

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY
PARDEE SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES**

**INTRODUCTION TO MIDDLE EAST POLITICS
TOPICS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
CAS IR 300 A1**

Professor Noora Lori
nlori@bu.edu

Fall 2014

MWF 10:00am-11:00am

Classroom: CGS 115

Office Hours: 152 Bay State Road, G04B Wednesdays 1-3pm, and by appointment.

Course Description and Objective:

This course provides an introductory overview of the comparative politics of the Middle East since World War I.

The political development of the Middle East has long puzzled political scientists. Large-scale comparative studies have repeatedly found a positive relationship between capitalist economic development and democracy. The assertion that economic liberalization would lead to political liberalization was supported by the political developments of the late twentieth century. In 1974, there were 40 democracies in the world, most of them concentrated in the West. By 1990, there were 76 electoral democracies, growing to 117 by 1995. Democracy ceased to be a mostly Western phenomenon and took on global dimensions with a ‘third wave’ of political liberalizations.

This global trend, however, appeared to miss one critical part of the globe—the Middle East—which has come to be seen as a region marked by “enduring authoritarianism.” In response, over the past two decades, scholarship on democratization has largely focused on explaining the deviation posed by the “Arab democracy deficit” or the problem of Muslim “democratic underachievers.” The existing literature has thus been preoccupied with explaining the emergence, resilience, and variety of authoritarian regimes in the region.

In the span of the last five years, however, widespread popular movements have toppled long-standing authoritarian regimes in places like Tunisia and Egypt and have led to serious challenges and intransigent violence in places like Syria. Meanwhile, Islamist political parties—long forced underground or banned under secular dictatorships—have begun to dominate the electoral scene. How do we explain these current transformations and conflicts?

The objective of this course is to enable students to contextualize and explain the current

political climate by tracing the roots of these contestations and conflicts to the longer history of state formation and state building in the region. Accordingly, the course is divided into two parts: the ‘making’ and ‘unmaking’ of Middle Eastern states.

The first half of the course will begin by briefly surveying the rise and decline of empires that shaped modern state-formation in the region. Students will be asked to consider how colonial legacies continue to impact territorial disputes and conflicts in the Middle East. What makes the region so susceptible to external intervention—why is it so geopolitically and economically important? What explains the variety and durability of authoritarianism in the region?

In the second half of the course, students will focus more sharply on the ongoing struggles to reshape Middle Eastern states. How do economic policies (like social welfare provisions or privatization) impact demands for political participation and mobilization? Why have various Islamist political movements come to represent the strongest forces demanding reform, government accountability, and democracy in the region? Finally students will analyze the popular movements sweeping the region since January 2011, and critically assess how well competing social science theories are able to explain and contextualize these changes. The main objective of the course is to supply students with the theoretical skills and empirical evidence necessary to evaluate and develop their own arguments about contemporary politics in the Middle East.

Required Readings:

The following two books are required for class and available for purchase from the University Bookstore or online:

Esposito, John L. *Islam and Politics*. Fourth Edition. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1998.

Gelvin, James. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. Second Edition. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

All other readings will be available on the course blackboard site or the library’s course reserves website <http://www.bu.edu/library/sel/services/reserve/>.

Assignments:

Participation/Notecards: (15%)

Active participation will account for a large proportion of the final grade. This means not only coming to classes and actively participating in class discussions, but also turning in a daily file card (directions below). If you do not turn in a file card, you will be marked as absent for that class session. Students may have three absences without any penalty.

After the third absence, you will be docked 5 points from the final class grade.

File-Card Requirement

1. At the beginning of each class (except on days when the short paper is due, you are giving your presentation, or exams are given) please turn in, in person, a 3 x 5 white file card with your name and the date on one side. On the other side of the file card, please include from the day's readings (1) one quotation, noting the author and page number, and (2) one comment on why your quotation raises an important issue. Make sure that your writing is legible and that your quotation and comment fits on one side of a single file card.
2. You may not turn in a file card if you do not attend class, or turn in a file card for anyone else, under any circumstances.
3. File cards will not be returned to you, but each will be recorded as satisfactory (check) or good (check plus) according to how carefully and thoughtfully it was done. At the end of the semester each student will get a class participation grade that will be largely based on the file card marks.

Map Quiz: (5%)

The objective of this early map quiz is to familiarize students with the geography of the region. State boundaries are particularly important for understanding how current fault-lines and tensions emerged out of the region's state formation. The quiz will be closed to books, notes, and all electronic equipment (laptops, smart phones, tablets etc.).

Short Paper 1: (10%)

The first short paper assignment is designed to help students identify the main arguments and supporting evidence of a text and make a succinct argument using evidence from the readings and lecture. It will serve to familiarize students with the type of essay questions they should expect on the midterm and final exams. The main purpose of this assignment is to enable students to receive critical feedback on their comprehension, writing, and argumentation skills prior to the formal examinations. The short paper should be 3 pages long (700-750 words).

