

**Political Science 389I: Politics of the Modern Middle East
Spring 2020 Monday/Wednesday/Friday
1:10 – 2:10 PM Engineering Building R15**

Instructor: Dr. Jeremy Berkowitz

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Office Hours: Monday 3:30-5:30 PM LNG 77 and by appointment

Course Description

The 22 countries located in the geographic region commonly referred to as the Middle East and North Africa have had, and will likely continue to have, significant impacts on the politics and daily lives of the rest of the world. This course offers students an introduction to contemporary Middle Eastern politics and government. Students will learn about the history, geography, society, and economy of these nations, and how they have contributed to the modern political outcomes we observe today. Since these countries have complex relationships with each other and the broader world, understanding how their political systems developed and function will offer insights on a diverse array of subjects in international relations, ranging from natural resource production to state sponsored terrorism.

Course Materials

There are two required textbooks for this class, which are available through the Binghamton University Bookstore or online through alternative sources.

Michelle Angrist (editor). 2019. *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East*, 3rd Edition. Lynne Rienner, Colorado. ISBN 13: 9781626378056

Roger Owen. 2006. *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 3rd Edition. Routledge, London and New York. ISBN 13: 97804150297141

All other course readings will be posted on the "Content" Mycourses tab by Noon (EDT) the day before they are assigned. You will also be able to find the majority of these readings through the library.binghamton.edu journals tab. You are strongly encouraged to complete all readings, and a thorough understanding of these readings will be required for participation credit and crafting appropriate response papers.

Course Objectives and Components

1) Participation (20 Percent of overall grade): This class is an upper-level course, and students will be expected to fully complete each week's readings and regularly attend class. The course is divided into multiple distinct sections, typically within one week. Each class session will include between one and two readings, and students will be expected to have completed the assigned readings prior to the beginning of each class, and be able to engage with the material on a substantive level during in-class discussion. Your participation will be evaluated based on your attendance, as indicated by sign-in sheet that will be available at the beginning of each class. You will not be required to attend all class sessions, but full participation will require you to attend at least 80% of all sessions.

Please Note: Due to the often-times sensitive and emotional content matter of a class on conflict, I strongly encourage students to be aware of and sensitive towards each other's personal experiences and opinions on the subject. If at any time you feel uncomfortable with the direct of the discussion, either inform the class or send me a private message. Any statements or actions that occur in class that violate the Student Conduct Code will result in the appropriate response from myself and the University.

2) Geography Assignment (10 Percent of overall grade): This assignment is intended to introduce students to basic techniques of conducting empirical research, as well as provide you with geographical information about countries in the Middle East and North Africa. This assignment is due February 10th. Your paper is expected to conform to university standards of grammar, citation, and other compositional requirements. One week prior to the due date of the assignment, you will be given a numbered map of the region. You must submit a paper (11 or 12 point font, double-spaced) that provides the names and capitals of each country, as well as a brief paragraph describing an important economic, political, or social characteristic. This research must be conducted using reputable sources such as course materials, the Political Handbook of the World, or the CIA World Factbook. The characteristics must demonstrate a minimal level of research effort and consideration. **You are required to turn these papers in via the relevant Turn-it-in assignment on Mycourses, as well as through a physical copy submitted in-class.**

3) Response Papers (30 Percent of overall grade): You will be required to turn in a total of two (2) three to four-page papers (11 or 12 point font, double-spaced) over the course of the class. The first paper is due February 26th, and the second paper is due April 1st. The papers are expected to conform to university standards of grammar, citation, and other compositional requirements. One week prior to the due date of each assignment, you will be given a series of prompts broadly relating to the material we have covered thus far. You are to select one of these prompts and respond to it, demonstrating awareness of the various topics covered in the class, arguments made by various authors, and empirical evidence that supports your own response. **You are required to turn these papers in via the relevant Turn-it-in assignment on Mycourses, as well as through a physical copy submitted in-class.** I will return comments on these papers within two course weeks of the response paper due date.

