

Rutgers University
Department of Political Science
Spring 2022

Governments/Politics of the Middle East
(21:790:333)

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Friday 2:30 PM - 5:20 PM

Office Hours: Every **Friday from 5:30pm to 7:00pm or by appointment**

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/3285137973?pwd=OGJnTS94emhDamdqTG10WDJ6Yk5VUT09>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed to provide students with an overview of contemporary politics in the Middle East. It offers a survey of the most salient issues in the region as well as some common explanations for the current state of affairs. The course is organized into three sections. **Part I** surveys the emergence of the “Middle East” as a region as well as the main discussions regarding the study of Middle Eastern Politics and its place in the wider Political Science literature. **Part II** lays out the principal problems in the region, namely: democratic deficiency, authoritarian resilience, gender disparities, historical and modern conflicts, and economic underdevelopment. **Part III** explores some common explanations for this state of affairs. We will analyse the influence of history, economy, religion, and foreign intervention on the trajectory of events in the region. The course concludes by reflecting on the future of the Middle East, reforms movements, and autocracies in the region,

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the course is to help students develop their own views on politics in the Middle East by offering them the necessary theoretical skills and empirical evidence. After completing this course, students will demonstrate:

- critical knowledge of politics and contemporary events in the Middle East region
- familiarity with key concepts, scholars, and approaches in the field of Middle Eastern studies
- ability to use various conceptual tools to better analyze, understand, and/or explain political events and processes in the region

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Attendance and Participation:	10%	
Food Presentation:	10%	
Research Paper Proposal:	10%	<i>March 11</i>
Take Home Exam	30%	<i>March 25</i>
Book Review:	20%	<i>April 08</i>
Research Paper:	20%	<i>April 29</i>

Participation: Students are expected to have read the assigned readings and to be prepared to answer quizzes, as well as participate with informed comments and questions during the lectures and group presentations.

Grading Scheme	
Attendance	/5
Participation	/5
Total	/10

Presentation: Students are expected to sign up for an oral presentation (approx. 20 - 30 minutes) on one session's assigned food. Presentations must include the following components: 1) a brief summary of the history of the assigned food; 2) questions surrounding its proprietorship; 3) a discussion of some of the current cultural debates and tensions surrounding it. You will have the opportunity to sign up for presentation on blackboard until September 12, after that date I will randomly assign students. Please note that you are responsible for remembering the date of your presentation and your group. Please feel free to charm us with your culinary skills by sharing samples of the assigned dish.

Grading Scheme	
History and proprietorship	/5
Reflection/Discussion	/5
Total	/10

Take-home Midterm Exam: A take-home midterm exam will take place on *March 25*. The questions will be posted on March 25 at 8:00 am EST and students have until March 25 at 11:00 pm EST to submit their answers. The midterm will include materials covered in the first half of the course—Week 1 to Week 6. A review session will be held the week prior to the exam. The exam will cover lectures, documentaries, presentations, and readings. It will consist of essay questions.

Book Review: A book review (approx. 2000 words, double-spaced, *Times New Roman* font size 12) on one of the following novels is due on *April 08*. Students are expected to read and review one of the assigned novels. The library carries copies of the assigned novels; the novels can also be accessed and/ or purchased online. The assigned novels are:

- ❖ Aswānī, ‘Alā’, and Humphrey T. (Humphrey Taman) Davies. *The Yacoubian Building: A Novel*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 2006).
- ❖ Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* (Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1994).

The review should include the following components: 1) author's brief biography; 2) summary of the novel, its chapters, and the main plot; 3) how the novel ties to class readings; 4) discussion of some of your favorite quotes; 5) how the novel contributed and challenged your understanding of the topic.

Grading Scheme	
Summary of the novel	/5
Quotes	/5
how the novel contributed and challenged your understanding of the topic	/5
How the novel ties to class readings	/5
Total	/20

Research Paper Proposal: A research paper proposal (approx. 250 words, double-spaced, *Times New Roman* font size 12) is due on **March 11**. Proposals should be submitted through the Canvas. The proposal should include:

- The topic and the country/countries you wish to write your paper on.
- Preliminary sources (including a minimum of 2 books and 2 academic journal articles).
- A brief statement describing what in particular you wish to address.

Grading Scheme	
Topic Outline	/5
Citations and Bibliography	/5
Total Grade	/10

Research paper: A research paper (approx. 2000 words, double-spaced, *Times New Roman* font size 12) is due on **April 29**. Papers should be submitted through canvas. The research question must address one of the major themes of the course. Please pay attention to the following points:

- This assignment requires a critical evaluation of the themes discussed in the course and students are expected to incorporate some of the course material in their papers.
- You may choose to examine case studies, or focus on theoretical concepts related to the course. In either case, the paper must provide a critical analysis of the subject of investigation.
- Make sure to state a clear main argument (thesis statement) in the introductory paragraph of your paper. In the body of the paper, you must support your thesis, cite and briefly discuss contrary views, and develop your own arguments and positions. End the paper with a summary of the main arguments.

