

**BOSTON UNIVERSITY
PARDEE SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES**

**THE UNITED STATES IN THE MIDDLE EAST
CAS IR 503/ PO 570**

PROFESSOR NOORA LORI
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Spring 2015

Wednesdays, 1:00-4:00pm

Classroom: SED 208

Office Hours: 152 Bay State Road G04B, Thursdays 2-4pm, and by appointment.

Course Description and Overview:

In this graduate seminar students will examine the United States' engagement with the region that has increasingly dominated U.S. foreign policy since WWII—the Middle East.

The course will be divided into two parts. In the first half of the course, students will study the extent of the U.S.'s involvement in the Middle East by addressing competing explanations about the determinants of U.S. policies in the region. What is the breadth and depth of the U.S.'s material, economic and cultural penetration of the region? What is the extent of the U.S. military presence in the region? Does military power translate into the capacity to influence policies and steer political and economic development? We will examine the politics of democracy promotion in the region, debating the extent to which these initiatives are driven by strategic interests or a commitment to spreading liberal values. We will address the strategic interests that the U.S. has in the region—including securing access to oil, maintaining a balance of power by preventing the rise of a hostile power, and ensuring the security of Israel. Students will explore how the definition of strategic interests and assessments about how best to pursue them are, in practice, shaped by cultural and ideological constructions, domestic political factors and lobby groups, and the actions of transnational non-state actors such as private firms, NGOs and the media.

In the second half of the course, students will examine some of the unintended consequences of U.S. intervention in the Middle East. How have non-state groups used political Islam to critique the 'American Empire' and U.S. intervention in the wider Muslim world? What is the history of Islamic radicalization against the United States and how is it (both empirically and rhetorically) connected to U.S. policies since the Cold War era? Finally, how should the 'legitimate' actors of our current world system (nation-states and international organizations) respond to the growing threat of 'illegitimate' but increasingly salient non-state groups?

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 the contemporary relationship between the United States and the Middle East. Students will critically engage with a range of theoretical and empirical works on U.S. policies in the Middle East, and be guided through the planning and execution of an original and comparative research project.

Required Readings:

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

Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945, 3rd edition* (The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill: 2008).

Michael Mann, *Incoherent Empire* (Verso, London: 2003).

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

ASSIGNMENTS:

Participation/Notecards: (10%)

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 two absences without penalty. **With the third unexcused absence, you will be docked 5 points from the final class grade. No exceptions.**

File-Card Requirement

1. At the beginning of each class 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 Quizzes: 15%, 2 quizzes: Map #1 (5%) and Map #2 (10%)

Students will have to take two map quizzes for this course.

In the first map quiz, students will be asked to identify the countries that are part of the Middle East and North Africa on a map. The objective of the first 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 process.

In the second map quiz, students will be asked to identify the US military presence in the Middle East and its vicinity. Students will be required to identify (and distinguish between) the locations of all US air force, army, marine, and naval bases in the region. The objective of the second map quiz is to familiarize students with the level of US military penetration in the region.

Both quizzes will be closed to books, notes, and all electronic equipment (laptops, smart phones, tablets etc.).

Presentation: Oral presentation and handout (10%)

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 (or partner) presentations covering the readings for one class session at the beginning of the semester. The presentation will consist of an oral presentation (15 minutes) and a handout on the week's topic. Students are encouraged to use images and video clips to help illustrate the stakes of the week's readings to the class. The handout can include key terms, maps, or historical timelines (2 pages).

Short written assignment (15%)

The 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 consist of responding to a prompt that requires a comprehensive analysis of several weeks of reading, like an essay question from a midterm or final exam. The main purpose of this assignment is to enable students to receive critical feedback on their comprehension, writing, and argumentation skills prior to undertaking the longer written assignment. The short paper should consist of no more than 5 pages (12 font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins).

Research Paper: research design (5%), rough draft (5%), peer review comments (5%), and final paper (35%)

Students will be guided through the research and writing process. Each will choose his or her own individual research project in consultation with the professor. Papers must be comparative in scope and focus on cases drawn from the themes covered in class. The comparative method and case selection criteria will be discussed in class. Appropriate primary data sources and secondary sources will also be discussed in class.

