

Middle East Politics
Political Science 391 (#16648)
Fall 2014

Instructor: Dr. Carolyn Shaw
Class: M/W 11:00-12:15 LH 114
Office hours: M-Th 9:30-11:00, or by appointment
Lindquist Hall Room 418B

<https://www.facebook.com/carolyn.shaw.336>

I am available for IM chat during office hours if that is more convenient for you.

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Overview of the Course

This course is an introductory course on the regional politics of the Middle East. The course will include both a comparative politics perspective (contrasting the domestic politics *within* different countries), as well as an international relations perspective (explaining varying relationships *between* countries). The content will be organized thematically (political economy, gender, religion, poverty, conflict, etc.), but we will also use specific country case studies to illustrate different themes. We will alternate between lecture days and group discussion days for most topic areas.

Learning Philosophy / Course objectives

This class is discussion based because I believe that students learn best when actively engaged with the materials of the course. Students can learn from listening to each other, not just to the professor. By actively participating in regular group discussions, students can formulate and learn to articulate their own ideas about controversial issues.

- * This class is designed for students who are genuinely curious about the Middle East and are motivated to read deeply and really explore these complex, difficult issues. Students should not take this class if they simply want to put in the minimum amount of work to 'get by'. The quality of the class is significantly enriched by the knowledge and views that each student contributes to the discussions. If students do not read and reflect on the materials prior to our discussions, they not only short change themselves, but do a disservice to their classmates by not being prepared.

It is my hope that students will achieve the following objectives in this course:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the culture and history of the region that dispels shallow, stereotypical images of the Middle East.
- Grapple with the different views on complex issues to establish their own informed perspective.
- Become more adept at articulating and defending their positions through dialogue and discussion, while respecting views that are different from their own.
- Gain enough foundational knowledge to be able to critically appraise future developments in the region.

Requirements

Students are expected to **attend class regularly**. Attendance will be taken throughout the semester. Because class discussion is central to the class, only 2 recorded absences will be allowed before points will be deducted from the attendance grade.

Students are expected to **read all of the assigned readings** and to be able to discuss them in class. (Average weekly reading assignment will be 60-80 pages).

Writing assignments will include reviewing two movies, completing a case study assignment, completing exam study guides, and writing a role play paper. (Details below)

Students will take **two essay exams** and a **geography quiz**.

Required Reading

Angrist, Michele Penner, ed. Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East. (2nd ed) Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2013.

Schwedler, Jillian, ed. Understanding the Contemporary Middle East. (4th ed) Lynne Rienner Publishing, 2013.

Supplemental Reading

- * Miscellaneous relevant readings will be posted on Bb throughout the semester for your review. These are optional, but obviously of interest to the weekly course content.
- * *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Al Jazeera, BBC, Arab News, Gulf News, or other daily news source.*

Grading

Attendance	8 pts (full points for 2 or fewer absences, 1 point off for each day missed after 2)
Geography Quiz	5 pts
Case Studies Assignment	12 pts (1 pt each country, due in two parts)
Movie Reviews	10 pts (5 pts each)
Role Play Assignment	15 pt (10 pts paper, 5 pts for participation)
Exam 1	25 pts (15 for exam + 10 pts for study guide)
Exam 2	25 pts (15 for exam + 10 pts for study guide)

A = 93 - 100 points

A - = 90 - 93

B+ = 85 - 89

B = 80 - 84

C+ = 75 - 79

C = 70 - 74

D+ = 65 - 69

D = 60 - 64

F = 59 or below

Geography Quiz

It's hard to follow a discussion about history and politics when you don't even know where a country is on the map. Geography matters. What countries share borders? Where are the strategic locations and natural resources? Are resources scarce or abundant? We will discuss all of these points, but you will simply be asked to properly place a list of countries on a blank map. Maps of the Middle East will be distributed early in the semester for you to study. Quiz on **Aug 25 (Monday)**.

Case Studies Assignment

The Angrist textbook contains case studies of 12 individual countries. We will not go over the specific histories of each country in class, but these cases provide specific examples that illustrate the thematic discussions in class. These cases examine aspects of history, political opposition, political economy, religion and politics, civil society, identity, gender, and the impact of international politics in each country. You will type a brief bullet-pointed summary of these aspects for each country (1 page max for each country).

The assignment will be due in two parts.

Part I: Jordan, Turkey, Syria, Israel, Palestine. **Due Sept 29 (Monday)**

Part II: Algeria, Kuwait, UAE, Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Iran. **Due Dec 3 (Weds)**.

Movie Reviews

Movies can provide great insights into a region's culture and make a far away place much more real for people watching. You will select two movies from two lists (historical and contemporary) to watch and write a review of. Your review will include a brief summary of the plot, discussion of the themes as they relate to class topics, and your own personal reflections on the movie. Length 2-3 pages each.

Review #1 due Sept 15 (Mon)

Review #2 due Nov 10 (Mon).

Role Play Assignment

One of the most challenging aspects to understanding Middle East politics is appreciating why diplomatic negotiations are so difficult. You will be assigned a specific role to play in negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear capabilities. You must do your best to represent the interests of your assigned role. In preparation you will write a brief paper regarding the policy preferences of your state and actor, then you will spend four days trying to reach consensus with other regional actors to resolve the crisis. **Paper due Oct 22 (Weds)**.