- You may use the Chicago Manual of Style, MLA Style, or another citation system. Please make sure you consistently use one system of citation for your references.
- Include a bibliography listing all sources used in the essay. Do not pad the bibliography with items you did not actually use.

Need writing support? Visit the University Writing Center for writing workshops and one-on-one tutoring services at: <https://sas.n.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>. Another excellent resource for writing support is Rutgers Learning Center at: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/rlc>

Grading Scheme	
Quality of Argumentation	/10
Depth of Research (use of sources)	/5
Clarity of Organization, Grammar/Writing Quality	/5
Total Grade	/20

GRADING SCHEME

<i>Descriptor</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Grades Scored Between</i>
Outstanding	A	90 - 100
Very Good	B+	87 and less than 90
Good	B	80 and less than 87
Satisfactory	C+	77 and less than 80
	C	70 and less than 77
Poor	D	65 and less than 70
Fail	F	0 and less than 65

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK ACADEMIC POLICIES

Completion of Requirements: You should complete all the requirements of the course. If you do not submit an assignment, you will automatically fail the course.

Late Assignments: It is your responsibility to inform your professor as soon as it becomes clear that your assignment will be late. Late assignments will receive *a penalty of 5% per day* including weekends. Research assignments more than one week late will not be accepted.

Make-Ups for Exams: Students will not be allowed to take the mid-term exam on another date unless the absence was documented and excused in accordance with the University policy.

Academic Integrity and Honesty: Rutgers University is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the academic integrity code at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/> and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Important Semester Dates: Important Semester Dates are found at <https://registrar.newark.rutgers.edu/office-registrar-academic-calendar>

Email Communication: The primary method of communication will be via emails, sent either directly or via Canvas. It is your responsibility to ensure that your Rutgers email ID is operational to receive my emails and announcements. Contact the Technology Help Desk immediately if you experience problems in receiving emails from me. If you are still reading the syllabus at this point, email me at the address listed above with a cute kitten picture and you will be able to secure a two-day extension on the final course paper.

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

Religious Holiday Policy and Accommodations: Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. The Division of Student Affairs is available to verify absences for religious observance, as needed: (973) 353-5063 or DeanofStudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries: Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

Students Who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. To submit an incident report: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does **NOT** have a reporting responsibility,

contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or run.vpva@rutgers.edu.

Disability Services: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must complete and submit the Registration Form, schedule and complete an intake meeting, and submit appropriate documentation. If your request for reasonable accommodations is approved, you will receive a Letter of Accommodations (LOA), which you should present privately to the instructor as early in the semester as possible. Accommodations are not retroactive and are effective only upon submission of the LOA to the instructor. Please begin the process by completing and submitting the Registration Form, Applying for Services, which is available at the website below.

- **Applying for Services:** <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/applying-for-services>
- **Documentation Guidelines:** <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>
- **Letter of Accommodations (LOA):** <https://ods.rutgers.edu/my-accommodations/letter-of-accommodations>
- **Office of Disability Services (ODS)**
 Suite 219, Paul Robeson Campus Center
 (973) 353-5375
odsnewark@rutgers.edu

FEELING OVERWHELMED?

The Student Wellness Program (SWP) is a free and confidential counseling service which helps students deal effectively with stressors and pressures.

- Call to schedule an appointment: (973) 353-5805
- Drop off at: Counseling Center Room 101, Blumenthal Hall,
- Visit website for more information at: or <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/>

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS:

The course readings will draw on a variety of disciplines as well as translated essays by activists and writers based in the region. There is one required textbook for this course. It can be purchased from the University Bookstore:

- ❖ Schwedler, Jillian, ed. 2013. *Understanding the Contemporary Middle East*. Fourth edition. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

In addition to the course text there are a number of academic journal articles that will be used throughout the year. These are posted and accessible online through the library database and the Canvas

Part	Week	Date	Topic	Readings and In-class Activities	Assignments and Exams Due Date
dy ng the	1	01/21	Introduction	No Required Reading	

