

Oil, Suicide Bombers, & The Veil: Demystifying The Politics of the Middle East Fall 2009

POL 40591-001

Class Time: TH 2:15-5pm
Classroom: Bowman 217

Professor: Joshua Stacher
Email: jstacher@kent.edu
Office: 302 Bowman (office 17)
Office Phone: (330) 672-8922
Office Hours: T 10:30am-1: 30pm
Th 10:30am -12:30pm

Teaching Assistant: Aysegul Keskin
Email: akeskin@kent.edu
Office: Bullpen (Bowman 2nd Floor)

Course Objective:

The politics of the Middle East is frequently misrepresented. Theories of oil's "peculiar" properties, the fear of terrorism, and sympathy for oppressed women drown Western media coverage. This course engages these distorted constructions and places them within larger structural and historical perspectives. This reading, writing, and thought intensive seminar introduces students to theory and context that encourage a more nuanced appreciation of the Middle East. Theories that will be considered include modernization, dependency, structuralism, and constructivism. Specific themes include: The emergence of the Middle East state system, identity politics, authoritarian persistence & blocked democratization, electoral politics, political violence, women, Islamist movements, the Iranian revolution, and the Arab-Israeli conflict. The United State's historical and contemporary role in the region will also be considered.

Central themes that we will address are:

- 1) The Emergence of the Middle East State System
- 2) Ideologies: Nationalism, Secularism, & Islamism
- 3) Political Reform & Authoritarian Persistence
- 4) Opposition challenges the State
- 5) The Role of the Military
- 6) The Politics of the Gulf and International Economy of Oil
- 7) War & Security in the Middle East
- 8) The Arab-Israeli Conflict
- 9) Economic Reform of the Region's States

Requirements

Attendance: The College of Arts and Sciences **requires** that its professors take attendance. Since a close reading of the material is a necessity, attendance is **mandatory** and accounts for **10-percent** of your grade. Given that my presentations will complement and supplement the assigned reading, you will miss a great deal if you are absent. Only reading the text and/or relying on the session discussions will not be enough.

Attendance is also mandatory for all deadlines and evaluations. Make-ups and extensions will only be given in emergency situations on a case-by-case basis.

During class meetings, the instructor will introduce the scheduled topic and indicate how it relates to the overall course objectives. The remainder of each class is more interactive and requires active and informed student participation. This is a reading and thought intensive writing seminar. As such, it is imperative that students read the set texts closely to prepare for focused discussion. The success of this course is dependent on everyone's attendance and thoughtful contributions.

Quizzes: There will be **ONE** quiz in this course. Students will be asked to locate or name countries, capitals, historic cities and rivers on a map as well as in short answer form. This exercise will count for **10-percent** of your grade. The quiz will be given at the beginning of seminar on Thursday, September 17th.

Short Essay: An essay that considers and academically situates the film *Yacoubian Building* (2006) will account for **20-percent** of your grade. The film, which explores different themes and prevailing issues of contemporary life in Arab societies, will be shown during class on Thursday October 1st. I strongly recommend that you attend the showing during class. A discussion will follow.

Students will then be required to write a 1,500-2,000 word essay that takes the film and one of its prevailing themes and analytically engages with it based on questions that will be distributed following the film. No outside reading is required for the essay but critical analysis of the film and incorporating course material is necessary.

Term Paper: Since this is a "writing intensive" seminar, the term paper represents the central element for this course's evaluation. You are **required** to submit a 20-to-25 page (double-spaced, 1"-margins, Times New Roman Font, 12-point) on a topic of your choosing that carefully examines an aspect of the politics of the Middle East. This does not include a bibliography, which will be required and attached to the back of your term paper.

You may choose from a country case that examines a particular theme (such as Economic Reform in Jordan) or a theme that compares various cases (i.e. The role of Islamist movements in Egypt, Yemen, and Lebanon). Similarly, examining an aspect of the region's conflicts such as the Arab-Israeli conflict are acceptable topics, but please no "peace plans" or polemics that fail to take into account both sides of the argument.

Feel free to consult with me about your topics. I recommend not waiting until the last minute. High quality papers require time and preparation.