4) Final Paper Proposal: You will be required to turn in a brief (one page double spaced) proposal for your Final Paper. This assignment is due March 20th. This proposal should detail a question you wish to investigate relating to the Politics of the Middle East, as well as an outline of your theoretical answer to the question. Proposals which I am confident will assist you in successfully completing the Final Paper will receive a "pass" in the assignment. If I am not confident your proposal will assist you in completing your final paper, you will receive instructions on how to make adjustments, thereby having your grade changed to "pass." **You will be required to turn the Research Paper Proposal in via the relevant Turn-it-in assignment on Mycourses, as well as a physical copy submitted in-class.** I will return comments on these proposals within two course weeks of the due date.

5) Final Paper (40 Percent of Overall Grade): **Your final paper is due via the relevant Turnitin assignment on Mycourses, as well as a physical copy submitted in-class, on May 4th.** The paper is required to be between ten (10) and fifteen (15) pages long, at least 11 point font, double spaced, and conform to university standards of grammar, citation, and other compositional requirements. The Final Paper will present a research question relating to the politics of the Middle East, propose a clear and well-reasoned argument that answers that question, and provide viable, but preliminary, empirical tests that will offer support for or against your argument. Case studies, formal modeling, and statistical

analysis are all valid forms of empirical testing, although the techniques behind formal modeling and statistical analysis will not be taught in this class, and I do not encourage students to attempt these if they have not had prior training and experience. Students are strongly encouraged to use Binghamton University's digital book and journal collections, as well as other academically valid sources obtained outside of University facilities, in collecting literature and answering their question. A vital step to completing this research project is writing a serious and well-thought out Final Paper Proposal. Discussing your paper with me in person during office hours is strongly encouraged.

Grade Breakdown

20% (Participation) + 10% (Geography Assignment) + 30% (Response Papers) + 40% (Final Paper) = 100%

Grading

Letter Grades will be determined as follows:

A = 93 and above

B = 83-86

C = 73-76

F = 59.9 and below

A- = 90-92.9

B- = 80-82.9

C- = 70-72.9

B+ = 87-89.9

C+ = 77 – 79.9

D = 60-69.9

Academic Honesty

All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity and will be held to the code of conduct established in the Binghamton University Rules of Conduct and Academic Honesty Policy. Ignorance of the relevant rules pertaining to academic honesty is not a justifiable excuse. If you have not, please review these rules through Binghamton.edu if you have any questions, and complete the library's tutorial on Academic Honesty that is available through the Library tab on your Mycourses home page.

Late Assignments and Extensions

This class follows guidelines set out by the Binghamton University Rules of Conduct for late assignments and extension requests. If the assignment is not submitted and an extension was not granted, the student's grade on that assignment will be penalized based on standard university practices. If there is a valid reason for a student to receive an extension on an assignment, the student in question is required to provide written, properly composed letters requesting an extension at least 24 hours prior to the due date of the assignment. Medical extensions are allowed, but require a note from a medical practitioner. Extensions are given on a case-by-case basis, and invalid or inappropriate extension requests will not result in the student receiving an extension.

Disability Related Equal Access Accommodation Statement

Students wishing to request academic accommodations to ensure their equitable access and participation in this course should notify the instructor by the second week of class. 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) includes information regarding their Disability Documentation Guidelines. The office is located in UU – 119.

Please Note: In order to ensure a timely SSD accommodation, it is highly encouraged to speak with me a least one week prior to the needed accommodation.

Assignments

Week 1: Introduction (January 22nd, January 24th)

January 22nd: Review Syllabus, come to class with questions

January 24th: Angrist Chapter 1

Week 2: Colonialism and Post-Colonialism (January 27th, January 29th, January 31st)

January 27th: Owen Chapter 1

January 29th: Owen Chapter 2

January 31st: Angrist Chapter 3

Week 3: Arab and Non-Arab States (February 3rd, February 5th, February 7th)

February 3rd: Owen Chapter 3

February 3rd: Add/Drop Deadline

February 5th: Owen Chapter 4

February 7th: Owen Chapter 5

Week 4: Politics and Economics in the Middle East (February 10th, February 12th, February 14th)

February 10th: Angrist Chapter 4

Geography Assignment Due

February 12th: Ncube Mthuli, John Anyanwu, and Kjell Hausken. 2014. "Inequality, Economic Growth, and Poverty in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)" *African Development Review*, Vol. 26 (3): 435-453.

February 14th: Angrist Chapter 5

Week 5: Oil and Power (February 17th, February 19th, February 21st)

February 17th: Beblawi, Hazem 1987. "The Rentier State in the Arab World" *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 9 (4): 383-398.

