

**Political Science 5125-101**  
**Readings and Research in Comparative Politics:**  
**THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST**

Fall 2008

Tuesday 6:00 -- 9:00 pm, Old Library Classroom Bldg. 13

Dr. Ryan

Office: OLCB 2055

Phone: 262-6348

E-mail: [ryanc@appstate.edu](mailto:ryanc@appstate.edu)

Office hours: Tues. 3-5:00 p.m., Wed. 10:00-11:45 a.m., and by appointment

Course Description

The course examines key issues and scholarly works in the study of modern Middle East politics. We will focus largely on works examining the comparative politics and international relations of the Middle East. But since Middle East Studies -- like all regional studies -- is an inherently inter-disciplinary field, we will be reading not only the work of political scientists, but also historians, religious studies scholars, and others. During the semester, we will be reading and discussing the entire gamut of hot topics, including: the Western impact on the creation of the modern Middle East, the politics of state-building and national identity, Islam and politics, women's rights, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Islamist and jihadist movements, the crisis of Afghanistan, questions of democracy and authoritarianism, and the international relations and foreign policies of key Middle East states, such as Israel, Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria.

Required Books

R. Stephen Humphreys, *Between Memory and Desire: The Middle East in a Troubled Age* (University of California Press, 1999).

James L. Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

John L. Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (University of Washington Press, 2001).

Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, eds. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States* (Lynne Rienner Press, 2002).

Marwan Muasher, *The Arab Center: The Promise of Moderation* (Yale University Press, 2008).

### Requirements, Grading, and Deadlines

The class operates on a seminar format, meaning that it is entirely discussion-based. You are expected to have read the assigned readings before each class, and come to the session with questions, ideas, and topics to discuss. Grading for the class is based on the following:

- 25% 10 page research essay on an issue in the domestic politics of a particular Middle Eastern country. Deadline: Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, by noon.
- 10% 4 page book review and presentation. Books will be chosen from the list of additional readings. Deadlines vary.
- 25% 10 page foreign policy analysis of one of the country's we will not cover in detail in class. Deadline: Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, by noon.
- 15% Active and constructive class participation.
- 25% Final Exam: Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 6:00 – 8:30 pm.

### Current Issues and Media Sources

I expect you to keep up with key issues and events in Middle East politics throughout the semester. To do so, you should utilize major news sources with a global focus. Major English-language news sources include the newspapers *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* in the U.S. and in Britain *The Independent*, *The Guardian*, and *The Times*. The most extensive coverage is often found in the *BBC online*. You should also make use of major Middle East media from within the region itself, to get often more extensive coverage and also to get a sense of local Middle Eastern approaches to the politics and issues of the day. The sources listed below are all in English, and tend to represent very different views. These links are, respectively, from the Persian Gulf Emirate of Qatar, the Kingdom of Jordan, the State of Israel, and the Islamic Republic of Iran:

Al-Jazeera: <http://english.aljazeera.net>

Jordan Times: <http://jordantimes.com>

Ha'aretz: <http://www.haaretz.com>

Tehran Times: <http://www.tehrantimes.com>

## Blogs

There are many blogs in Middle Eastern studies, but I am recommending two in particular. The first is the Abu Aardvark blog of Dr. Marc Lynch (George Washington University) and the second is that of Dr. Juan Cole (University of Michigan):

Abu Aardvark:

<http://abuaardvark.typepad.com/>

Juan Cole's "Informed Comment":

<http://www.juancole.com/>

## ASU policies on students with disabilities

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <http://www.ods.appstate.edu/> or 828-262-3056. Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

## Student Conduct

The university's academic integrity policy can be found at the Office of Student Conduct web site: <http://studentconduct.appstate.edu/>.

## **Weekly Topics and Assigned Readings**

Aug. 26

Introduction: Political Science and Middle East Studies

Sep. 2

State Formation and the Political Development of the Modern Middle East

Readings:

Stephen Humphreys, *Between Memory and Desire*, chs. 1-5

David Romano, "Conducting Research in the Middle East's Conflict Zones," *PS:*

*Political Science & Politics* 34 (3) July 2006: 439-441.

Sep. 9  
Islam and Politics

Readings:

Humphreys, *Between Memory and Desire*, chs. 6-10  
 Jillian Schwedler, "The Third Gender: Western Female Researchers in the Middle East,"  
*PS: Political Science & Politics* 34 (3) July 2006: 425-428.

Additional Readings:

Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya*.  
 Laurie Brand, *Women, the State, and Political Liberalization*.  
 Fatima Mernissi, *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's  
 Rights in Islam*.

Sep. 16  
The Israel-Palestine Conflict

Readings:

James Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, pp. 1-143  
 Janine Clark, "Field Research Methods in the Middle East," *PS: Political Science &  
 Politics* 34 (3) July 2006: 417-422.

Additional Readings:

Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, *The Crystallization of the Arab State System. 1945-54*.  
 Malcolm Kerr, *The Arab Cold War: Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir and His Rivals*.

Sep. 23  
The Arab-Israeli Conflict and Peace Process

Readings:

Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict*, pp. 144-273  
 Sheila Carapico, "No Easy Answers: The Ethics of Field Research in the Arab World,"  
*PS: Political Science & Politics* 34 (3) July 2006: 429-431.