** There are three deadlines associated with this paper **

Proposal Deadline: October 1

Your proposal should be a 2-3 page written outline that designates your topic, argument, essay organization, and an annotated bibliography (5-7 sources) that shows invested preliminary research has been conducted. I should be able to get a sense of the organization and argument of your essay.

1st Submission: November 5

Your completed 20-25 page paper is due at the beginning of class. I will read and extensively comment as well as grade your effort. The essays will be returned to you on November 12. You will have a chance to revise and resubmit a final copy of your paper at the end of term for a second evaluation and grade.

2nd Submission:

The revised paper will account for 30-percent of your grade is due on the final day of class, which is **Thursday December 10th**

Extra Credit: Students that wish to improve their grade in their course can read thoughtful magazine and academic articles that deal with the politics of the region and write 3-page reaction papers (double-spaced, TNR 12-point font, 1” margins). Each reaction paper will be credited 1-percentage point towards your overall grade. The maximum number of extra credit papers that you can write is five per semester. You must clear the article with me before writing an extra credit assignment. Look in places such as the *New York Times Magazine*, *Middle East Report*, and other venues for thought provoking treatments of the region.

Evaluation & Assessment:

This course’s assessment will be distributed accordingly:

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| 1) Attendance: | 10-percent (5% attendance, 5% participation) |
| 2) Map Quiz (September 17): | 10-percent |
| 3) Short Essay (October 15): | 20-percent |
| 4) Proposal Deadline (October 1): | 20-percent |
| 5) Term Paper (1 st Sub) (November 5): | 10-percent |
| 6) Term Paper (2 nd Sub) (December 10): | 30-percent |

The term paper will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- * Relevance to question;
- * Sound ordering and structuring of material;
- * Quality and clarity of written expression;
- * Effective use of evidence;
- * Demonstration of sound understanding of topic;
- * Identification of major themes and arguments;
- * Critical evaluation and judgment;
- * Range of sources used;
- * Insight and originality.

A Note on Late Essay Submissions & Extension Requests:

Late essays will be downgraded one-third of a letter grade (i.e. from a B to a B-) if submitted after 2:15pm on the day they are due. They will be penalized an additional one-third of a letter grade for each day, they are late after that. Essays submitted more than five days after the due date will not be accepted. The due date for the Term Paper’s 2nd Submission corresponds to the end of the semester and is non-negotiable.

The deadlines are noted above and below. Requests for extensions must be made **in writing** and at least **one week** in advance of the deadline and are granted at the discretion of the professor. No extensions will be granted on the deadline of the Term Paper’s 2nd Submission.

GRADING Scale:

- A: 93-100, A-: 90-92
- B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82
- C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72
- D+: 67-69, D: 60-66
- F: Below 60

Required Texts: (Available at KSU Student Center Bookstore, Dubois & Campus Supply)

- 1) Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, 3rd Edition Boulder: Westview Press, 2007.
- 2) Charles Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents*, 6th Edition. New York: Bedford/St/Martin's, 2006.

All additional articles & readings will be made available on Vista. The readings will be posted by September 10th 2009.

Notes & Disclaimers:

- 1) Help: If you are having problems with this course, the readings, or the evaluations I urge you to come to my office hours. If those times are not convenience for you, please call my office (330-672-8922) or email me (jstacher@kent.edu) and I will gladly schedule an appointment to suit your schedule. Whatever you do, **DO NOT** wait until it is too late to get help from the professor.
- 2) Decorum: Everyone is entitled to say whatever they wish in the classroom. However, the central aspect to being able to be informed and critical thinking students requires a welcoming and civilized forum. The instructor will not tolerate insulting or intimidating statements or behavior towards your fellow colleagues in class.
- 3) Registration Requirement
The official registration deadline for this course is September 13, 2009. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashFast) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline. The last day to withdraw is November 8, 2009.
- 4) Student Accessibility Policy
University Policy 3342-3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. **Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services** (contact 330-672-3391 or visit <<http://www.kent.edu/sas>> for more information on registration procedures).
- 5) **Student Cheating and Plagiarism**
Cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. The university affirms that acts of cheating and plagiarism by students constitute a subversion of the goals of the institution, have no place in the university and are serious offenses to academic goals and objectives, as well as to the rights of fellow students.

