**Government, Politics and Society of the Middle East**

Dr. Lawrence Rubin INTA 2260

Habersham 149 Fall 2018

(404) 385-4081 Clough Commons 262

lawrence.rubin@inta.gatech.edu M/W 1500-1645

Office Hours: M/W 1330-1430 & by appointment

**Course description:**

The purpose of this course is to analyze contemporary Middle East Politics. Utilizing theoretical insights from Comparative Politics and International Relations, the course examines the impact of the Great Powers, pan-Arabism, the Islamic resurgence, the oil crisis, authoritarianism, democratization, international and domestic politics of the Middle East, and the rise of ISIS. This course will provide substantive knowledge about the region using political science tools and methodology.

Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior. Students will also be able to describe how these forces influence the global system. In doing so, students will also be able to think critically, collaborate with others, and demonstrate reading, writing, and presentation skills. This course has no prerequisites. It fulfills both Social Science General Education and Global Perspectives requirements. This syllabus is subject to change.

**Learning outcomes:**

Student will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language. Student will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior. Student will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence the global system.

INTA specific learning outcomes are as follows:

* *Problem Solving in International Affairs.* Students will be able to use their knowledge of international affairs in a practical problem-solving way to address issues of immediate international concern.  Includes knowledge of key issues, familiarity with methods to assess solutions, data-gathering research skills through which to put different methods into place.
* *Scientific analysis of international politics.* Students will be proficient in basic mathematical skills and be able to formulate problems in international affairs mathematically if appropriate.  Use software, process and analyze information, quantitative and qualitative methods.
* *Effective communication skills.* Students will be able to express their arguments clearly and effectively both in written reports and in their research and oral presentations.
* *Teamworking skills.* Students will be able to work in small groups in a way that demonstrates respect for their colleagues and efficiency in working collaboratively towards projects and goals.

**Requirements and grading:**

Students are expected to attend lectures, read the assigned material, and participate actively in all course discussions. This course is taught as a hybrid lecture/seminar-style. The course grade will be based on the following criteria:

20% Participation (including quizzes & movie reviews)

15% 3-5 page critical writing assignment based on *The Yacoubian Building*

20% In-class mid-term

15% Simulation

30% Final

*Exams*: The mid-term (20%) and final (30%) exams will be based on lectures, class discussions, and the *required* readings. The mid-term will take place in class. The final is a take-home assignment.

*Participation (20%):* Students are expected to attend class, read the assigned *required* material, and participate actively in all course discussions. You will also be sent short articles on current events that we will discuss informally in class. The participation grade also includes a total from quizzes and two movie reviews. You will not be tested on the recommended readings. Students will also be assigned a country at the beginning of the semester. The student will follow this country through the semester and will be responsible for one or two “country updates”. This will entail a five minute presentation of breaking news in which the student discusses the significant of the news event.

*Critical writing assignment (15%).* This three to five page essay will be based on *The Yacoubian Building*. It will be due October 13th. You will receive more details throughout the semester.

*Simulation Game* (15%): Details for this game will be explained throughout the course of the semester. It is scheduled to take place in class during the last week of class. The grade will be based on individual performance, group performance, and a short written assessment due at the time of the take home final.

Late papers will lose half a letter grade every day unless the instructor has given prior approval. There will be no make-up exams except for excused absences due to a documented medical condition, official university team activity, or religious holiday. Students with a disability or a health related issue who require special accommodation should speak with me as soon as possible.

\*Smartphones must be turned off during class and remain inaccessible during class. You will not be able to use your laptops, tablets, etc. during class.

\*Very important: Make sure your email is set up to receive announcements through Tsquare. Check your email account regularly.

**Honor Code**: All coursework must meet the Georgia Tech standards of academic honesty. <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=9>

**Required texts available for purchase at the bookstore and on-reserve at the library:**

* Alaa Al Aswany, *The Yacoubian Building* (Harper Perennial, 2002)

**Important**: Readings followed by \* can be downloaded from Tsquare. Readings followed by a \*\* can be accessed through the library.