Additional Readings:

Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967*.  
 Simona Sharoni, *Gender and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Politics of Women's  
 Resistance*.

Sep. 30  
Militant Islamist Movements, Jihad, and Terrorism

Readings:

John Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*  
 Curtis Ryan, "Islamist Political Activism in Jordan: Moderation, Militancy, and Democracy," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 12 (2) June 2008: 1-13.  
<http://www.merijournal.com/en/asp/journal/2008/june/ryan/1.pdf>

Additional Readings:

Quintan Wiktorowicz, *The Management of Islamic Activism: Salafis, the Muslim Brotherhood, and State Power in Jordan.*  
 Fawaz Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad went Global.*

Oct. 7  
The Tragedy of Afghanistan

Readings:

Larry Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*

Additional Readings:

Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West.*  
 Mahmoud Mamdani, *Good Muslim, bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror.*

\* First Research Essays Due: Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, by noon \*

Oct. 14  
Lecture: The Middle East and the 2008 U.S. Election

6:30 pm in room 114 in the new Belk Library

Fall Break: Oct. 16-19<sup>th</sup>

Oct. 21

The Middle East Regional System and Israeli Foreign Policy

Readings:

Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, chs. 1-4, 6

Additional Readings:

Michael Barnett, *Dialogues in Arab Politics: Negotiations in Regional Order*.

Oct. 28

The Foreign Policies of Turkey and Iran

Readings:

Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, chs. 13 & 14

Kerem Oktem, "Harbingers of Turkey's Second Republic," *Middle East Report Online*

(MERO): <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero080107.html>

Hilal Elver, "Lawfare and Wearfare in Turkey," *Middle East Report Online*

(MERO): <http://www.merip.org/mero/interventions/elverINT.html>

Farideh Farhi, "Iran's 'Security Outlook,'" *Middle East Report Online*

(MERO): <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero070907.html>

Additional Readings:

James Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of US-Iranian Relations*.

Charles Kurzman, *Iran: The Unthinkable Revolution*.

Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam will Shape the Future*.

Nov. 4

The Foreign Policies of Egypt and Saudi Arabia

Readings:

Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, chs. 5, 9 & 15

Lisa Anderson, "Absolutism and the Resilience of Monarchy in the Middle East,"

*Political Science Quarterly* 106 (1) 1991: 1-15.

Samer Shehata and Joshua Stacher, "Boxing in the Brothers," *Middle East Report Online*

(MERO): <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero080807.html>

Additional Readings:

Michael Herb, *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle East Monarchies*

Eberhard Kienle, *A Grand Delusion: Democracy and Economic Reform in Egypt*

Nov. 11

The Foreign Policies of Jordan and Syria

Readings:

Hinnebusch and Ehteshami, *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, ch. 7

Ryan, "Jordan: The Politics of Alliance and Foreign Policy," in Jeanne A. K. Hey, ed., *Small States in World Politics: Explaining Foreign Policy Behavior* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Press, 2003), pp. 135-155.

Ryan, "The Odd Couple: Ending the Jordanian-Syrian 'Cold War,'" *Middle East Journal* 60 (1) Winter 2006: 33-56.

Eyal Zisser, "Bishar al-Assad: In or out of the New World Order?" *Washington Quarterly* 28 (3) 2005: 115-131.

Additional Readings:

Marc Lynch, *State Interests and Public Spheres: The International Politics of Jordan's Identity*.

Lisa Wedeen, *Ambiguities of Domination: Politics, Symbols, and Rhetoric in Contemporary Syria*.

Eyal Zisser, *Commanding Syria: Bashar al-Asad and the First Years in Power*.

David Lesch, *The New Lion of Damascus: Syria Under Bashar al-Asad*.

Nov. 18

Arabs, Israelis, and the Middle East Peace Process

Readings:

Muasher, *The Arab Center*, pp. 1-133

Ryan and Schwedler, "Return to Democratization or New Hybrid Regime?: The 2003 Elections in Jordan," *Middle East Policy* 11 (2) 2004: 138-151.

Additional Readings:

Rashid Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America's Perilous Path in the Middle East*

\* Second Research Essays Due: Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, by noon \*

Nov. 24

No Class Meeting (Middle East Studies Association conference meeting)

Dec. 2

Arabs, Israelis, and the Middle East Peace Process

Readings:

Muasher, *The Arab Center*, pp. 134-290

Marc Lynch, "Taking Arabs Seriously," *Foreign Affairs*, Sept./Oct. 2003.

Additional Readings:

Marc Lynch, *Voices of the New Arab Public: Iraq, al-Jazeera, and Middle East Politics Today*.

Larry Diamond, *Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq*.

Dec. 9

The Future of Middle East Studies. Political Science, and Politics

Readings:

Joel Beinin, "Middle East Studies After September 11," Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Presidential Address, 2002;

Lisa Anderson, "Scholarship, Policy, Debate and Conflict: Why We Study the Middle East and Why it Matters" MESA Presidential address, 2003;

Laurie Brand, "Scholarship in the Shadow of Empire," MESA Presidential Address, 2004.

*Final Exam: Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 to 8:00 pm*