	2	01/28	Studying the Middle East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anderson, Lisa. “2003 MESA Presidential Address: Scholarship, Policy, Debate and Conflict: Why We Should Study the Middle East and Why it Matters,” <i>Middle East Studies Association Bulletin</i> 38, 1 (June 2004). Available at: http://bit.ly/2vFB5Zn • Said, Edward. “Islam Through Western Eyes,” <i>The Nation</i>, April 26, 1980, 488–92. Available at: http://bit.ly/2vG0qSV • Documentary Reel Bad Arab: https://bit.ly/2WMuO9F 	
Part 2: Understanding the Region : Some Relentless Problems	3	02/04	Democratic Deficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mehran Kamrava, “The Middle East’s Democracy Deficit in Comparative Perspective,” <i>Perspectives on Global Development & Technology</i> 6, no. 1–3 (June 2007): 189–213, Available at: http://bit.ly/2MIA5Da 	Group 1 Food Presentation on Tabbouleh [In-class]
	4	02/11	Authoritarian Resilience and the Arab Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dina Shehata, “The Arab Uprisings and the Prospects for Building Shared Societies,” <i>Development</i> 57, no. 1 (25 2014): 84–95, Available at: http://bit.ly/2MIjuPU • Hicham Alaoui. 2019. “From Algeria to Sudan, a New Lease of Life for Arab Springs.” <i>Jadaliyya</i>. July 12, 2019. https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/39808. 	

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tickling Giants Movie • This class will be over zoom 	
	5	02/18	The Arab-Israeli Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharoni, Simona, and Mohammed Abu-Nimer. 2013. "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict." In <i>Understanding the Contemporary Middle East</i>, edited by Jillian Schwedler, Fourth edition. [Chapter 6] 	Group 2 Food Presentation - The Humus Debate [In-class]
	6	02/25	Women's Rights and Gender Inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollard, Lisa. 2013. "The Role of Women." In <i>Understanding the Contemporary Middle East</i>, edited by Jillian Schwedler, Fourth edition. [Chapter 11] • World Bank, <i>Opening Doors: Gender Equality and Development in the Middle East and North Africa</i>, 2013, pages 1-31. Available at: http://bit.ly/2vDsg24 • Library Resources [In-class Training] 	
	7	03/04	Historical Legacies: Colonialism, Imperialism, and Nationalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rami Khouri, "Arab Mismanagement? Blame Colonialism," <i>The Daily Star</i> (Lebanon), September 3, 2008. Available at: http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Commentary/2008/Sep-03/120349-arab-mismanagement-blame-colonialism.ashx • Robin Wright, "How the Curse of Sykes Picot Still Haunts the Middle East," <i>The New Yorker</i>, April 30, 	Group 3 Food Presentation cook for Syria [In-class]

				2016. Available at: http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/how-the-curse-of-sykes-picot-still-haunts-the-middle-east	
	8	03/11	Political Economy: Development and Oil Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael L. Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” <i>World Politics</i>, no. 3 (2001):325-361. Available at:https://www-jstor-org.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/stable/pdf/25054153.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A5d1786f197f639206e8fa56a8b88fb3c Review 	Research Paper Proposal Due
	9	03/18	NO CLASS		
	10	03/25	TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM <u>The questions will be posted on March 25 at 8:00 am EST and students have until March 25 at 11:00 pm EST to submit their answers.</u>		
Part 3: Explaining the Middle East: Some Plausible Explanations	11	04/01	Religion and Politics: The Rise of Political Islam and Islamist Parties Guest lecture: Ms. Sajedah Goudarzi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayoob, Mohammed, and Danielle N. Lussier. 2020. <i>The Many Faces of Political Islam : Religion and Politics in Muslim Societies</i>. Second edition. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.11448711. [Chapters 1, 3, 4] 	
	12	04/08	Religion and Politics: The Rise of Political Islam and Islamist Parties Guest lecture: Ms. Sajedah Goudarzi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schwedler, Jillian. 2013. “Religion and Politics in the Middle East.” In <i>Understanding the Contemporary Middle East</i>, edited by Jillian Schwedler, Fourth edition. [Chapter 12] Conversation with Dalia Fahmy, Abdullah al- 	Book Review due

				<p>Arian, and Khalil al-Anani, and Shadi Hamid, "The Many Battles of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood." Available at: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/06/battles-egypt-muslim-brotherhood-150604103022250.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Power of Nightmares Part 1 - Baby It's Cold Outside 	
13	04/15	U.S. Foreign Policies and the War on Terrorism Guest lecture: Ms. Sajedah Goudarzi		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luban, D. (2002). The War on Terrorism and the End of Human Rights. Georgetown Law Faculty Publications and Other Works. https://scholarship.law.georgetown.edu/facpub/892 • Episode 3 of the Netflix documentary "Turning point" 	
14	04/22	U.S. Foreign Policies and the War on Terrorism		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trevor Thrall and Erik Goepner, "Step Back: Lessons for U.S. Foreign Policy from the Failed War on Terror Cato Institute," <i>Policy Analysis</i>, June 26, 2017, http://bit.ly/2OBnolh • "Habeas Schmabeas 2007." This American Life. April 27, 2007. https://www.thisamericanlife.org/331/habeas-schmabeas-2007American Coup Documentary 	
15	04/29	Hope and Disappointment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bayat, Assef. (2010). <i>Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change</i> 	Research Paper due

				<p><i>the Middle East</i> (pp. 1 - 29). http://bit.ly/2KOsjwX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This class will be over zoom	
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