Presentation/Handout: (15%)

This assignment aims to develop students' communication and language skills in order to plan and deliver an effective presentation. Students will sign up for individual presentations covering the readings for one class session at the beginning of the semester. The presentation will consist of an oral presentation (10 minutes) and a 2-page handout that will be circulated to the rest of the class. The handout should outline the readings for that session and one additional page (optional) may be added to include any supplementary information (such as pictures or maps) that can facilitate the class discussion.

Examinations: Midterm (25%) Final (30%)

The midterm exam will cover the first part of the course (weeks 1-7) and the final exam will cover the second part of the course (weeks 8-15). Review sessions will be held in class prior to each exam. The exams will cover the material from the lectures and readings. The exams will be closed to books, notes, and all electronic equipment (laptops, smart phones, tablets etc.).

Evaluation breakdown:

- Participation/notecards 15%
- Map quiz 5%
- Short paper 1 10%
3 pages (700-750 words)
- Oral Presentation/Handout 15%
10 min presentation
2-page handout
- Midterm exam 25%
Part 1: Covers weeks 1-7
- Final exam 30%
Part 2: Covers weeks 8-15

Please note that late assignments will be docked a full grade per day.

Academic Integrity:

There is a zero-tolerance policy for cheating and plagiarism. Please review the BU academic code of conduct carefully: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>

PART 1: THE 'MAKING' OF MIDDLE EASTERN STATES

No classes on Monday, September 1

WEEK 1: WHAT IS THE "MIDDLE EAST"?**Class 1, Wednesday, September 3: Course Overview**

No readings

Class 2, Friday, September 5: Inventing the concept of the 'Middle East'

Roger Adelson, "British and U.S. Use and Misuse of the Term, 'Middle East,'" in *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, edited by Michael E. Bonine, Michael Gasper, and Abbas Amanat (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011): pgs 36-55 (blackboard)

WEEK 2: THE MAKING OF THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST: EARLY PERIOD**Class 3, Monday, September 8: The Rise and Fall of Empires**

Michael Gasper, "The Making of the Modern Middle East." In Ellen Lust (Ed.) *The Middle East* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011): *Read only* 1-25 (blackboard)

Recommended: Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, pgs. 1-32

*****Map Quiz*****

Class 4, Wednesday, September 10: Foreign Powers and Defensive Development

Gelvin, *Modern Middle East*, pgs. 1-12, 69-87

Class 5: Friday, September 12: Imperialism

Gelvin, *Modern Middle East*, pgs. 88-99

WEEK 3: THE 'INVENTION' OF THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST: EUROPEAN INTERVENTION AND STATE-FORMATION

Class 6: Monday, September 15: State-formation by Decree

Gelvin, *Modern Middle East*, pgs. 171-185

David Fromkin. "How the Modern Middle East Map Came to be Drawn." In *Smithsonian* (May 1991): 166-170. (Blackboard)

Clive Irving, "Gertrude of Arabia, the Woman who invented Iraq." In *The Daily Beast* (June 17, 2014): 1-6. (Blackboard)

Class 7: Wednesday, September 17: State-formation by Revolution and Conquest

Gelvin, *Modern Middle East*, pgs. 186-196.

Class 8: Friday, September 19: Spread of Nationalism and State-Building

Gelvin, *Modern Middle East*, pgs. 197-205

Gasper, "The Making of the Modern Middle East," pgs. 38-63. (blackboard)

WEEK 4: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF STATE-BUILDING

Class 9: Monday, September 22: Foundations of the State

Abbas Kelidar, "States without Foundations: The Political Evolution of State and Society in the Arab East" in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 28 (2), (2009): 315-355. (Blackboard)

Class 10: Wednesday, September 24: The Role of the State

Alan Richards and Richard Waterbury, "The Emergence of the Public Sector" in *Political Economy of the Middle East*, CO: Westview Press, 3rd edition, (2008): 179-210. (Course reserves)

Class 11: Friday, September 26

No readings

****Assignment 1: Due****

WEEK 5: AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST: VARIATIONS

Class 12: Monday, September 29: Institutions and Regime-Types

Ellen Lust, "Institutions and Governance" in Ellen Lust (Ed.) *The Middle East* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011): 143-192. (Course reserves)

Class 13: Wednesday, October 1: Monarchies

Russell Lucas, "Monarchical Authoritarianism: Survival and Political Liberalization in a Middle Eastern Regime Type." *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no.1 (2004): 103-119. (Blackboard)

