wednesday 2 pm – 5 pm, and by appointment

Important Note: All students should send a prior message if they plan to come to the office hour for better help.

## **Course Description**

The Middle East is a region where numerous interstate and intrastate conflicts exist. Recent developments as in the case of Arab Spring and the emergence of ISIS have put the region in the priority list again in global political agenda. On the one hand, internal dynamics of the Middle East states have dramatic effects on the regional politics; on the other hand, any conflict emerging in the region has a potential to trigger a global conflict, as well. In light of these, this course aims to enhance students' knowledge about the region in general probing the intertwined structure of domestic and international politics in the region. To do so, this seminar will first explore the internal dynamics of the region benefiting from a historical and social context. Then, we will attempt to find answers to the following questions: Who are the main players in the region, and what do they aim for? What is the role of the region in global politics? Why do external actors deeply involve in regional politics? Why is Middle East more conflict-prone? How could the region become more stable, is it plausible to settle inter and intra-state disputes at all? To answer these questions, we will also focus on the recent developments such as failure of Iraq and emergence of ISIS, Arab Spring, and Israel-Palestine conflict. This way, students will be exposed to a combination of practical and theoretical perspectives on the region and its crucial role in international politics. This course satisfies the International Relations and the upper-level requirement for the Political Science major.

## **Learning Objectives and Outcomes for General Education Requirements**

After completing the course, the students will identify the dynamics that lead to regional and international conflicts, and investigate domestic sources (e.g. institutional structure, ethnic/religious ties) of the inter and intra-state conflict and war in the Middle East.

This course fulfills the “G (Global Interdependencies)”, “N (Social Science)”, and “W (Harpur Writing)” general education requirements.

## **Course Organization**

Course Day 0 – 05.26.2015  
Course Day 1 – 05.27.2015  
Course Day 2 – 05.29.2015  
Course Day 3 – 06.01.2015  
Course Day 4 – 06.03.2015  
Course Day 5 – 06.05.2015  
Course Day 6 – 06.08.2015  
Course Day 7 – 06.10.2015  
Course Day 8 – 06.12.2015  
Course Day 9 – 06.15.2015  
Course Day 10 – 06.17.2015  
Course Day 11 – 06.19.2015  
Course Day 12 – 06.22.2015  
Course Day 13 – 06.24.2015  
Course Day 14 – 06.26.2015

## **Grading**

Discussion Posts: 14 course days, each 3%  
Discussion Answers: 14 course days, each 2%  
Critical Reviews: 3 papers, each 10%  
Bonus: 5%

## **Course Requirements**

The class will meet online. Each student is responsible for completing the readings (around 40-50 pages per course day) prior to the course day, and for contributing to the discussion of the material online. Participation in class discussions (by submitting your discussion posts and discussion answers) is a significant portion of your final grade, so each absence will reduce your participation grade. Please check below for the requirement for class discussions. Aside from class discussions, each student will write three critical reviews, and these should be e-mailed to me, submitted to Turnitin page of the class, as a well-structured Word or PDF document, by 10 pm EST. one day before the course day. Critical reviews should be no shorter than 4 double-spaced pages (ideally 4-5 double spaced pages).

### **1-Discussion Posts** (14\*2=42 points)

Students are asked to make a post everyday under the thread I created, which covers discussion topic for that particular day on the discussion board on the Blackboard. Student posts must not be less than a paragraph of at least 6-8 sentences. The first discussion thread will be the meeting class, and I will give the details of it later. The posts should not be a mere summary of the readings. Rather, students are required to argue a point in critique or response to the reading material. Students can also ask one or two questions that can lead to a good discussion. Please, be concise but substantial in the way you make your argument

Each discussion post will be graded over 3 points.

- Two points – on the quality (showing knowledge and competence on the readings) of the post.
- One point – on the originality (creativity) of the post

Discussion posts should be posted the same day of the class.

### **2-Discussion Answers** (14\*2=28 points)

Apart from making an original post, students are expected to respond to the posts of at least two of their classmates, and, out of courtesy, respond to everybody who responds to them. If students fail to respond other people's posts, then they will fail to get 2 points assigned for this task. If students fail to answer properly (only answering one post, failing to answer to the replies to their original posts, lack of quality in posts, failure to show knowledge they acquire from the readings), then they will get partial points at most.

