

## **The Politics of Middle East Fall 2011**

POL10500.002  
Fall 2011  
Class Time: T/H: 12:30-1:45pm  
Classroom: Bowman 317

Professor: Joshua Stacher  
Office: 302 Bowman (office 17)  
Office Hours: T: 8-9:15am  
                  10:30am-12:30pm  
                  H: 8-9:15am  
                  (or by appointment)  
Office Phone: (330) 672-8922  
Email: [jstacher@kent.edu](mailto:jstacher@kent.edu)

### **Course Objective:**

The peoples and countries of the Middle East are frequently portrayed as existing in a timeless state. In the lands of history, they are supposedly prisoners of it. We are told repeatedly that their “Islamic” culture is traditional, their “oil” economies un-globalized, and their “sultanistic” political systems backwards. It was an unpredictable but welcome shock when the region’s populations began to mobilize and demand change beginning in December 2010. Subsequently, the peoples in the countries of the Middle East produced multiple uprisings and (some say) revolutions since January 2011.

The 2011 Arab Intifadas (Uprisings) have sent very clear messages: Those who have been ruled have had enough of those who have ruled them, controlled their natural resources, and interfered in their daily lives. Questions, however, persist: Is the “old” order being thrown off as brave revolutionary youths faceoff against their dictators? Since some of authoritarian leaders have been overthrown, can we expect the emergence of democracy? Are we witnessing the Middle East’s 1989 moment? Or – on a more pessimistic note – has all that much changed? Are we witnessing the reconstitution of the *ancien regimes* in different guises?

These are all important and interesting questions to be sure. But there are, at least, two fundamental questions from which they all eminent from:

- 1) What counts for political change?
- 2) Who or what is producing or can produce political change?

We will spend the bulk of the semester asking these questions as we try to understand the changes that are taking place within a larger historical perspective of political and social change. This reading and thought intensive course introduces students to theories that encourage a more nuanced appreciation of the Middle East.

There will be four major objectives guiding the course: Firstly, the course will examine the political, social, and economic themes that generate debate in the field of Middle East Studies. Secondly, we will seek out comparative insights about the political systems of the Middle East. Thirdly, we will examine the role of social movements and ordinary people in producing wider social and political change. Lastly, we will examine the 2011 Arab Uprisings.

Central themes that we will address are:

- 1) The Emergence of the Middle East State System
  - 2) Authoritarian Legacies, Persistence, and Political Reform
  - 3) Identity and Gender
  - 4) The Political Economy of the Region
  - 5) Civil Society and Opposition Challenges to the State
  - 6) The Political systems in the Gulf, the Meshreq and the Maghrib.
  - 7) Social Movements as a Source of Political Change
  - 8) Everyday Life as a Source of Political Change
  - 9) The 2011 Arab Uprisings
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## 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.**

**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. You will also be asked to name some of the region's current or recent presidents or monarchs (2005-present). This exercise will count for **15-percent** of your grade. The quiz will be given at the beginning of seminar on Thursday, September 22.

**Mid-Term:** All seminar participants are required to take a mid-term exam in this seminar. Students will produce 2-essay answers from a larger list of question. Although there will be choice, anticipate this to be a challenging exercise. The exam will take place during one class setting and will be 75-minutes long. The mid-term constitutes **25-percent** of your final grade and will be on Tuesday, October 18.

**Writing Assignment:** Students (writing as solo-authors or in teams of up to three people) are expected to write a **12/14-page** paper (Times New Roman, 12-point, 1"-margins, double-spaced).

There will be some choice in terms of the assignment. You will either write 1) a detailed paper on an aspect of the Egyptian Uprising or 2) a mock-grant proposal to go conduct research in the Middle Eastern country of your choice. More details will follow on the exact details of this assignment.

The paper is worth **25-percent** of your grade and is due on Thursday November 22.

Written work will be assessed according to the following criteria:

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

**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 12:30pm 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 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.

**Final Exam:** This class will end with a final exam to be delivered according the University's exam schedule. There will be two sections to the exam – 1) a section that deals with a topic or theme we have explored after the mid-term and 2) a section that asks you to make use of the material that you've learned from the beginning of the semester. The mid-term question and cumulative questions will be weighed equally.

The Final Exam is worth **25-percent** of your grade and will take place on December 16 at 12:45pm in Bowman 317.

