

**School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Political Science**

**Comparative Politics of the Middle East
POLS 3408
Fall 2020**

Class time: UW 2:00 – 3:15

Instructor

Dr. Nadine Sika

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Office: HUSS 2022

Extension: 1906

Class Venue: Online Delivery through Synchronous and Asynchronous modes

Office Hours: UW 12:00 – 1:30 or by appointment. All office hours are through zoom.

Course Format

This course is offered remotely and uses Blackboard as the Learning Management system. Zoom is used for interactive class discussions, and Panopto for recorded lectures.

Course Objective

This course aims to provide students with an understanding of contemporary politics of the Middle East. It seeks to address and answer major questions concerning state-society relations in the region. What is the historical origin shaping the socio-political and economic structures of the region? What are the major trends that shape politics in the region? What are the origins of the Arab Israeli conflict, and how far does it affect Middle East and North African Politics today? What is the role of Political Islam in shaping politics of the region? Through addressing these questions, the course seeks to introduce students to the most important issues shaping the politics of the Middle East and North Africa today.

Course Outcomes:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- understand the contemporary Middle East and North Africa through understanding its historical developments.
- think analytically and objectively about various Middle Eastern problems shaping contemporary politics.
- Debate different issues in Middle East politics and develop well-structured arguments about the various perspectives in the Middle East.
- Write well-structured and well-argued essays.

Course Guidelines:

1. Classes and Mode of Delivery

- The course is offered online synchronously and asynchronously via Zoom and Panopto. On the events when the classes are delivered through Panopto, the

lecture will be 20 minutes long, and after watching the lecture, students will be asked to discuss the lecture on blackboard discussion boards.

- Classes are expected to be heavily interactive. Students are expected to raise their hands in Zoom to talk, and open group discussions on blackboard discussion boards.
- Students are encouraged to schedule Zoom meetings (acting as Office Hours) with me if they need clarifications on course material or the project.

2. Course Participation & Preparation.

- Class participation carries a high weight in the course grade and students will have to earn these grades. Positive participation grades are earned through active contribution to class discussion and not simply by attending class.
- Students are expected to read all materials before class, to be able to contribute positively to class discussions. This will enhance class participation grades.

3. Exams

- Exams are offered online, and they are not proctored.
- Exams are take-home exams. The instructor will provide students with two essay questions three days prior to the exam due date. Students are expected to base their answers on the class readings and discussions. Exams should include citations from the class readings.
- The exam due-date is written in the syllabus.
- Grades will be posted on Blackboard, and students have the right to call for a Zoom meeting to go through their mistakes, if they want.

Grading

Participation	10%
2 take home exams	25% each
Debate	15%
Final Paper	25%

Important Dates

Midterm 1: October 3

Midterm 2: November 4

Debate: December 2

Final Essay: December 15

Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage
A	94+	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-93	C+	77-79	D	60-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	F	Below 60
B	83-86	C-	70-72		

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity commits to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. These values enable academic communities to develop their ideas into action. Academic integrity violations include but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, multiple submissions. For more information on academic integrity policies at AUC please visit the following website: <https://www.aucegypt.edu/academics/academic-integrity>
Any academic integrity violation will result in an F.

Students with Disabilities

Academic accommodations for students with disabilities are available for all qualifying students. All types of accommodations in this class follow AUC's regulations. For more information on academic accommodations for students please visit the following:
https://documents.aucegypt.edu/Docs/about_Policies/Reformatted%20disability%20policy.pdf

Readings

Textbook

Raymond Hinnebusch and Jasmine Gani eds., *The Routledge Handbook to the Middle East and North African State and States Systems* (London: Routledge, 2020)

All Readings will be posted on Blackboard

Participation 10%

Students are expected to actively participate in class through reading the material *before* class.

Take home Examinations 25% each

The exam will be composed of two short essays. It is based on the course readings in addition to the class discussions. You are requested to be very analytical in your answers. You need to support your arguments through citing the assigned readings in your essay. The exams are to be uploaded on Turnitin.