Each discussion answer will be graded over 1 point

- One point – on the quality (showing knowledge and competence on the readings) and originality (creativity) of students' response to their fellows' original posts
- One point– for students' response to everybody who responds to them.

Discussion posts should be posted the same day of the class.

### ***Discussion Board Participation Policy***

All discussions in this course will be, for the most part, between you and the other class members of this course. Please post and respond in these discussions with thought provoking, honest cordiality; bashing or flaming other class members is inappropriate. Keep the discussions flowing and remember, there are no stupid questions or answers -- all your thoughts are unique to you and your experiences. Also, understand that I will not reply to each of your responses in a discussion. I usually will respond to a few posts

(more, if the discussion gets off topic) and let you, the student, lead the way. To help pace yourself with the discussions, make sure to follow the read, post, and reply schedule listed in each discussion prompt and instructions.

### **Critical Reviews** (3\*10=30 points)

Students will be responsible for writing three critical reviews, no less than 4 double-spaced pages, to the readings of day of their choice. Students should write response papers synthesizing a particular week's readings. The paper will be graded on the basis of quality of the research and the consistency of the argumentation.

To obtain the whole grade on this assignment, students firstly summarize the reading or compilation of the readings very briefly, not more than a paragraph, then discuss the importance of reading from their perspective. In doing so, students are expected to be critical towards the argument the author proposes. Students should be very concise and clear about why they are critical, and how they could improve the value of the article in theoretical sense. Students can also give real life examples to support their ideas. In order to make instructions more clear, I will post an example of critical review in the first week of the class.

Students can write critical reviews any time they want; however, the submission should be one day before the discussion of the reading. To illustrate, for example a student chooses one or a group of article among the readings of Course Day 7 (06.10.2015) to write a critical review, so she/he should do it the day before until 10pm, in this case 06.09.2015. A student cannot write more than one critical review for one week. Late submissions (24 hours late) will be punished with one letter grade. Submission later than 24 hours will not be accepted at all.

### **Bonus**

This is not a required assignment. Any student who would like to get bonus grades (an additional 5% for the final grade) can choose a contemporary topic in the Middle East and write an op-ed, which is 4-5 double-spaced pages at maximum. The op-ed will cover the summary and brief discussion of the topic, explanation how and why it is important for the international politics of the Middle East. These pieces must be original including the author's argument that is supported by the academic readings assigned for the class as well as other articles of big journals such as Foreign Affairs, The Economist etc.

**Deadlines (Late assignments will be punished by one letter grade reduction)**

*Discussion Posts* – Between 1:00 am EST. and 4:00 pm EST

*Discussion Answers* – Between 1:00 am EST. and 11:59 pm EST

*Critical Reviews* – 10 pm EST. on the day before of the course day.

*Bonus* – No deadline, anytime before the last day of the course

**Blackboard and Email**

The course’s Blackboard page will be updated frequently with announcements, readings, and anything else that I need to communicate to you. Please check Blackboard page of the class frequently. Your Binghamton email (or whichever email Blackboard has on file for you) is the address I will use to communicate with you electronically.

***Communication Agreement***

- **For me ...** I will read and respond to all course email/postings at least once a day during normal working days. I usually do most of my evaluation work on the weekends, especially for essays. If you cannot reach me by phone (either my cell or office phone), leave your name and telephone number on my voice mail (indicate a good time to get in contact with you) and I will return your call as soon as possible.
- **For you ...** I expect you to check into our online course area at least 4 times per week for a total of at least 120 minutes. Please do not check in just once per week to play 'catch up' as you will miss valuable, required discussion participation. I will also make all course announcements (assignment updates, etc.) via our online course area, so please, check in often.