Condensed Version

"Cheat" means to intentionally misrepresent the source, nature, or other conditions of academic work so as to accrue undeserved credit, or to cooperate with someone else in such misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

1. Obtaining or retaining partial or whole copies of examinations tests or quizzes before these are distributed for student use;
2. Using notes, textbooks or other information in examinations, tests and quizzes, except as expressly permitted;
3. Obtaining confidential information about examinations, tests or quizzes other than that released by the instructor;
4. Securing, giving or exchanging information during examinations;
5. Presenting data or other material gathered by another person or group as one's own;
6. Falsifying experimental data or information;
7. Having another person take one's place for any academic performance without the specific knowledge and permission of the instructor;
8. Cooperating with another to do one or more of the above;
9. Using a substantial portion of a piece of work previously submitted for another course or program to meet the requirements of the present course or program without notifying the instructor to whom the work is presented; and
10. Presenting falsified information in order to postpone or avoid examinations, tests, quizzes, or other academic work.

“Plagiarize” means to take and present as one’s own a material portion of the ideas or words of another or to present as one’s own an idea or work derived from an existing source without full and proper credit to the source of the ideas, words, or works. As defined, plagiarize includes, but is not limited to:

- a. The copying of words, sentences and paragraphs directly from the work of another without proper credit;
- b. The copying of illustrations, figures, photographs, drawings, models, or other visual and nonverbal materials, including recordings of another without proper credit; and
- c. The presentation of work prepared by another in final or draft form as one's own without citing the source, such as the use of purchased research papers.

Academic Sanctions

The following academic sanctions are provided by this rule for offenses of cheating or plagiarism. Kent campus instructors shall notify the department chairperson and the student conduct office each time a sanction is imposed. Regional campus instructors shall notify the regional campus dean and the student conduct officer each time a sanction is imposed. Regional campus student conduct officer shall notify the Kent student conduct office each time a sanction is imposed by a regional campus Instructor. The following academic sanctions are provided by this rule for offenses of cheating or plagiarism. In those cases the instructor may:

1. Refuse to accept the work for credit; or

2. Assign a grade of "F" or zero for the project, test, paper, examination or other work in which the cheating or plagiarism took place; or
3. Assign a grade of "F" for the course in which the cheating or plagiarism took place; and/or;
4. Recommend to the department chair or regional campus dean that further action specified in the rule be taken. The department chairperson or regional campus dean shall determine whether or not to forward to the academic dean or to the vice president for the extended university a recommendation for further sanction under this rule.

Academic Appeals

The general principle that applies to the following procedures is that an appeal is directed to the administrative level immediately above the unit from which the appeal emanates.

Appeals are limited to the following reasons:

- a. The decision is arbitrary or unreasonable,
- b. The decision resulted from a procedural error,
- c. The decision is not in accordance with the facts presented,
- d. New information is available which may suggest modification of the decision.

For complete policy and procedure go to <http://www.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/3-01-8.cfm>

Course & Reading Schedule:

- Th 9/03 Seminar 1: **Challenging Stereotypes: Introducing the Politics of the Middle East**
- 1) Syllabus distribution
 - 2) Course expectations
 - 3) View "Film Sakafi" [An Educational Film] (2004)

Historical Considerations

- Th 9/10 Seminar 2: **Framing the Politics of the Region**
- Readings:
- 1) Richards & Waterbury, Chapters 1 & 2 (pgs, 1-43)
 - 2) Hinnebusch, *IR of the ME*, (2003), pgs. 1-13
 - 3) Anderson, "Scholarship, Policy, Debate, and Conflict: Why We Study the Middle East and Why It Matters," Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Nov 2003):
<http://w3fp.arizona.edu/mesassoc/Bulletin/Pres%20Addresses/Anderson.htm>

- Th 9/17 Seminar 3: **State Formation**
Readings:
1) Cleveland & Bunton, chapters 9, 10, & 11 (pgs. 149-215)
2) Eugene Rogan, "The Emergence of the Middle East State System," in Fawcett, pgs. 17-38
3) Optional: Cleveland & Bunton, Chapter 13 (pgs. 239-271)
- Evaluation:
4) Map Quiz