Final Paper 25%

A final paper of 10 pages (12 Times New Roman/double spaced, 2000-2500 words) is required for this course. The paper is on any topic/country that students chose. You are required to discuss your topic with the instructor. The paper should include a clear research question and hypothesis and should be highly analytical.

Debate 15%

The instructor will divide the class into two groups, one group will be in favor of the role of military interventions during the Arab Uprisings, while the other will be in

favor of the opposite viewpoint. Each student is to present a 3-page report on their position during the debate.

Course Outline

Week 1

Introduction to the course and the origins of the Middle East state system

September 6

Introduction to the course

Mode of Delivery

This class will be held through zoom. Students are encouraged to turn on their cameras, to be able to get to know one another and to introduce ourselves.

September 9

Raymond Hinnebusch, "Historical Context of state formation in the Middle East: Structure and Agency," in eds. Raymond Hinnebusch and Jasmine Gani, *The Routledge Handbook to the Middle East and North African State and States Systems* (London: Routledge, 2020), p. 21-39.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

Week 2

Regime formation in the Arab World

September 13

Roger Owen, *State Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* "The growth of state power in the Arab world: the single party regimes" chapter 2

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto. Students will then be asked to discuss the lecture and the reading through zoom. I will open the zoom session at 2:30 p.m.

September 16

Monarchies

Michael Herb, *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democratic Prospects in the Middle Eastern Monarchies* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), chapters 1, 2.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

Week 3**Regime formation in non-Arab Regimes****September 20*****Iran***

William Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2012), p. 162 -178

Mode of Delivery

Students will be provided with a YouTube link on the Iranian Revolution, and then the class will resume through zoom at 2:45 p.m. for discussions.

September 23***Turkey***

Owen, "State and Politics in Israel, Iran and Turkey," chapter 5

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

Week 4**Israel and the Palestinian Question****September 27*****Israel***

Joel Migdal, *Through the Lens of Israel*, chapter 3.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto. Students will then be asked to discuss the lecture and the reading through zoom. I will open the zoom session at 2:30 p.m.

September 30***The Palestinian Question***

Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), chapters 2,3,4.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquiries on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

Take-home exam 1 to be given to students on September 30th

Week 5

Discussing state formation and its impact on today's politics in the region

October 4

Midterm Exam 1: No class to resume, exam due at 3:00 pm.

October 7

The Fierce State?

Suggested readings:

Roger Owen, *The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life* chapters 1 and 4.

Charles Tripp, "The State as an Always-Unfinished Performance: Improvisation and Performativity in the Face of Crisis," *International Journal of Middle East Politics* vol. 50, no. 2 (2018), pp. 337-342

Ellis Goldber, "Imagining Citizens," *International Journal of Middle East Politics* vol. 50, no. 2 (2018) pp. 343 – 346

Ariel Ahram, "On the Making and Unmaking of Arab States," *International Journal of Middle East Politics* vol. 50, no. 2 (2018), pp. 323-327

Lisa Anderson, "The State and its Competitors," *International Journal of Middle East Politics* vol. 50, no. 2 (2018), pp. 317-322.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered through zoom. Students will be discussing today's readings, they will be split into different chat rooms, for more in-depth discussions. The second half of the class will be based on each group's presentation of their discussions and main ideas.

Week 6

Political Islam

October 11

Nathan Brown, "Islamist Parties and Arab Political Systems as they Are," in *When*

Victory is not an Option (Cornell University Press, 2012).

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

October 14

Carrie Rosefsky Wickham. *The Muslim Brotherhood Evolution of an Islamist Movement* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013), chapter 8.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered through zoom. Students are required to participate through discussing today's readings together.

Week 7

Sectarianism

October 18

Danial Byman, "Sectarianism Afflicts the New Middle East," *Survival* 56, no. 1 (2014), pp. 79-100

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

October 21

Nader Hashimi, "Toward a Political Theory of Sectarianism in the Middle East: The Salience of Authoritarianism over Theology," *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* vol. 1, no. 1 (2016), pp. 65-76.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

Week 8

October 25 and October 28

Class debate and discussions

Sectarianism in the region: Age old phenomenon or regime invention?