**Grading Scale:**

A: 94-100%	A-: 90-93%				
B+: 88-89%	B: 82-87%	B-: 80-81%			
C+: 78-79%	C: 72-77%	C-: 70-71%	D: 65-69%	F: <65%	

## **Books**

- Fawcett, Louise (2013). *International Relations of the Middle East*. Oxford 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (required)
- Richards, Alan and John Waterbury (2007). *Political Economy of the Middle East*. Westview Press 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (recommended)
- Owen, Roger (2004). *State, Power and Politics in the Making of Modern Middle East*. Taylor & Francis 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (recommended)
- Telhami, Shibley (2013). *World Through Arab Eyes*. Basic Books 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (recommended)

## **Tentative Schedule of the Class (Subject to Changes)**

### **Day 0 – 05.26.2015**

#### **Introduction – Meeting**

### **Day 1 – 05.27.2015**

#### **Defining the Middle East, How to Study International Politics of the ME**

- F. Gregory Gause III, (2011). “Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.90 No.44
- R. Adelson (1995). *London and the Invention of the Middle East*. Yale University Press pp.22-26
- L. Anderson (2004). “2003 MESA Presidential Address: Scholarship, Policy, Debate and Conflict: Why we should study the Middle East and Why it matters?” *MESA Bulletin*
- Edward Said (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Random House - *Introduction*

### **Day 2 – 05.29.2015**

#### **Emergence and Evolution of Contemporary Middle East**

- Fawcett (ed.) Intro and Ch. 2, 3, 4.
- Owen (2007). *State, Power and Politics in the Making of Modern Middle East* Ch.1 & 5 (not required)

### **Day 3 – 06.01.2015**

#### **Origins of the Arab – Israeli Conflict**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 12
- Smith, Charles D. (1992) *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. New York: St. Martin’s Press Ch. 1 & 3

#### **Day 4 – 06.03.2015**

##### **Pan-Arabism, Palestinian Nationalism, and the Arab – Israeli Conflict**

- F. Ajami (1978) “The End of Pan Arabism” *Foreign Affairs* 355-373.
- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 9 & 10

#### **Day 5 – 06.05.2015**

##### **Wars in the Middle East**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 12 & 14
- E. Karsh (1990). “Geopolitical Determinism: The Origins of the Iran – Iraq War” *The Middle East Journal*. Vol.44, No.2
- S. Yetiv (1992). “The Outcomes of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm: Some Antecedent Causes” *Political Science Quarterly*. Vol 107, No.2 (not required)

#### **Day 6 – 06.08.2015**

##### **Peace Attempts in the Middle East**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 13
- S. Telhami (2011). “Arab and Israeli Peace Initiatives: A Last Chance for Negotiations” *Middle East Policy*. Vol.18, No.1
- L. Farskash (2011). “The One-State Solution and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Palestinians Challenges and Prospects” *Middle East Journal*. Vol.65, No.1

#### **Day 7 – 06.10.2015**

##### **Modern Warfare in the Middle East: Iraq and Terrorism**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 15
- T. Dodge (2005) “Iraqi Transition: from regime change to state collapse” *Third World Quarterly*. Vol. 26, No.4

#### **Day 8 – 06.12.2015**

##### **Iran: Domestic Politics, Regional Balance and Nuclear Issue**

- Kaye, Dassa, Frederic Wehrey and Michael Doran (2011) Arab Spring, Persian Winter: Will Iran Emerge the Winner From the Arab Revolt. *Foreign Affairs*, July/August
- Edelman, Eric Andrew Krepinevich and Evan Montgomery (2011). The Dangers of A Nuclear Iran. *Foreign Affairs* 90(1) pp.66-81
- Waltz, Kenneth (2012) Why Iran Should Get the Bomb: Nuclear Balancing Would Mean Stability. *Foreign Affairs* 91(4) p.2

- Ehteshami, Anoushiravan and Raymond Hinnebusch (1997) *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System*. New York: Routledge Ch. 5 and 6.

## **Day 9 – 06.15.2015**

### **Democracy and the Middle East**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 6
- L. Diamond (2010). “Why are there no Arab democracies?” *Journal of Democracy*. Vol.21, No. 1
- E. Bellin (2004). “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective” *Comparative Politics*. Vol. 36, No. 2
- Tessler, Mark (2002). Islam and Democracy in the Middle East: The Impact of Religious Orientations on Attitudes toward Democracy in Four Arab Countries. *Comparative Politics* 34(3) pp.337-354

## **Day 10 – 06.17.2015**

### **Oil and Economy in the Middle East**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 5
- M. Ross (2001). “Does oil hinder democracy?” *World Politics*. Vol.53
- Herb, Michael (2005). “No Representation without Taxation? Rents, Developments, and Democracy” *Comparative Politics* pp.297-316

