POLS 363: GOVERNMENTS AND POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

San Diego State University
Summer 2013
M-T-W-Th 10.00-11.40
AH 3113

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Office hrs: M, T 11.45-12.45

Description
This course is designed to contribute to students’ critical thinking on socio-political phenomena and help them ask appropriate questions, develop well-grounded arguments, and analyze the validity of alternative perspectives. The lectures will be interactive, in a sense that students will be active by asking questions, answering questions, and participating class discussions. To do so, they have to read the materials in the syllabus before coming to the class.

Middle East is an intriguing area to analyze. Historically, it is the birthplace of three monotheistic religions and several ancient civilizations. Currently, the region is the core of the Muslim world and includes more than half of the world’s oil reserves. The study of the Middle East politics includes many controversial issues. In this regard, students will encounter readings that may challenge their personal opinions. They should keep in mind that in highly politicized issues such as this subject, there are multiple answers to the questions posed. The purpose of the course is to encourage students to take the reading materials seriously and, then, develop their own arguments.

Class Requirements
Students are expected to complete all assigned readings. Attendance is mandatory.

Required Readings
Ellen Lust, ed., The Middle East (CQ Press 2010, 12th edition)
Other book chapters and journal articles are in the Blackboard.

Grading
Class Participation: 15% Final Exam: 45%
Midterm Exam: 40%
TOTAL: 100%

A = 4.0
A- = 3.7
B+ = 3.3
B = 3.0
B- = 2.7
C+ = 2.3
C = 2.0
C- = 1.7
D+ = 1.3
D = 1.0
D- = 0.7
F = 0

Disability Accommodation
For academic accommodations due to disability, please contact Disabled Student Services.

Academic Dishonesty
Students caught engaging in cheating will receive an automatic F and will be reported.
SCHEDULE

PART I: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

July 8 Islam and Islamic Empires I

July 9 Islam and Islamic Empires II, Ottoman Empire
In Class Videos: The Message (Migration to Abyssinia); Islam, Empire of Faith (Baghdad and Cordoba).

July 10 First World War and its Aftermath

PART II: CONTEMPORARY STATES

July 11 Turkey

July 15 Iran
In Class Video: Iranian Shah and American Presidents.

July 16 Egypt

July 17 Iraq, Syria

July 18 Saudi Arabia

July 22 Israel,
*The Middle East,* “Israel,” pp. 460-85.

July 23 Palestine, and Jordan

July 24 Review

July 25 MIDTERM
PART III: AUTHORITARIANISM AND DEMOCRACY

July 29 Islam, Secularism

July 30 Democracy, Arab-Majority Countries

July 31 Patriarchy, Rentier States
Giacomo Luciani, “Oil and Political Economy in the International Relations of the Middle East” in Louise Fawcett, ed., International Relations of the Middle East (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 81-103.

PART IV: MUSLIMS AND/IN THE WEST

August 1 Colonial and Post-Colonial Periods

August 5 Clash of Civilizations

August 6 Orientalism
In-Class Video: Orientalism with Edward Said.

August 7 The US and the Middle East
In Class Video: President Obama, Cairo Speech.
PART V: POLITICAL ISLAM
August 8 From Quietism to Radicalism / Saudi Arabia and Iran
M. Ayoob, Chapter 1, 2, and 3.

August 12 Egypt and Pakistan
M. Ayoob, Chapter 4.

August 13 Turkey and Indonesia
M. Ayoob, Chapter 5.

August 14 Lebanon, Palestine, and Transnational Islamists
M. Ayoob, Chapter 6 and 7

FINAL EXAM: August 15 (during the regular class time)