Suggested Readings and videos:

Usama Makdisi, "Sectarianism and Modernity," YouTube video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMnq0T-O4Yo>

Tareq Ismail, "Unravelling of the uncivil state: Iraq and the imposition of sectarian governance," *International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies* vol. 9, no. 2 (2015), pp. 121-137.

Hannes Baumann, "Social protest and the Political Economy of Sectarianism in Lebanon," *Global Discourse* vol. 6, no. 4 (2016), pp. 634-649

Mode of Delivery

These two classes will be offered through zoom. Students will be divided into different chat rooms, where they will discuss the origins of sectarianism in the region. After the small discussions, each group will present the main points of their discussions to class through zoom.

Week 9

Civil Society

November 1

Anders Hårdig, "Beyond the Arab Revolts: Conceptualizing Civil Society in the Middle East and North Africa," *Democratization* vol. 22, no. 6 (2015): 1131-1153.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

Midterm 2 to be handed to students on November 1

November 4

Midterm 2 due at 3:00 pm

No class to convene on this day

Week 10

International Politics in the Middle East

November 8

Sean Yom, *From Resilience to Revolution: How Foreign Interventions Destabilize the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), chapter 1.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

November 11

Raymond Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East*, second edition. (Manchester University Press, 2015), chapters 7, 8, 10.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered through zoom. Students are expected to discuss the readings thoroughly in this class.

Week 11

Civil-Military Relations

November 15

Zoltan Barany, *How Armies Respond to Revolutions and Why* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), chapter 5

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquiries on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

November 18

Sertif Demir & Oktay Bingöl, "From military tutelage to civilian control: an analysis of the evolution of Turkish civil–military relations," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (2018) DOI: 10.1080/13530194.2018.1491291

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered through zoom. Students are expected to discuss the readings thoroughly in this class.

Week 12

Class Debate (15% of grade)

November 22

Preparation for Class Debate:

The Role of the Military in the Arab Uprisings: The cases of Syria and Tunisia

Suggested readings:

Holger Albrecht and Dorothy Ohl, "Exist, Resistance, Loyalty: Military Behavior during Unrest in Authoritarian Regimes," *Perspectives on Politics* (2016), pp. 38-52.

Holger Albrecht, Aurel Croissant and Fred Lawson eds. , *Armies and Insurgencies in the Arab Spring* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016).

Marc Lynch ed., *The Arab Uprisings Explained: New Contentious Politics in the Middle East* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2014).

POMEPS Studies, *From Mobilization to Counter-Revolution* online at:

http://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/POMEPS_Studies_20_Mobilization_Web-REV.pdf

Mode of Delivery

Today students are expected to meet independently with their groups to prepare for the class debate.

November 25

Class Debate through zoom. Students are required to turn their cameras on during the whole class.

Week 13

The Arab Spring

November 29

Muriel Asseburg and Haiko Wimmen, "Dynamics of transformation, elite change and new social mobilization in the Arab World," *Mediterranean Politics* vol. 21, no. 1 (2015): 1-22

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquiries on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

December 2

Asef Bayat, *Revolution without Revolutionaries Making Sense of the Arab Spring* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017), chapters 8,9,10.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on zoom. The zoom session will start at 2:30 p.m.

Week 14

Gender and Politics in the Region

December 6

Mounira Charrad, "Gender in the Middle East: Islam, State, Agency," *Annual Review of Sociology* (2011), pp. 417-437

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on Blackboard discussion board. Students' answers and inquires on these discussion boards will be saved by the instructor and will be part of students' participation grade.

December 9

Lindsay Benstead, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Patriarchy: The Importance of Feminist Theory," POMEPS Studies, no. 19 (2016), pp. 8-12.

Marwa Shalaby, "Women's Political Representation and Authoritarianism in the Arab World," POMEPS Studies, no. 19 (2016), pp. 45-51.

Mode of Delivery

This class will be offered as a 20-minute lecture on Panopto, students will be asked a few guiding questions in the lecture, which they will then discuss on zoom. The zoom session will start at 2:30 p.m

Final Paper Due

December 15, 2020 1:30 pm