

## **SPECIAL TOPICS OFFERED IN SPRING 2016**

POLS 5130-02

**Dr. El-Mahdi**

**Topic: Redefining Revolution, Resistance, and Politics**

The Arab Uprisings of 2011 came as a turbulent shock to both politicians and scholars of the region. While still trying to decode its causes and effects, it took another (un)expected turn in most of the countries it graced. Looking at these events and its ongoing path, this course questions the significance of these events, and what we (students of the region and responsible citizens) can make out of them both politically and analytically. It questions the uprisings against established assumptions in comparative politics, political theory, and Middle East studies literature, deciphering the meaning of revolution, resistance, counter-revolution, narratives, and democratization, as they play out in the region during the 21st century. The course will look at different forms of movements and different conceptions of resistance from football fan clubs "ultras", to movie making and music.

POLS 5130-03

**Dr. Koehler**

**Topic: Elections and Parties in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**

Scholars have differed widely in their assessments of electoral and party politics in the MENA. While an influential current of research has emphasized the stabilizing role of elections under authoritarianism, the resurgence of electoral competition in some countries after the Arab Uprisings has given rise to arguments about founding elections as part of transitional processes. Focusing on evidence from recent electoral politics in Egypt and Tunisia, this course will tackle the following questions: (1) What was the role of electoral politics under authoritarianism in the region? (2) How did electoral politics contribute to shaping regime trajectories after the uprisings? (3) What were the main determinants of voting behavior in these contests? And (4), what does the form of electoral politics in Egypt and Tunisia suggest for the trajectories of these two countries? Participants will be introduced to some of the main readings in this particular field, but we will also get to work with public opinion data available through the Arab Barometer, as well as electoral data on the subnational levels.

POLS 5140-01

**Dr. Korany**

**Topic: *The New International Relations: Concepts, Practices, and Challenges***

International Relations have usually been conceived and analyzed as an activity solely coming from the very top. The justification is a deeply-rooted assumption that this is where "significant" IR are located. Consequently, the focus has usually been on the behavior of top institutions such as the royal palaces, presidencies and other chancelleries as well as foreign ministries.

Without neglecting these top decision-making institutions, this course on New International Relation tries to compensate for this biased and skewed view by investigating IR from below, or what we can call People's international relations. Rather than being obsessed primarily with the outcome or final output - the tip of the iceberg, we aim to look at the process itself: how international behavior is actually shaped and made. For instance, how social movements - whether Bread Riots, Wall Street Protest, Anti-Globalization Movement - impact such international behavior. How specifics of development issues or religion and religious movements shape national behavior and beyond, e.g. recent Paris attacks and their impact.