The final research project accounts for a large proportion of the final grade and students will be evaluated in four parts:

First, students will turn in a research design midway through the course. Bring two copies of the research design to class, as one will go to the professor and another will go to your assigned 'writing partner' (or group). Students will read each other's research designs and provide written comments (to be shared with the professor).

Second, students will turn in a full (rough) draft of the final research paper before the end of the semester. Bring two copies of the rough draft to class and share one with your writing partner (or group).

Written comments on the research design and rough drafts will be graded for how thoughtful and helpful they are to your peers.

Finally the final draft of the research project is due during the final exam time for the course (**12:30pm, May 9, 2015, no exceptions**). For **undergraduate students** papers must be between **18-20 pages long**, for **graduate students** papers must be between **23-25 pages long** (Times New Roman, 12 font, 1 inch margins).

Evaluation breakdown:

• Participation/notecards	10%
• Map quiz #1	5%
• Map quiz #2	10%
• Oral Presentation/handout	10%
• Short Paper	15%
• Individual Research Project	50%
<i>Research Design</i>	5%
<i>Rough Draft</i>	5%
<i>Peer Review Comments</i>	5%
<i>Final Paper</i>	35%

Please note that all late assignments will be docked a full grade per day. No exceptions.

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/>

WEEK 1: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2015: INTRODUCTION
Syllabus & Introductions

WEEK 2: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2015: WHAT IS 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.
- David Fromkin. “How the Modern Middle East Map Came to be Drawn.” In *Smithsonian* (May 1991): 166-170.
- Michael Gasper, “The Making of the Modern Middle East.” In Ellen Lust (Ed.) *The Middle East* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2011): (1-64)

*****Map quiz #1: National boundaries of Middle East and North Africa*****

WEEK 3: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2015: WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE U.S. IN THE MIDDLE EAST? DEBATING EMPIRE

- Bernard Lewis “The Revolt of Islam: A New Turn in a Long War with the West,” *New Yorker*, (Nov. 19, 2001): (28 pgs).
- Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America’s Empire*, (Penguin Press, NYC: 2004) (Introduction: 1-29).
- Michael Mann, *Incoherent Empire*, (Verso, London: 2003) (Introduction: 1-17). [hereafter Mann]
- Ussama Makdisi ““Anti-Americanism” in the Arab World: An Interpretation of a Brief History,” *Journal of American History*, (September, 2002), pp. 538-557.

WEEK 4: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2015: DOES MILITARY POWER = STRENGTH? MAKING SENSE OF 9/11 & ITS AFTERMATH

- Mann, Chapters 1-4, (18-122).
- Michael Ignatieff, “The Burden,” *New York Times*, January 5, 2003 (14 pgs).
- Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, (Verso, London: 2004) (Preface: xi-XXI).

*****Map quiz #2: US military presence in the Greater Middle East*****

WEEK 5: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015: SPECIAL GUEST LECTURE: IMPACT OF SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS ON LEBANON AND EGYPT: PROF DENIS SULLIVAN & MS. RIMA RASSI

- **Professor Denis Sullivan is the Director of the Boston Consortium for Arab Region Studies (BCARS) and a Professor of Political Science at Northeastern University**
- **Ms. Rima Rassi is the senior program coordinator of international affairs and refugee research at the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs and an instructor in the Department of Sociology at the American University of Beirut.**

- Denis Sullivan and Jaime Jarvis, “Syria’s Humanitarian Crisis: A Call for Regional and International Responses” *Boston Consortium for Arab Region Studies (BCARS)* Jan 2015.
- Denis Sullivan and Sarah Tobin, “Security and Resilience Among Syrian Refugees in Jordan” *Middle East Research and Information Project Report* MER 273 (Oct 2014).
- Noah Bonsey, “What Obama Doesn’t Understand about Syria” (Nov 2014) <http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/11/26/what-obama-doesnt-understand-about-syria/>
- Watch documentary: “Syria’s Second Front” *Frontline*, PBS <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/syrias-second-front/>

I: DETERMINANTS OF U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST: COMPETING EXPLANATIONS

WEEK 6: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2015: WHAT DRIVES U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST? THE POLITICS OF DEMOCRACY-PROMOTION

- Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Price of America’s Empire*, (Penguin Press, NYC: 2004) (Chapter 5 “The Case for Liberal Empire”: 169-200).
- Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” *American Anthropologist*, 104 (3): 783-790.
- Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East Since 1945, 3rd edition* (The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill: 2008) (Chapter 1: “Orientalism, American Style: The Middle East in the Mind of America”: 9-42). [hereafter Little]
- Amaney Jamal, *Of Empire and Citizens: Pro-American Democracy or No Democracy at all?* (Princeton University Press, Princeton: 2012) (Introduction and Chapter 1: 1-40).
- Fawaz Gerges, *American and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 2009) (Chapter 1: 1-19).

WEEK 7: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015: WHAT DRIVES U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST? OIL

- David Painter, “Oil and the American Century,” *Journal of American History* (June 2012): 24-39.
- Little, “Chapter 2: Opening the Door: Business, Diplomacy, and America’s Stake in Middle East Oil” (43-76).
- McAlister, “King Tut, Commodity Nationalism, and the Politics of Oil, 1973-79” in *Epic Encounters* (California, 2005) (125-40).
- Toby Craig Jones, “America, Oil, and War in the Middle East,” *The Journal of American History* (2012) 99 1: 208-218.
- Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*, (Verso: 2011) (Introduction: 1-11).

****No class on Wednesday, March 11, 2015—Spring Break****

WEEK 8: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015: WHAT DRIVES U.S. POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST? LOBBY GROUPS, PUBLIC OPINION, & POLITICAL CULTURE

- Little, “Chapter 3: The Making of a Special Relationship: America and Israel” (77-116).
- Norton, “U.S. Presidents in the Arab-Israeli Conflict” in Boston Study Group on Middle East Peace, *Israel and Palestine: Two States for Two Peoples, If Not Now, When?* (Assigned reading: pgs 57-75; *recommended reading—whole study*).
- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “The Israel Lobby,” *London Review of Books* (23 March 2006): 3-12.
- Mitchell Bard, “The Arab Lobby: The American Component,” *Middle East Quarterly* (Fall 2010): 13 pgs.
- Walter Russell Mead, “The New Israel and the Old,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2008): 28-46.
- Kiera Feldman, “The Romance of Birthright Israel,” *The Nation* July 4, 2011, (plus Letters)
- Martin Kramer, “The American Interest,” *Azure*, (Autumn 2006): 21-33.

Recommended reading:

- Abdel Monem Said Aly, Shai Feldman, and Khalil Shikaki, *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and Peacemaking in the Middle East* (Palgrave MacMillan, New York: 2013).

*****Research designs due*****

II: U.S. INTERVENTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST: UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

WEEK 9: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015: THE COLD WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- Little, “Chapter 4: A Tale of Four Doctrines: U.S. National Security, the Soviet Threat, and the Middle East” (117-156).
- Peter Sluglett, “The Cold War in the Middle East” in Louise Fawcett (ed), *International Relations of the Middle East*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 2009) (44-60).
- Douglas Little, “Mission Impossible: The CIA and the Cult and Covert Action in the Middle East,” *Diplomatic History*, (November 2004), (663-701).
- Nick Cullather, “Damming Afghanistan: Modernization in a Buffer State,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 89, No.2, (Sep. 2002) (512-537).
- Bruce Jentleson, “The Reagan Administration and Coercive Diplomacy,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 106, No. 1 (Spring, 1991) (57-82).

- William Shephard, “Sayyid Qutb’s Doctrine of ‘Jahiliyya’” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4, (Nov. 2003) (521-545).
- Ann M. Lesch, “Osama Bin Laden: Embedded in the Middle East crises,” *Middle East Policy*, (June 2002) 9 2: 82-92.
- Robert Fisk, “Anti-Soviet warrior puts his army on the road to peace: The Saudi Businessman who recruited mujahedin now uses them for large-scale building projects in Sudan,” *The Independent* (6 December 1993).

