

Special Topics - Fall 2017

POLS 4030-01

Dr. Kassem

Topic: Seminar: Media Depictions of Contemporary Egyptian Politics

This course offers an in-depth analysis of the nature and dynamics of modern Egyptian politics. In order to familiarize students with post-1952 Egypt, assessments of Egyptian politics will be made through movie depictions of each regime. Once the trends and general imprints of each era are established, this course will then focus on the major issues and themes confronting and shaping as a republic and eventually leading to Egypt's post 2011 political arena. Such themes will include but are not limited to the following: The fall of Mubarak regime, the rise of the second republic, and the subsequent parliamentary and presidential elections. This second part of this course will analyze the patterns civil participation, the role of the military, as well as the role of Muslim Brotherhood and their fall from power after the 30th of June.

POLS 5130-03

Dr. Salem

Topic: Military and non-military Sanctions within the U.N. system

This course will provide an overview of different means to respond to breaches to international peace within the UN system.

The course is divided into 3 parts: The first part will provide a brief introduction to the UN's main objective; principles; composition; and decision-making. This will build the groundwork for discussing the general principle of the "*Prohibition of the Use of Force*" to maintain international peace (part 2) as well as means to respond to breaches to international peace within the UN system (part 3).

Here we will look at different legal issues, including the question of whether '*Use of Force*' necessarily has to be physical in nature and carried out by armed forces as originally defined. Assuming the definition is not open for development, does that mean the financial support of a rebel group in a foreign country or cyber attacks do not qualify as '*Use of Force*' because they lack physical impact? How about actual physical attacks carried out by non-state actors, for instance terrorists?

Can the collective international community, namely UN Member states, react to such breaches to international peace? And if so, by employing which means: military or non-military sanctions? Which UN organ decides and approves such collective security measures?

In this course we will find answers to all of the above mentioned questions and examine case studies, including the financial Embargo in Iran in 1979; the ad-hoc tribunals for the former Yugoslavia in 1991 and Ruanda in 1994; the attack of the World Trade Center in New York on 11 September 2001; the US invasion on Iraq in 2003; or the No-Flight-Zone in Libya 2011, just to name a few.

- I. Introduction to the UN system
Malcolm Shaw, International Law, 7th edition, 2014, p. 875 - 883
 - a. Main UN organs (UN Agencies, UN Programmes and Funds)
 - i. Objective
 - ii. Composition
 - iii. Decision-making
 - b. UN-Charter

- II. Principle of prohibition of the use of force
Malcolm Shaw, International Law, 7th edition, 2014, p. 811- 820
 - a. Legal source: Article 2 (4) UN-Charter
 - b. Scope of force
 - i. Armed force
 - ii. Physical non-armed force, i.e. cyber-attack?
 - iii. Economic force, i.e. financial support of rebel group?
 - c. Addressee of Prohibition
 - i. States
 - ii. Non-state actors, i.e. terrorists?

- III. Exceptions to the principle of prohibition of the use of force, “legitimacy of military action”
 - a. Individual or collective self-defense:
 - Malcolm Shaw, International Law, 7th edition, 2014, p. 820-846
 - i. Legal source: Article 51 UN-Ch. / Article 5 NATO
 - ii. Related issues:
 - 1. Can non-State actors be considered as agents of aggression?
 - 2. Are anticipatory / preemptive acts of self-defense legal?
 - iii. Case studies: Sep. 11, Iraq
 - b. Collective military sanctions:
 - Malcolm Shaw, International Law, 7th edition, 2014, p. 897 - 930
 - i. Legal source: Art. 39, 42 UN-Charter
 - ii. Case studies: Nazi Germany, Democratic Republic of Congo
 - c. Non-military sanctions
 - Malcolm Shaw, International Law, 7th edition, 2014, p. 884- 897
 - i. Legal source: Art. 39, 41 UN-Charter
 - ii. Examples:
 - 1. Economic Sanctions / Embargo (Iran)
 - 2. Diplomatic Sanctions
 - 3. Weapon embargo
 - 4. No flight zones (Libya, Syria)
 - 5. Ad-hoc criminal tribunals (ICTY, ICTR)
 - d. Humanitarian Intervention / Responsibility to Protect:
 - Malcolm Shaw, International Law, 7th edition, 2014, p. 838 -840, 913
 - i. No legal source – yet moral duty to intervene?
 - ii. Case study: Kosovo

POLS 5140-01

Dr. McMahon

Topic: The Global Political Economy in Crisis

POLS 5140 synthesizes the fields of international relations and global political economy. It productively combines critical studies of power relations and the global production, circulation and accumulation of capital to understand eruptions of crisis in our contemporary neoliberal moment. More specifically, the course historicizes the neoliberal moment in social terms, analyzes processes such as the transnationalization of production, privatization and monetization, studies contradictions such as capital's necessity of infinite growth against the finite capacities of societies and the planet, problematizes the political function of hegemonic ideals such as reform and freedom, and formulates plans for the coming eruption of crisis. In the process, students will make sense of ideas that power has intentionally obfuscated including hegemony, negative interest rates, derivatives, securitization and currency depreciation. Throughout POLS 5140, special attention is paid to the modes of appearance of crisis in the Middle East (i.e. imperialization, war, commodity price inflation).

The course is built on a strong foundation of diverse resources including texts by Karl Polanyi, David Harvey, Samir Amin, Wendy Brown, Robert Cox, and Adam Hanieh, videos such as *The Big Short* and *Too Big to Fail* and the Bloomberg Surveillance podcast.

Through POLS 5140 students develop a critical, more realistic understanding of their political-economic world.