**August 20: Introduction**

**August 22: The challenges of the Middle East**

*What is the Middle East? Where is the Middle East? Who lives there? What are the important questions? Why are there so few democracies? How can we explain the inter and intra-state violence? How can we study these questions? Why should we study the region?*

* Arab Human Development Report, UNDP, 2004. Excerpts. Available at: <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/contents/2004/execsum-04e.pdf> (Skim)
* Bernard Lewis, “What went wrong with the Middle East,” *The Atlantic* (January 2002)
* Larry Diamond, “Why are there no Arab Democracies?” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 21 no. 1, January 2010

**August 27: Pre-modern to the Modern Middle East**

*What are some of the major challenges the Middle East faces as it moves from the pre-modern to the modern age?* *What are the some of the responses?*

* Map quiz (countries, regimes types, demographics). 15% of participation grade.
* Mark Gasper, “The Making of the Modern Middle East” in *The Middle East.*
* Ian Lustick, “The Absence of Middle Eastern Great Powers: Political ‘Backwardness’ in Comparative Perspective,” *International Organization* Vol. 51, No. 4(2003), 653-683 (Skim)

**August 29: Origins of the Modern Middle East**

* TBA

*Recommended:*

*Blood and Oil: The Middle East in World War I* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jP0evPEsc30

# *BBC Documentary: The First World War (Jihad 1914 - 1916)*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cei8dFUzZ3s>

*Promises and Betrayals: History Channel Britain and the struggle for the Holy Land* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JW2sm0iR0E8>

**September 3: Labor Day**

**September 5: The democracy deficit and the dynamics of authoritarianism**

* Tarek Masoud, “Has the Door Closed on Arab Democracy?” *Journal of Democracy*, 2015

**September 10: Movie “The Square”**

**September 12: The democracy deficit and the dynamics of authoritarianism**

* Michael L. Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53, no. 3 (2001): pp. 325-361 (Skim for argument)
* Steven Fish, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” *World Politics* 55 (October 2002), pp. 4-37 (Skim for argument)
* Lisa Blaydes, “Elections and Elite Management,” in Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak’s Egypt (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pgs. 48-64

**September 17: Colonial legacies: Development, institutions, and the state**

* Roger Owen, “The End of Empires,” in *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 5-22*,* p. 23-38

**September 19: Movie, *Frontline: Our Man in Tehran*** (Part One, Part two recommended)

**September 24: Guest lecture**

**September 26: Mid-term**

**October 1: Movie: *Waltz with Bashir***

**October 3: Oil and its effects**

* Giacomo Luciani, “Oil and Political Economy in the International Relations of the Middle East,” in Louise Fawcett, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 81-103
* F. Gregory Gause III, *International Relations of the Persian Gulf*, 16-44

**October 8: Fall Recess**

**October 10: International politics**

* Marc Lynch, “Regional International Relations,” Chapter 8 in *The Middle East*
* Lawrence Rubin, *Islam in the Balance* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2014), 97-117 \*\*

**October 15: Iran, the international order, and the nuclear question**

* TBA

**October 17: Islam and Politics: Part I**

* Mandaville, “State Formation and the Making of Islamism,” Tsquare.
* G. Kepel, *The Trail of Political Islam*, pp. 25-88\*

**October 22: Islam and Politics: Part II**

* Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, “Interests, ideas, and Islamist outreach in Egypt” in *Islamic activism*, pp. 231-249
* Lawrence Rubin, "Islamic Political Activism in Israel," Saban Center Analysis Paper Series, Number 33 (April 2014); http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2014/04/28-israel-islamists-rubin

**October 24: Israeli-Palestinian relations: Origins**

* Mark Tessler, “The Israeli-Palestinian conflict,” Chapter 7 in *The Middle East*
* William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2009), 301-344 \*

**October 29: Israeli-Palestinian: Current**

**October 31: The remaking of Iraq?**

**November 5: Ethnic conflict and sectarianism**

* Vali Nasr, “When Shiites Rise,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2006)

**November 7: The rise of al-Qaeda and ISIS**

**November 12: Arab uprisings**

* Sean L. Yom and F. Gregory Gause III. "Resilient Royals: How Arab Monarchies Hang On." *Journal of Democracy* 23, no. 4 (2012): 74-88
* TBA

**November 14: Sectarianism, ethnic conflict, and international intervention: Comparing Syria and Yemen**

* TBA

**November 19: Simulation I**

**November 21: Student recess**

**November 26: Simulation II**

**November 28: Arab civil wars and a new order?**

**December 3: Regional and great power competition and the future of US foreign policy**

* TBA

**FINAL EXAM DUE AT THE TIME OF THE SCHEDULED EXAM by 1700, Friday, December 7.**

I WILL SEND THE QUESTIONS TO YOU THROUGH T-SQUARE.

YOU WILL EMAIL AND TURN IN A HARD COPY TO 149 HABERSHAM.