*****Essay 1 question will be handed out*****

WEEK 10: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015: THE U.S. AND EGYPT: MILITARY SUPPORT

- Little, “Chapter 5: Sympathy for the Devil? America, Nasser, and Arab Revolutionary Nationalism” (157-192).
- Gerges, “Chapter 8: Egypt” (171-191).
- Jason Brownlee, *Democracy Prevention: The Politics of the U.S.-Egyptian Alliance* (Cambridge University Press: 2012), (Introduction-Chapter 2: 1-68).
- Shana Marshall and Joshua Stacher, “Egypt’s Generals and Transnational Capital.” In *Middle East Report* no. 262 (Spring 2012): 5 pgs.

*****Essay 1 Due*****

WEEK 11: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015: US-IRAN RELATIONS: REVOLUTION, IRAQ-IRAN WAR, “AXIS OF EVIL”—WITH GUEST LECTURER DR. KEVAN HARRIS

- **Dr. Kevan Harris is a Sociologist and Associate Director of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies at Princeton University**
- Little, “Chapter 6: Modernizing the Middle East: From Reform to Revolution in Iraq, Libya, and Iran” (193-228).
- Patrick Tyler, *A World of Trouble* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux: 2008) “Chapter 6: Carter and the Shah: Khomeini’s Revolution” and “Chapter 8: The Iran-Contra Affair: The Clash of Saudi and Israeli Influence”, (210-248; 308-352).
- Gerges, “Chapter 4: The Carter, Regan, and Bush Administrations’ Approach to Islamists” (59-85).
- Jack Colhoun, “Washington Watch: How Bush Backed Iraq,” *Middle East Report*, No. 176, Iraq in the Aftermath (May-June 1992) (35-7).
- Ray Takeyh, “A Time for Détente with Iran,” *Foreign Affairs* (Mar/Apr 2007): 17-32.
- Eric S. Edelman and others, “The Dangers of Nuclear Iran: The Limits of Containment,” *Foreign Affairs* (Jan./Feb. 2011): 66-81.
- Saeed Kamali Dehghan, “Iran acknowledges US is willing to reach nuclear agreement” (21 January 2015) <http://www.theguardian.com/world/iran-blog/2015/jan/21/iran-us-nuclear-agreement-hassan-rouhani-tehran>

Talks to attend:

-Keynote lecture of the “Youth in Contemporary Muslim Societies” Conference (Trustees Ballroom, April 8, 5-8pm)

-Guest Lecture: Bilal Malik, April 9, 11am-12:30pm SMG 220

WEEK 12: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015: THE GULF WARS

- Little, “Chapter 7: Kicking the Vietnam Syndrome: Waging Limited War from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf” (229-266).
- Little, “Chapter 9: Not Your Father’s Persian Gulf War: The Bush Doctrine, Iraq, and Radical Islam” (307-342).
- Amy Gershkoff and Shana Khusner, “Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration’s Rhetoric,” *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Sept. 2005): (525-537).
- Alex Callinicos, “Iraq: Fulcrum of World Politics,” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 26. No. 4/5 (2005) (593-608).
- 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 13: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015: NO CLASS (BU MONDAY SCHEDULE)

- *****Rough Drafts Due via email to writing partner and nlori@bu.edu*****

WEEK 14: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015: THE ‘ARAB SPRING,’ ISIS, AND A SHIFTING REGIONAL ORDER

- Melani Cammett and Ishac Diwan, “Toward a Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings”, *Jadaliyya*, (2013): Read part 1 + part 2, 12 pgs.
- Gregory F. Gause. “Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring: The Myth of Authoritarian Stability.” In *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011): 7 pgs.
- Barak Obama, “Moment of Opportunity: American Diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa,” State Department, May 19, 2011.
- Adam Hinds, “Six ways for the U.S. to reset relations in the Middle East,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 23, 2011.
- Ryan Lizza, “How the Arab Spring remade Obama’s foreign policy,” *New Yorker*, 5/2/2011.
- Dodge et al. “Iraq between Maliki and the Islamic State” *Project on Middle East Politics Briefing* (July 9, 2014): 1-38.

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

*****Peer Review Comments Due*****

*****Final Research paper due at time of final exam: 12:30pm on May 9, 2015. Full letter grade drop after due time and each day thereafter. No exceptions*****