Class 14: Friday, October 3: Electoral Authoritarianism

Rachid Tlemcani, "Electoral Authoritarianism" *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Op-ed, (May 29, 2007): 1-3. (Blackboard)

Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "Multi-Party Elections in the Arab World: Institutional Engineering and Oppositional Strategies," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, vol. 36, no. 4, (December 2002): 34-62. (Blackboard)

WEEK 6: AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST: COMPETING EXPLANATIONS (1)

Class 15: Monday, October 6: Islam, Culture, and Regime-type

Fish, M. Steven. "Islam and Authoritarianism." *World Politics* 55, no. 1 (2002): 4-37. (Blackboard)

Class 16: Wednesday, October 8: Critique of Political Culture approach

Lisa Anderson, "Democracy in the Arab World: A Critique of the Political Culture Approach." In *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World: Comparative Experiences*, eds. Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany, and Paul Noble. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1995): 77-92. (Blackboard)

Class 17: Friday, October 10: The promise and limitations of Civil Society

Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Civil Society as Social Control: State Power in Jordan," *Comparative Politics*, 33 (1) (2000): 43-61. (Blackboard)

Week 7: AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE MIDDLE EAST: COMPETING EXPLANATIONS (2)

****Note: There will be no classes on Monday Oct 13****

Make-up Class 18: Tuesday, Oct 14: Oil

Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53(3) (April 2001): 325-361. (Blackboard)

Class 19: Wednesday, Oct 15: Militaries and Foreign Intervention

Bellin, Eva. "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East." *Comparative Politics* 36 (January 2004): 139–57. (Blackboard)

Amaney Jamal, Chapter 1, in *Of Empire and Citizens: Pro-American Democracy or No Democracy at All?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012): 1-36. (Blackboard)

Class 20: Friday, Oct 17: Midterm Review

No readings

WEEK 8: MIDTERM EXAM & TRANSITION TO PART 2:

Class 21: Monday, October 20: Midterm Exam

No Readings

PART 2: THE 'UN-MAKING' OF MIDDLE EASTERN STATES

Class 22: Wednesday, October 22: Documentary: "The Square"

No Readings

Class 23: Friday, October 24: Documentary: "The Square"

No Readings

WEEK 9: STATES AND ISLAM: VARIETIES OF ISLAMIC STATES

Class 24: Monday, October 27: Political Islam—Revival and Reform

Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, Chapter 2 (pgs. 33-38, 43-54, 58-61) and Chapter 3 (pgs. 62-78).

Class 25: Wednesday, October 29: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, Chapter 4 (pgs. 99-116).

Class 26: Friday, October 31: The Islamic Republic of Iran

Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, Chapter 3 (pgs. 84-89) Chapter 4 (pgs. 126-131) Chapter 5 (196-220).

WEEK 10: STATES AND ISLAM: SECULARISM VS. ISLAMISM

Class 27: Monday, November 3: State Exhaustion and Islamist Critiques

Khoury, "Islamic Revivalism and the Crisis of the Secular State," in I. Ibrahim (ed.) *Arab Resources* (CCAS, 1983): 212-234. (Blackboard)

Class 28: Wednesday, November 5: Political Exclusion and Parallel Institutions

Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, pgs. 136-148.

Carrie Wickham, "The Parallel Islamic Sector" in *Mobilizing Islam: Religion, Activism, and Political Change in Egypt*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002): 93-118 (Blackboard)

Class 29: Friday, November 7: Parallel functions: Welfare Provision

Steven Brooke, "Doctors and Brothers," *Middle East Report* 269 (Winter 2013): 2 pgs. (Blackboard)

Melani Cammett and Sukriti Issar, "Bricks and Mortar Clientelism: The Political Geography of Welfare in Lebanon." In *World Politics* 62, no. 3 (July 2010): 381-421. (Blackboard)

WEEK 11: THE ISLAMIST ALTERNATIVES: DOES INCLUSION LEAD TO MODERATION?

Class 30: Monday, November 10: Egypt

Mona El-Ghobashy. "The Metamorphous of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers." In *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 3 (August 2005): 373-395. (Blackboard)

Class 31: Wednesday, November 12: Iran

Arang Keshavarzian, "Contestation without Democracy: Elite Fragmentation in Iran." In *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*, edited by Martha Posusney and Michelle Angrist (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2005): 63-90. (Blackboard)

Class 32: Friday, November 14: Overview: Can Islamists become moderates?