## **Day 11 – 06.19.2015**

### **Arab Spring – Why and How?**

- Tufekci, Zeynep and Christopher Wilson (2012) Social Media and the Decision to Participate in Political Protest: Observations From Tahrir Square. *Journal of Communication*, 62:2 pp.363-379
- Anderson, Lisa (2011). Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. *Foreign Affairs* 90(3).
- Hinnebusch, Raymond (2012) Syria: From “Authoritarian Upgrading” to Revolution? *International Affairs*

## **Day 12 – 06.22.2015**

### **Arab Spring – Success and Failure**

- Kahf, Mohja (2014) The Syrian Revolution, Then and Now. *Peace Review* 26(4) pp.556-563
- Bellin, Eva (2012) Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the



Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring. *Comparative Politics* 44(2) pp.127-149

- Lynch, Mark (2013). *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the new Middle East*. New York: PublicAffairs. Ch.6

### **Day 13 – 06.24.2015**

#### **The U.S. and the Middle East**

- Fawcett (ed.) Ch. 16
- Bush, Sarah S. and A. A. Jamal. (2015) Anti-Americanism, Authoritarian Politics, and Attitudes about Women’s Representation: Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Jordan. *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol.59

### **Day 14 – 06.26.2015**

#### **Anti – Americanism in the Middle East**

- Katzenstein, Peter J., Robert O. Keohane eds. (2007). *Anti-Americanism in World Politics*. Cornell University Press. Ch. 1 & 4
- Blaydes, L., & Linzer, D. A. (2012). “Elite Competition, Religiosity, and Anti-Americanism in the Islamic World”. *American Political Science Review*, 106(2)
- Corstange, D., & Marinov, N. (2012). Taking Sides in Other People’s Elections: The Polarizing Effect of Foreign Intervention. *American Journal of Political Science*, 56(3), 655-670.

#### **Disability Accommodation**

Disability-related Equal Access Accommodations – Students wishing to request academic accommodations to insure their equitable access and participation in this course should notify the instructor as soon as they are aware of their need for such arrangements. Authorizations from Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) are generally required. We encourage you to contact SSD at (607) 777-2686 to schedule an appointment with the Director or Learning Disabilities Specialist. Their website ([www.binghamton.edu/ssd](http://www.binghamton.edu/ssd)) includes information regarding their Disability Documentation Guidelines. The office is located in UU – 119.

#### **Plagiarism**

Binghamton University expects all students to do their own work, and to acknowledge the work of others when presenting their work. The Binghamton University Student Academic Honesty Code, published in the University Bulletin, defines academic

dishonesty as involving the “misappropriation of academic or intellectual credit to oneself or to the discredit of others,” including plagiarism, cheating on examinations and quizzes, multiple submissions, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication and misrepresentation, forgery, sabotage, and bribery. Plagiarism specifically includes any incident of presenting someone else’s work as your own—including work that you pay someone else to do for you. The Student Academic Honesty Code is published in the University Bulletin, and is available online:

[http://buweb.binghamton.edu/bulletin/program.asp?program\\_id=703](http://buweb.binghamton.edu/bulletin/program.asp?program_id=703)

### **What is Plagiarism?**

Presenting the work of another person as one’s own work (including papers, words, ideas, information, computer code, data, evidence-organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else taken from the Internet, books, periodicals or other sources). Plagiarism includes:

1. Quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgement, even a few phrases;
2. Failing to acknowledge the source of either a major idea or ordering principle central to one’s own paper;
3. Relying on another person’s data, evidence or critical method without credit or permission;
4. Submitting another person’s work as one’s own;
5. Using unacknowledged research sources gathered by someone else.

### **Make-up assignments**

Plan on attending every class and turning in assignments on time. There will be no make-up assignments given in this class, barring extreme circumstances. Should scheduling conflicts arise, discuss them with me as soon as possible, and before they happen.

### **Tentative nature of this syllabus**

This syllabus is presented as a guideline for the course only. I reserve the right to change any part of it when I believe it becomes necessary, and I can almost guarantee you that it will. Changes will be announced and a revised syllabus will be posted on Blackboard. You must keep up with the changes to the syllabus.