Course Overview

This course provides an advanced introduction to the politics of the Middle East. The first section of the course addresses key themes and issues. After examining key debates about the politics of studying the Middle East, we then explore social change; the political economy of development; institutions and governance; religion and society; actors, public opinion and participation; human rights; terrorism; nuclear capabilities; and the broader international relations of the Middle East. The second section of the course explores these themes and issues using a variety of case studies. We address Israel, Palestine, the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey and Libya.

Required Book and Readings

There is one required book for purchase, which is available at the Dalhousie University Bookstore. Other required readings are available online via Brightspace. The required book is:


Grade Distribution

1) Small Paper (Due in class on January 26): 15%
2) Mid-Term Exam (Held in class on February 16): 25%
3) Major Research Paper (Due in class on March 14): 35%
4) Final Exam (Take-home exam due in class April 6): 25%

Assignments

1) Small Paper: Students will write a paper of approximately 1,000-1,250 words (4-5 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font) in response to a question provided by the
instructor. The question will address material covered during the first three weeks of the course. The purpose of the assignment is to assess the student’s understanding of the course material. As such, students should refer to, and cite, **only material covered in the readings and lectures**. The paper is due in class on January 26. It is worth 15% of the course grade. Late papers will be assessed a penalty of 5 percentage points per day. Papers submitted more than 7 days late will not be accepted.

2) **Mid-Term Exam**: The mid-term exam will be held in class on February 16. It is worth 25% of the course grade. The first portion of the mid-term exam will ask students to define and explain the significance of key terms. The second portion will ask students to write an essay in response to a question. Both portions will give students some choice about which terms and essay questions they wish to answer.

3) **Research Paper**: Students will write a research paper of approximately 2,500 words (8-10 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font). Students are free to choose their topic provided that it relates to the politics of the Middle East. The instructor will provide some suggested topic questions for consideration. The paper is due in class on March 14. It is worth 40% of the course grade. Late papers will be assessed a penalty of 5 percentage points per day. Papers submitted more than 7 days late will not be accepted. Students must submit a hard copy of the paper to the instructor. Papers cannot be submitted via email. The late penalty is administered based on the date that a hard copy was submitted.

4) **Final Exam**: The final exam will be a take-home exam that is due in class on April 6. It is worth 25% of the course grade. Students will write one essay in response to a question provided by the instructor.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

1) **Academic Integrity**: Students are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with Dalhousie University’s policies on academic integrity, particularly the section concerning plagiarism and cheating, but also the section concerning student resources: [http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

   Additional information about academic integrity and University policies can be found here: [http://www.dal.ca/faculty/healthprofessions/faculty-and-staff/academic-integrity/information-for-faculty.html](http://www.dal.ca/faculty/healthprofessions/faculty-and-staff/academic-integrity/information-for-faculty.html)

   All assignments submitted may be subjected to evaluation by Urkund, a University approved computer service that checks assignments for plagiarism. Students are required to retain an electronic copy of all papers in addition to the hard copy submitted to the professor. More information about Urkund can be found here: [https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/faculty-resources/urkund--plagiarism-detection.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity/faculty-resources/urkund--plagiarism-detection.html)
2) **Academic Accommodation.** Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers experienced related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian human rights legislation.

Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit [www.dal.ca/access](http://www.dal.ca/access) for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca

3) **Key Dates.** January 20 is the last day to add winter term courses, the last day for late registration, and the last day to drop winter term courses with no financial implications. February 10 is the last day to drop winter term courses without a “W” and the last day to change winter term courses from audit to credit (and vice versa). March 17 is the last day to drop winter term classes with a “W.”

4) **Grade Appeals.** Students who wish to appeal their grade must produce a brief written statement (approximately 250 words) explaining why they feel that the assignment/exam was not graded correctly. Appeals must be made within one week from the date on which the assignment/exam was returned. The appeal process will produce a revised grade that may be raised, unchanged, or lowered. The revised grade is final and cannot be appealed.

5) **Use of electronic devices.** Students are not permitted to use any electronic devices during the mid-term exam. Students are asked to turn off their cell phones during lectures. Laptops, tablets and other electronic devices may be used during lectures for note taking, but not for any purpose that is distracting to class (i.e. listening to music, streaming videos, etc).

6) **Email Communication with the Instructor.** Emails to the instructor must be sent from the student’s official Dalhousie University Email Account. The instructor will not respond to emails sent from any other account. Grades will not be discussed over Email.

7) **Grade Scale and Definitions.** All course assignments will be graded according to the following grade scale, which was approved by the Dalhousie University Senate in 2014:

### Grade Scale and Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>85-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Grading Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Good base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>Satisfactory Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>55-59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>Marginal Pass Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills (except in programs where a minimum grade of &quot;C&quot; or &quot;C+&quot; is required).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FM</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Marginal Failure Available only for Engineering, Health Professions and Commerce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0-49</td>
<td>Inadequate Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>Withdrew after deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILL</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>Compassionate reasons, illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>Transfer credit on admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade not reported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WEEKLY READINGS AND TOPICS

SECTION 1 – THEMES AND ISSUES
IN THE POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

January 10 – Introduction to the Class


January 12 – The Politics of Studying the Middle East


January 17 – Social Change in the Middle East


January 19 – The Political Economy of Development in the Middle East


January 24 – Institutions and Governance


January 26 – Religion, Society, and Politics in the Middle East

*** Short Paper due in class ***


**January 31 – Actors, Public Opinion, Participation**


**February 2 – Human Rights**


**February 7 – Terrorism**


**February 9 – Nuclear Capabilities**


February 14 – Mid-Term Exam Review Class (And Research Paper Information Session)

No readings

February 16 – Mid-Term Exam

No readings

February 21 and 23 – Reading Week (No Classes)

No readings

February 28 – International Relations


SECTION 2 – CASE STUDIES

March 2 - Israel, Palestine and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Part 1)


March 7 - Israel, Palestine and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (Part 2)


**March 9 – Jordan**


**March 14 - Egypt**

*** Research Paper due in class ***


Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar, “Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: The Case of Egypt,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 46 (4) 2013: 727-734.

**March 16 – Saudi Arabia**


**March 21 – Iraq**


**March 23 - Iran**


**March 28 - Syria**


**March 30 - Turkey**


**April 4 – Libya**


Brian McQuinn, “Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: The Case of Libya,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 46 (4) 2013: 716-720.

**April 6 – Take Home Exam due in Class**

No Readings