

PSC 311 Politics of the Middle East

Section 01

Fall 2014

Course Location: 314 Forsyth **Course Time:** TR: 2:00-3:15
Instructor: Dr. Sievert **E-mail:** jmsievert@email.wcu.edu
Office Location: 347 Stillwell **Office Hours:** MW 1:00-3:00pm, or by apt.

Course Overview

This course is an introduction to the contemporary politics of the Middle East. The class will examine the interplay of various factors that helps us better understand and critically analyze the Middle East. These themes include the development of the state and stability of authoritarian regimes, the role of religion and secularism in politics, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, terrorism and war, oil, and the Arab Spring. By the completion of this course students will have developed an understanding of the various political science theories and empirical analyses that will provide the student with a solid foundation for understanding the politics of the region.

This class is not a history lecture, but rather a discussion of the existing research and dynamic exchange of ideas. Therefore, students are encouraged to be active participants in discussions as well as to form and express individual arguments and opinions in an open, collaborative learning environment. This course will provide students with the skills to think critically about current trends in Middle Eastern politics as well as evaluate and examine politically difficult situations and events.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students can expect to be able to:

- Identify broad trends in the political, social, and economic development of the Middle East.
- Critically evaluate existing explanations for current trends in the politics of the Middle East.
- Develop evidence based arguments for explaining current issues facing the region.

Course Materials

The required text for this course is *The Middle East, 13th Edition*, Lust, Ellen. 2014. Sage Publications: Washington DC. The text is available for rental through the campus bookstore. All readings from this text will be denoted as “Lust” on the Course Schedule.

A History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 6th Edition, Bickerton, Ian J. and Carla L. Klausner. 2010. Prentice Hall Publications: New York, NY is a recommended text and it is

available for purchase through the campus bookstore. All readings from this text will be denoted as “B& K” on the Course Schedule.

All other readings for the course will be posted on the class Blackboard site and are denoted with * on the Course Schedule.

Course Requirements

Grades will be calculated based on three key components.

Position Papers and Debate

After each section we will conduct a debate centered on an empirical observation occurring in the Middle East, grounded in the theories and arguments we have discussed. Each student will write a 2 to 3 page position paper in response to a prompt given by the instructor. Position papers must be printed out and submitted at the beginning of class. Emailed and/or late assignments will not be accepted. An outline for the position papers will be discussed in class and posted on the course Blackboard site. Position papers will be worth 50% of the final grade (10% each) and debate participation will be worth 5% of the final grade.

During the first week of class students will sign up for two sessions where they will be part of the group leading the debate. Students will prepare a short opening argument, questions for the opposing side, responses to potential questions from the opposing side, and a concluding argument. Students not leading the debate are expected to participate and contribute to the debate.

Essays and Assignments

Throughout the semester students will be complete three assignments; one in class assignment, and two short essays in response to questions posed by the instructor. Essays will be 3 to 4 pages and must be printed and submitted at the beginning of class on the days that they are due. Essay questions will be distributed the week before the due date and must include a works’ cited page. Each assignment will be worth 10% of the final grade, for a total of 30%.

In-Class Participation and Online Discussion

Active, engaged discussion is integral to understanding the major issue in the Middle East and North Africa. Active in-class participation in discussions and debates will be recorded.

We will also utilize an online component for discussion of current issues and events. In addition to the assigned readings, students are expected to keep up with the news and current events in the Middle East, which we will discuss in a closed group on Facebook. By Wednesday of each week students will post a news article on a current event, and pose a question for fellow students to answer. Each student will also comment on at least two articles posted by other students by Sunday evening. Therefore, each student will have at least three posts per week (one article with question, two comments on other articles).

If you do not currently have a Facebook account, you can create a profile solely for the purpose of this course. You do not need to provide any information in the Facebook account (or even use your real name!) and you can delete the account immediately after the course

concludes. If you choose not to use your real name, you must email the instructor so your posts will be counted. The group link will be posted on the Blackboard site and emailed to students during the first week of class. You must join the group by Friday August 22. Once all students have joined the group, it will be set to “secret” so your posts will be private and no one but the members of the group can see what is posted.

Participation both in-class and online will be worth a total of 15%.