Political & Economic Dynamics

- Th 9/24 Seminar 4: **Political Regimes & Opponents**
Readings:
1) Richards & Waterbury, Chapters 11 & 12 (pgs. 289-343)
2) Cleveland & Bunton, Chapters 15-16 (pgs. 301-344)
- Th 10/01 Seminar 5: **Economic Trajectories**
Readings:
1) Richards & Waterbury, Chapters Chapter 7 & 10 (pgs. 179-210 & 264-288)
2) Viewing "Omarat Yacoubian" [Yacoubian Building] (2006)
- Th 10/08 Seminar 6: **The Military & Politics**
Readings:
1) Richards & Waterbury, chapter 13 (pgs. 344-361)
2) Cook, "The Unspoken Power: Civil-Military Relations and the Prospects for Reform," Brookings Paper, (September 2004): (pgs. 7-32)
Deadline:
3) Term Paper Proposals Due
- Th 10/15 Seminar 7: **The Politics of Oil**
Readings:
1) Richards & Waterbury, chapter 3 (pgs. 44-70)
2) Beblawi, "The Rentier State in the Arab World," in Luciani, (1988): pgs. 85-98
3) Luciani, "Oil and Political Economy in the International Relations of the Middle East," in Fawcett, (pgs. 79-102)
Deadline:
4) Short essay due
- Th 10/22 Seminar 8: **Islamism as an Alternative**
Readings:
1) Richards & Waterbury, Chapter 14, (pgs. 362-383)

- 2) Zubaida, "Is Iran an Islamic State?" in Beinlin and Stork (1997): pgs. 103-119
- 3) Shehata & Stacher, "The Brotherhood Goes to Parliament," *Middle East Report*, (Fall 2006): Available at http://www.merip.org/mer/mer240/shehata_stacher.html

Th 10/29

Seminar 9: The Politics of Economic & Political Reform

Readings:

- 1) Richards & Waterbury, Chapters 8 & 9 (pgs. 211-263)
- 2) John Sfkianaskis, "The Whales of the Nile: Networks, Businessmen, and Bureaucrats in the Era of Privatization in Egypt," in Heydemann, (2004): pgs. 77-100
- 3) Kedourie *Democracy & Arab Political Culture* (1992): pgs. 1-11
- 4) Hudson, "The Political Culture Approach to Arab Democratization," in Brynen, Korany & Noble (1995): pgs. 61-76
- 5) Anderson, "Democracy in the Arab World: A Critique of the Political Culture Approach," in Brynen, Korany, & Noble (1995): pgs. 77-92
- 6) Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?" *American Anthropologist* (2002), pgs. 783-790

Th 11/05

Seminar 10: The Iranian Revolution

Readings:

- 1) Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of the Revolution* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2006): pgs. 214-239.
- 2) Cleveland & Bunton, Chapter 20 (pgs. 423-450)
- 3) Keshavarzian, "Elite Fragmentation in Iran," in Posusney & Angrist (2005): pgs.

Deadline:

- 4) Term Paper (1st Submission) due**

The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Th 11/12

Seminar 11: Palestine before 1914 - 1921

Readings:

- 1) Smith, Chapters 1 & 3, (pgs. 1-22 & 59-110)

Th 11/19

Seminar 12: Before Israel's Establishment

Readings:

- 1) Smith, Chapters 4 & 5 (pgs. 111-225)

Th 11/26

No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Th 12/03

Seminar 13: The Establishment of Israel and the Wars until 1984

Readings: Smith, Chapters 6, 7, 8, & 9 (pgs. 226-405)

Th 12/10

Seminar 14: **The Palestinians & the State of Israel**

Readings:

- 1) Smith, Chapters 10, 11, & 12, (pgs. 406- 558)
- 2) Robert Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review* (2003), pgs. 343-361.

Viewing:

- 3) "Paradise Now" (2005)

Deadline:

- 4) Term Paper (2nd Submission) Due**

Good Luck this Semester!