February 19th: Colgan, Jeff. 2014. "Oil, Domestic Politics, and International Conflict" *Energy Research & Social Science*, Vol. 1 (1): 198-205.

February 21st: Angrist Chapter 15

Week 6: Religion in the Middle East (February 24th, February 26th, February 28th)

February 24th: Owen Chapter 9

February 26th: Angrist Chapter 6

First Response Paper Due

February 28th: Lai, Brian. "An Empirical Examination of Religion and Conflict in the Middle East, 1950-1992." *Foreign Policy Analysis*, Vol. 2 (1): 21-36.

Week 7: The Military in the Middle East (March 2nd, March 4th)

March 2nd: Owen Chapter 10

March 4th: Angrist Chapter 10

No Class Friday March 6th: Winter Break

Week 8: Terrorism in the Middle East (March 9th, March 11th, March 13th)

March 9th: Kydd and Walter 2006. "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security*, Vol. 31 (1): 49-80.

March 11th: Piazza, James. 2009. "Is Islamist Terrorism More Dangerous?: An Empirical Study of Group Ideology, Organization, and Goal Structure." *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 21 (1): 62-88.

March 13th: Byman and Kreps 2010. "Agents of Destruction" *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 11 (1): 1-18.

Week 9: The Arab-Israeli Conflict (March 16th, March 18th, March 20th)

March 16th: Angrist Chapter 13

March 18th: Angrist Chapter 16

March 20th: Bloom, Mia 2004. "Palestinian Suicide Bombing: Public Support, Market Share, and Outbidding." *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 119 (1): 61-88.

Final Paper Proposal Due

Week 10: American Involvement in the Middle East (March 23th, March 25th, March 27th)

March 23rd: Owen Chapter 12

March 25th: Arreguin-Toft, Ivan. 2001. "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 24 (1): pp. 93-128.

March 27th: Laremont, Ricardo. 2013. "After the Fall of Qaddafi: Political, Economic, and Security Consequences for Libya, Mali, Niger, and Algeria" *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development* Vol. 2 (2): 1-8.

Week 11: Non-American Involvement in the Middle East (March 30th, April 1st, April 3rd)

March 30th: Evron, Yoram. 2013. "Chinese Involvement in the Middle East: The Libyan and Syrian Crises." *Strategic Assessment*, Vol. 16 (3): 79-91.; Trenin, Dmitri. 2016. "Russia in the Middle East: Moscow's Objectives, Priorities, and Policy Drivers." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

March 31st: Course Withdrawal / Grade Option Change Deadline

April 1st: Angrist Chapter 19

Second Response Paper Due

April 3rd: Human Rights Watch. 2020. "European Union: Events of 2019." www.hrw.org; Stevis-Gridneff, Matina. 2020. "Vigilantes in Greece Say 'No More' to Migrants." *The New York Times*, March 7, 2020.

Week 12: No Classes (Spring Break)

Week 13: The Arab Spring and it's Aftermaths (April 13th, April 15th, April 17th)

April 13th: Angrist Chapter 18

April 15th: Klausen, Jytte. 2015. "Tweeting the Jihad: Social Media Networks of Western Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 38 (1): 1-22.

April 17th: Associated Press. 2019. "Tunisia Polls Suggest Conservative Professor Wins Elections." *The New York Times*, October 13th, 2019; Gall, Carlotta. 2020. "'The Only Choice is to Wait for Death.'" *The New York Times*, March 8th, 2020.

Week 14: Saudi Arabia and Iran (April 20th, April 22nd, April 24th)

April 20th: Angrist Chapter 11

April 22nd: Angrist Chapter 17

April 24th: Mabon, Simon. 2012. "The Battle for Bahrain: Iranian-Saudi Rivalry." *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 19 (2): 84-97.

Week 15: The Middle East in the 2020s (April 27th, April 29th, May 1st)

April 27th: Owen Conclusion; Angrist Chapter 20

April 29th: Watson, Ben 2018. "The War in Yemen and the Making of a Chaos State." *The Atlantic*, February 3rd.

May 1st: Marcus, Jonathan. 2020. "Coronavirus: A ticking time-bomb for the Middle East." The British Broadcasting Corporation, March 31st.

Week 16: Final Class (May 4th)

May 4th: Final Class. **Final Paper Due**