If you are not familiar with following news in the Middle East and North Africa there are number of good outlets to read. I suggest you read from a variety of sources to get a good sense of what is going on. Below are some recommendations. You do not need to use these sources exclusively (or at all), but your posts must come from reputable news sources.

Al-Jazeera English <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/>

Al-Monitor A web-only news source focusing mainly on Egypt, the Gulf, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Turkey

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/home.html>

BBC International http://www.bbc.com/news/world/middle_east/

Haaretz Left-leaning Israeli news source. <http://www.haaretz.com/>

Jerusalem Post A Center-Right Israeli news source. <http://www.jpost.com/>

NY Times <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>

Course Policies

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Western Carolina University is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. Students who require reasonable accommodations must identify themselves as having a disability and/or medical condition and provide current diagnostic documentation to Disability Services. All information is confidential. Please contact the Office of Disability Services for more information at (828) 227-3886.

Academic Integrity Policy

“I will practice personal and academic integrity”, WCU Community Creed.

Western Carolina University strives to achieve the highest standards of scholarship and integrity. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a serious offense because it threatens the quality of scholarship and undermines the integrity of the community. Any violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct (see dsce.wcu.edu for more information).

Violation of the Academic Integrity Policy include:

Cheating: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

Plagiarism: Representing the words or ideas of someone else as one's own in any academic exercise.

Fabrication: Creating and/or falsifying information or citation in any academic exercise.

Facilitation: Helping or attempting to help someone to commit a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy in any academic exercise (e.g. allowing another to copy information during an examination).

As a faculty member I reserve the right to determine the appropriate sanctions for violations of the Academic Integrity Policy, including a final grade of "F" in the course. Students will be notified, in writing, of any Academic Integrity Policy allegation and have the right to respond to the allegation. The full text of the WCU Academic Integrity Policy, Process, and the Faculty Reporting Form can be found online at academicintegrity.wcu.edu.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be in class, on-time, and prepared. Therefore, I will take attendance regularly. I do understand that you as students have lives, responsibilities, and demands on your time outside of the classroom and may have to miss class. However, your success in the course depends in large part on class attendance. After three absences final grades will be affected. Students are responsible for any material they miss when absent from class.

Communication

It is important to stay in contact with your fellow students and your instructor. I will hold regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays and can also be reached Monday through Friday via email. Please come see me, or email me, with any questions or concerns you have as they arise. The semester moves along very quickly, and it is always best to come to me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the end of the semester to let me know if you have questions.

Classroom Technology Policy

Please do not text, talk on cell phones, Skype, listen to music, or otherwise disrupt the class. Students are permitted to take notes on computers, however if using a computer you will be asked to sit toward the back as to not distract others.

Student Support Services

Student Support Services provides support to students who are either first-generation, low-income or those who have disclosed a disability with: academic advising, mentoring, one-on-one tutorial support, and workshops focused on career, financial aid and graduate school preparation. You may contact SSS at (828) 227-7127 or email sssprogram@wcu.edu for more information. SSS is located in the Killian Annex, room 138.

Red Zone Campaign

Western Carolina University supports its campus community members in their right to healthy, happy, consensual relationships and is dedicated to developing a culture of respect and non-violence. Early in the first and second year at college, students enter the “Red Zone”, where they are more at-risk for unwanted sexual experiences on college campuses. And, according to NCHA 2013 data, 16.0% of WCU men and women indicated being in an emotionally, physically, or sexually abusive relationship in the past 12 months. As a result, the Red Zone Campaign encourages and empowers students, faculty, and staff to develop an open dialogue on the dangers of sexual violence and to speak up when they see violent behavior occurring. If you notice red flags in yours or a friend’s relationship, are experiencing violence or have in the past, you have a number of resources available to you:

- Counseling and Psychological Services (828.227.7469 or counselingcenter.wcu.edu)
- REACH of Macon County services in Jackson County (828.586.8969 or www.reachofmaconcounty.org)

To report a crime, please contact University Police at 828.227.8911 (Emergency line).

For more information, please visit redzone.wcu.edu or contact Sarah Carter at sacarter@wcu.edu.

Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC)

The Writing and Learning Commons (WaLC), located in BELK 207, provides free small-group course tutoring, one-on-one writing tutoring and academic skills consultations, and online writing and learning resources for all students. All tutoring sessions take place in the WaLC or in designated classrooms on campus. To schedule tutoring appointments, log in to TutorTrac from the WaLC homepage (<http://walc.wcu.edu>) or call 828-227-2274. Distance students and students taking classes at Biltmore Park are encouraged to use Smarthinking and the WaLC’s online resources. Students may also take advantage of writing tutoring offered at the Biltmore Park campus on certain days of the week; call 828-227-2274 or log in to TutorTrac and select “Biltmore Park Writing Tutoring” for availabilities.

Grading and Quality Point System

A+	97-100	Excellent	4.0
A	94-96	Excellent	4.0
A-	90-93		3.67
B+	87-89		3.33
B	84-86	Good	3.0
B-	80-83		2.67
C+	77-79		2.33
C	74-76	Satisfactory	2.0
C-	70-73		1.67
D+	67-69		1.33
D	64-66	Poor	1.0
D-	60-63		.67
F	0-59	Failure	0

Course Schedule

I reserve to change or alter the syllabus at any time. Students will be notified through in-class announcements, e-mail, and notifications on Blackboard.

Week	Topic	Date	Reading
1	Introduction	8/19	
		8/21	Lust, Ch.1 p.1-38
2		8/26	Lust, Ch.1 p.39-72
		8/28	In Class Assignment 1, Bring Textbook
3	Institutions	9/2	Lust, Ch.3 p.107-137
		9/4	Lust, Ch.3 p. 137-160
4		9/9	Bellin, "Robustness of Authoritarianism"*
	<i>Recommended Readings</i>		<i>Jordan (Lust, Ch. 15)</i>
			<i>Yemen (Lust, Ch. 26)</i>
		9/11	Debate 1, Position Paper 1 Due
5	Oil & Economy	9/16	Lust, Ch.4 p. 161-180
		9/18	Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?"*
6		9/23	Salehi-Isfahani, "Education, Jobs, and Equity"*
		9/25	Debate 2, Position Paper 2 Due
	<i>Recommended Readings</i>		<i>Persian Gulf States (Lust, Ch. 21)</i>
			<i>Saudi Arabia (Lust, Ch. 22)</i>
7	Israel-Palestinian Conflict	9/30	Lust, Ch. 7 p.287-313
			B&K, Documents 2-1 through 2-11
		10/2	Lust, Ch.7 p.314-366
8		10/7	B&K, Ch. 10
		1/9	B&K, Ch. 11, "Is Peace Possible?"
			Assignment 2 Due
9	Fall Break	10/14	No Class
		10/16	No Class
10		10/21	B&K, Ch. 14
	<i>Recommended Readings</i>		<i>Israel (Lust, Ch.14)</i>
			<i>Palestinian Authority (Lust, Ch.20)</i>
		10/23	Debate 3, Position Paper 3 Due
11	Advising Day	10/28	No Class
	Terrorism	10/30	Kydd & Walter, "Strategies of Terrorism"*
12		11/4	Bin Laden, "Fatwa"*
		11/6	Sprinzak, "Three Models of Religious Violence"*
	<i>Recommended Readings</i>		<i>Iraq (Lust, Ch. 13)</i>
			<i>Lebanon (Lust, Ch. 17)</i>
			Assignment 3 Due
13	Social Change	11/11	Lust, Ch. 2
		11/13	Anderson, "Authoritarian Legacies"*
			Tripp, "The Politics of Resistance"*
14		11/18	Zubaida, "Women, Democracy, & Dictatorship"*
	<i>Recommended Readings</i>		<i>Egypt (Lust, Ch. 11)</i>
			<i>Libya (Lust, Ch. 18)</i>
			<i>Tunisia (Lust, Ch. 24)</i>
		11/20	Debate 4, Position Paper 4 Due

Week	Topic	Date	Reading
15	Religion & Society	11/25	Lust, Ch. 5
	Thanksgiving	11/27	No Class
16		12/2	Blaydes & Linzer, "Political Economy of Women's Support for Fundamentalist Islam"*
	<i>Recommended Readings</i>		<i>Iran (Lust, Ch.12)</i>
			<i>Turkey (Lust, Ch. 25)</i>
		12/4	Debate 5, Position Paper 5 Due