**Evaluation & Assessment:**

This course's assessment will be distributed accordingly:

- |                                    |            |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| 1) Attendance:                     | 10-percent |
| 2) Map Quiz (September 22):        | 15-percent |
| 3) Mid-Term (October 18):          | 25-percent |
| 4) Paper Assignment (November 22): | 25-percent |
| 5) Final Exam (December 16):       | 25-percent |

**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:**

All the texts will be available at the KSU Student Center Bookstore and Campus Supply. They are also available on Amazon.com

- 1) Michele Penner Angrist (Editor), *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publisher, 2010). Referred to as "Textbook" below.
- 2) Joel Beinin and Federic Vairel (Eds.) *Social Movements, Mobilization, and Contestation in the Middle East and North Africa* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2011).
- 3) Asef Bayat, *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2010).

All additional articles & readings will be placed on the course's Vista site. The additional readings are available from today.

**Supplemental Reading & Viewing:**

Reading:

- *Middle East Report* (<http://www.merip.org>) has the best reporting on the region. Plus, KSU has a subscription through the library. Please feel free to liberally use MERIP. The Spring and Summer 2011 issues both examine the Arab Uprisings.
- *Jadaliyya* (<http://www.jadaliyya.com>) is a website with some of the most cutting edge work on the Middle East. There are also interview videos, film reviews, and photo essays. You should be checking *Jadaliyya* on a daily basis.
- *Middle East Channel* (<http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com>) is a website that contains research and op-ed style reports. It is updated daily between Monday through Friday. It should be part of your daily news in-take.

Viewing:

- *Al-Jazeera English* (AJE) is available to live stream on the Internet free of charge. If a big event happens this semester, consider turning to AJE for news, their opinion page, and their documentaries and roundtables. The website is <http://english.aljazeera.net>

**Special Events:**

The Northeast Ohio University Consortium on Middle East Studies (NOUCMES) recently was awarded a Social Science Research Council grant for its proposal, entitled, "Scholarship on the Contemporary Muslim World: Presenting New Perspectives to Middle America". The Consortium is charged with delivering a high-quality speaker series that will consist of 6-7 invited speakers and consist of between 12-14 events during the 2011-2012 Academic Year. You can benefit from all this by attending and taking part in the speaker series.

In fact, the first event in the series is scheduled to take place at Kent State's Journalism School (Franklin Hall) between 5-7pm on October 4, 2011. Details will follow this semester but there will be three speakers slated to come to NE OH during the semester.

- Rami Khouri, Journalist, American University of Beirut, October 4-5, 2011
- Sherine Hafiz, Anthropologist, UC-Riverside, November 14-15, 2011
- Toby Craig Jones, Historian, University of Rutgers, December 15-16, 2011

## Course & Reading Schedule

### Introducing the Politics of the Modern Middle East

- T 8/30 Class 1: Class introductions, discussion about expectations  
Syllabus distribution
- H 9/1 Class 2: Introductory lecture

### State Formation: Emerging from Colonialism

- T 9/6 Class 3: The Contemporary Middle East  
1) Textbook: Angrist, pg. 1-25.  
2) Owen, "The Growth of State Power in the Arab World," pgs. 23-55. (Vista)

### Autocratic Regimes, Civil Society, Economies & the International Factor

- H: 9/8 Class 4: **Regimes and Opposition**  
Textbook: El-Ghobashy, pgs. 29-47.
- T 9/13 Class 5: **Civil Society**  
Textbook: Carapico, pgs. 91-110.
- H 9/15 Class 6: **Political Economy**  
Textbook: Moore, pgs. 69-91
- T 9/20 Class 7: **The External Environment**  
Textbook: Gause, pgs. 49-68.
- H 9/22 Class 8: **Quiz** on the Region

### Identity, Religion, and Gender

- T 9/27 Class 9: **Identity & Politics**  
Textbook: Patel, pgs. 133-155
- H 9/29 Class 10: **Religion and Politics**  
1) Textbook: Schwedler, pgs. 111-131.  
2) Mitchell, "McJihad: Islam in the US Global Order,"  
*Social Text* Vol. 73: No 4 (Winter 2002): pgs. 1-18. (Vista)  
3) Shehata & Stacher, "The Brotherhood Goes to Parliament"  
*Middle East Report*, issue 240, (Fall 2006). Available:  
[http://www.merip.org/mer/mer240/shehata\\_stacher.h  
tml](http://www.merip.org/mer/mer240/shehata_stacher.html)
- T 10/4 Class 11: **Gender in the Middle East**  
1) Textbook: Singerman, pgs. 155-173.  
2) Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?"  
*American Anthropologist* (September 2002): 783-790.