Jillian Schwedler, "Can Islamists Become Moderates?" *World Politics* 63, no. 2, (April 2011): 347-376. (Blackboard)

WEEK 12: THE ARAB SPRING AND REGIONAL TRANSITIONS: CASE STUDIES (1)

Class 33: Monday, November 17: Overview of the Arab Spring

Gregory F. Gause. "Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability." In *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011): 7 pgs. (Blackboard)

Melani Cammett and Ishac Diwan, "Toward a Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings", *Jadaliyya*, (2013): Read part 1 + part 2, 12 pgs. (Blackboard)

Tobias Thiel, "The Middle East Despot's 13-Point Guide to Longevity and Prosperity." In *Middle East Report*, no. 269, (Winter 2013): 1 pg. (Blackboard)

Class 34: Wednesday, November 19: Tunisia

Nadia Marzouki, "Tunisia's Wall Has Fallen." *Middle East Research and Information Project*, (Jan 19, 2011): 3 pgs. (Blackboard)

Amy Aisen Kallander, "Tunisia's Post-Ben Ali Challenge: A Primer." *Middle East Research and Information Project* (Jan 26, 2011): 4 pgs. (Blackboard)

(Background) Christopher Alexander, "Authoritarianism and Civil Society in Tunisia: Back from the Democratic Brink." In *Middle East Report* no. 205 (1997): 4 pgs. (Blackboard)

Rikke Hostrup Haugholle and Francesco Cavatorta. "Beyond Ghannouchi: Islamism and Social Change in Tunisia." In *Middle East Report* no. 262 (Spring 2012): 20-25. (Blackboard)

Class 35: Friday, November 21: Egypt

Mona El-Ghobashy, "The Praxis of the Egyptian Revolution." In *Middle East Report* no. 258 (Spring 2011): 7 pgs. (Blackboard)

Hesham Sallam, "Striking Back at Egyptian Workers." In *Middle East Report* no. 259 (Summer 2011): 4 pgs. (Blackboard)

Shana Marshall and Joshua Stacher, "Egypt's Generals and Transnational Capital." In *Middle East Report* no. 262 (Spring 2012): 5 pgs. (Blackboard)

Andrea Teti, Vivienne Matthies-Boon, Gennaro Gervasio, "Sisiphus" *Middle East Research and Information Project* (June 10, 2014): 3 pgs. (Blackboard)

WEEK 13: THE ARAB SPRING AND REGIONAL TRANSITIONS: CASE STUDIES (2)

Class 36: Monday, November 24: Bahrain and the GCC

Ronald Neumann, "Bahrain: A Very Complicated Little Island" *Middle East Policy Council*, Volume XX, Number 4, (Winter 2013). (Blackboard)

Frederic M. Wehrey, "Part 1: The Roots of Sectarianism" in *Sectarian Politics in the Gulf: From the Iraq War to the Arab Uprisings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014): 1-38. (Blackboard)

Bernard Haykel, "Saudi Arabia and Qatar in a Time of Revolution" *Gulf Analysis Paper*, Center for International and Strategic Studies, (February 2013): 1-8. (Blackboard)

**** Thanksgiving Break: No classes Wednesday and Friday****

WEEK 14: REGIME-CHANGE, INTERNAL STRIFE AND FOREIGN INTERVENTION: CASE STUDIES (1)

Class 37: Monday, December 1: Libya

Christopher Chivvis, "Libya's Downward Spiral." *Foreign Policy* (September 13, 2012): 10 pgs. (Blackboard)

Lisa Anderson, "Rogue Libya's Long Road." In *Middle East Report*, no. 241, (Summer 2014): 4 pgs. (Blackboard)

Watch: Al-Jazeera Documentary, "Libya: Through the Fire" available on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUSyypEjn9E> (47 min).

Class 38: Wednesday, December 3: Syria

Bassam Haddad, "Introduction" in *Business Networks: The Political Economy of Authoritarian Resilience* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012): 1-22. (Blackboard)

Bassam Haddad, "The Current Impasse in Syria: Interview with Haytham Manna" Transcribed and translated by Ziad Abu-Rish, *Jadaliyya*, (April 27, 2012): 1-17. (Blackboard)

Kheder Khaddour and Kevin Mazur, "The Struggle for Syria's Regions." In *Middle East Report*, no. 269 (Winter 2013): 6 pgs. (Blackboard)

Class 39: Friday, December 5: Iraq

Toby Dodge, "Maps" and "Introduction: Assessing the Future of Iraq", in *Iraq: From War to a New Authoritarianism* (New York: Routledge, 2012): 10-31. (Blackboard)

WEEK 15: REGIME-CHANGE, INTERNAL STRIFE AND FOREIGN INTERVENTION: CASE STUDIES (2)

Class 40: Monday, December 8: The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (IS)

Dodge et al. "Iraq between Maliki and the Islamic State" *Project on Middle East Politics Briefing* (July 9, 2014): 1-38.* (Blackboard)

**This reading may be supplemented or replaced closer to the date of the assignment in response to the changing political situations in Iraq and Syria*

Class 41: Wednesday, December 10: Final Exam Review

No Readings

Final Exam: December 17, 2014 from 9:00-11:00am.