Study Guide Questions

You will complete the study guides in preparation for the two essay exams. These completed guides will count as 20% of your actual exam grade.

Part I: Due Oct 6 (Mon)

Schwedler Chaps 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Angrist Chaps 1, 2, 3, 5

Part II: Due Dec 8 (Mon)

Schwedler Chaps 7, 8, 9, 11, 12

Angrist Chaps 4, 6, 7, 8

Exams

Exams are given to hold you accountable for the assigned readings and to help you assimilate and analyze all of the content covered in class. They will be essay exams. You will have a choice regarding which of several questions you write on for the exam. 80% of the grade is based on your exam essays, and 20% is based on turning in your completed study guide. The questions for the exam will be taken directly from the study guide.

Exam 1 Oct 6 (Mon)

Exam 2 Dec 8 (Mon) AT 10:00 AM (scheduled during finals week)

The 2nd exam will not be cumulative. It will be on materials from the 2nd half of the semester.

WSU Blackboard

This course is facilitated by Blackboard, an online web aid accessible to all WSU students. The Blackboard page for this course contains a copy of the syllabus, lecture outlines, study guide questions, the writing assignments, current course grades, and web links to a variety of international topics. In order to access this site (www.blackboard.wichita.edu) you need your MyWSU number and pin number.

Academic Freedom / Respect for Others

Each student is encouraged to participate in class discussions. In any class that includes discussion of political ideas, there are bound to be many differing points of view. Students may not only disagree with each other, but may also have disparate views from the instructor on sensitive and volatile topics. It is my hope that these differences will enhance class discussion and create an atmosphere where students and instructor alike will be encouraged to think and learn. Therefore, be assured that your grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs or ideas expressed in class or your assignments. Rather, **we will all respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.**

Incompletes

An incomplete grade will only be given in the case of a documented medical or other emergency. To request an incomplete grade, a student must see me in my office and explain their need for an incomplete and fill out the necessary form. In most cases, it is in the student's best interest to complete the assigned course work on schedule.

I will not withdraw students from the class. It is a student's responsibility to monitor his/her progress in the course and to initiate withdrawal procedures on his/her own if necessary. To withdraw from a class, students must do it officially through the Registrar, and the Tuition and Fees Office.

Scholastic Dishonesty

As described in the Student Catalog, scholastic dishonesty constitutes a violation of college rules and regulations and is punishable according to the procedures outlined in the Catalog. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, plagiarism, and collusion. Plagiarism includes use of another author's words or arguments without attribution. Collusion is defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements. If a student commits any of these actions, I will seek disciplinary action in the form of an academic penalty, including a course grade of 'F'.

Date	Topic	Reading/ Assignment
Aug 18 (M)	Overview	Schwedler Chap 1
Aug 20 (W)	Geography	Schwedler Chap 2
Aug 25 (M)	History	Schwedler Chap 3 Geography Quiz
Aug 27 (W)	History	
Sept 1 (M)	Labor Day	NO CLASS
Sept 3 (W)	Politics	Angrist Chap 1, 2 Schwedler Chap 4
Sept 8 (M)	Politics	
Sept 10 (W)	Civil Society	Angrist Chap 5 Angrist Chaps 14, 19 (Jordan, Turkey)
Sept 15 (M)	Civil Society	Movie Assignment #1 DUE
Sept 17 (W)	International Relations	Angrist chap 3 Schwedler Chap 5 Angrist chap 18 (Syria)
Sept 22 (M)	International Relations	
Sept 24 (W)	Israel-Palestine Case	Schwedler Chap 6 Angrist Chaps 13, 16 (Israel and Palestine)
Sept 29 (M)	Israel-Palestine Case	Case Studies Assignment #1 DUE
Oct 1 (W)	Israel-Palestine Case	
Oct 6 (M)	EXAM 1	Study Guide #1 DUE
Oct 8 (W)	Economics	Angrist Chap 4 Schwedler Chap 7 Angrist Chap 9 (Algeria)
Oct 13 (M)	October Break	NO CLASS
Oct 15 (W)	Oil	Schwedler Chap 8 Angrist Chap 15 (Kuwait and UAE)
Oct 20 (M)	Economics and Oil	
Oct 22 (W)	Role Play Day 1	Role Play paper DUE
Oct 27 (M)	Role Play Day 2	
Oct 29 (W)	Role Play Day 3	
Nov 3 (M)	Role Play Day 4	
Nov 5 (W)	Urbanization	Schwedler Chap 9 Angrist Chap 10 (Egypt)
Nov 10 (M)	Urbanization	Movie Assignment #2 DUE
Nov 12 (W)	Ethnicity /Identity	Angrist Chap 7 Angrist Chap 12 (Iraq)
Nov 17 (M)	Ethnicity /Identity	
Nov 19 (W)	Religion	Angrist Chap 6 (by Schwedler) Schwedler Chap 12 Angrist Chap 11 (Iran)
Nov 24 (M)	TBD	
Nov 26 (W)	Thanksgiving	NO CLASS
Dec 1 (M)	Gender	Angrist Chap 8 Schwedler Chap 11 Angrist Chap 17 (Saudi Arabia)
Dec 3 (W)	Religion and Gender	Case Study #2 DUE
Dec 8 (M) @ 10:00 AM	EXAM 2 Scheduled Final Time	Study Guide #2 DUE