### Cases Studies: Republics

- H 10/6 Class 12: **Revolutionary Regimes I - Egypt**  
Textbook: Brown and Shahin, pgs. 203-228.
- T 10/11 Class 13: **Revolutionary Regimes II: Non-Arab Exception? Iran**  
Textbook: Keshavarzian, pgs. 229-259.
- H 10/13 Class 14: Syria: Film & Discussion: "Flood in Baath Country"
- T 10/18 Class 15: **Midterm Exam**

### **Case Studies: Monarchies**

- H 10/20                      Class 16: **Absolute Monarchies: Saudi Arabia**  
1) Anderson, "Absolutism and The Resilience of Monarchy in the Middle East" *Political Science Quarterly* 106:1 (1991): 1-15.  
2) Textbook: Okruhlik, pgs. 387-410  
3) Jones, Saudi Alchemy: Water into Oil, Oil into Water," *Middle East Report*, issue 254, Spring 2010
- T 10/25                      Class 17: **Constitutional Monarchies: Jordan**  
Textbook: Ryan, pgs. 311-333.
- H 10/27                      Class 18: **No Class** (Professor is at a Research Workshop)

### **Producing Change: Social Movements**

- T 11/1                      Class 19: Beinin & Vairel, Introduction & Chapter 1, "Protesting in Authoritarian Settings," pgs. 1-42
- H 11/3                      Class 20: Beinin & Vairel, Chapter 8 "Hizbollah's Women," 163-178
- T 11/8                      Class 21: Beinin and Vairel, Chapter 9 "A Worker's Social Movement on the Margins of the Global Neoliberal Order," pgs.181-201.

### **Producing Change: Ordinary Life**

- H 11/10                      Class 22: Bayat, (1) Introduction and (2) Transforming the Arab Middle East, pgs. 1-43.
- T 11/15                      Class 23: **Social Non-movements**, Bayat, (3) Quiet Encroachment, (4) The Poor, (5) Feminism of Everyday Life, pgs. 43-114
- H 11/17                      Class 24: (6) Reclaiming Youthfulness and (7) The Politics of Fun, pgs. 115-158
- T 11/22                      Class 25: **Street Politics**, Bayat, (8) A Street Named 'Revolution', (10) Everyday Cosmopolitanism, (11) The Arab Street, pgs. 161-170, & 185-220.
- Paper Assignment Due**

H 11/24                      **NO Class: Thanksgiving Break**

### **The 2011 Arab Uprisings**

- T 11/29                      Class 26: AJE Documentary & Discussion, "The Fall of Mubarak"
- H 12/1                      Class 27: **NO Class** (Professor is at a Professional Conference)
- T 12/6                      Class 28: *Middle East Report*, Spring 2011 Issue, Number 258.
- H 12/8                      Class 29: *Middle East Report*, Summer 2011 Issue, Number 259.

**The Final Exam is on Friday, December 16, 2011**

**Good Luck this Semester!**

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## Notes & Disclaimers:

- 1) Help: If you are having problems with this course, the readings, or the evaluations I urge you to come to my hours. If those times are not convenient for you, please call my office (330-672-8922) or email me ([jstacher@kent.edu](mailto: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 forum. The instructor will not tolerate insulting or intimidating statements or behavior towards your fellow colleagues in class.
- 3) Turn off your Cell Phones. The professor reserves the right to ask students whose cell phones ring or who are texting to leave the class.
- 4) Please do not come in late. The professor reserves the right to not admit late students.
- 5) Laptops may only be used in class for note taking. Please see me for permission.
- 6) Accessibility Services: 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 [www.kent.edu/sas](http://www.kent.edu/sas)<<http://www.registrars.kent.edu/disability/>> for more information on registration procedures).
- 7) Registration Requirement: The official registration deadline for this course is September 7, 2008. 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.
- 8) Administrative Policy and Procedures Regarding Student Cheating and Plagiarism:

### *Condensed Version*

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.

"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 [www.kent.edu/policyregister3342-3-01.8](http://www.kent.edu/policyregister3342-3-01.8).

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