

NYU DC

POL-UA 9540-001 DC1

Politics of the Near and Middle East

Spring 2019

Instructor Information

- Matthew Goldman
- Office hours by appointment
- Email: meg308@nyu.edu

Course Information

- POL-UA 9540-001
- Politics of the Near and Middle East
- Meeting Times: Wednesdays 6:15-9:15pm
- Room B203

Course Overview and Goals

This is a survey course exploring the politics of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and the intersection of politics and mass public opinion. We will address in this course those themes most relevant in the MENA region, including history, politics, and economics, while also examining how attitudes among ordinary citizens are influenced by these dynamics and, conversely, explore the extent to which political actors are influenced by opinion.

This course unfolds in five parts. The first section is introductory and discusses past approaches to understanding the MENA region and their limitations, followed by a brief history of the MENA and its colonial experience. The second section addresses the evolution of the post-colonial state and state formation. This will include an exploration of the *impact* of the post-colonial state on MENA societies and on the shape of contemporary institutions and governments. We then consider broader trends in the MENA, critically post-Arab Spring dynamics, which are characterized by varied responses, ranging from regime collapse, government reform, and devastating civil war, as political forces compete for control of the state. Within this context, we also address to role of non-state actors, such as Islamist movements and groups and others, economic crisis, the status of women and family, shifting relations between Arab states and the impact on regional security, and the influence of globalization and the war on terrorism. Weekly topics will feature illustrative case study examples.

Public opinion related to these dynamics matters, though is often overlooked in understanding MENA politics. This class examines the attitudes of mass publics towards Islamist movements and the role of religion in public life, political parties and other institutions, U.S. policy in the MENA region, etc., and how such views are influenced by factors such as education, economic and political opportunity. We will integrate public opinion analysis throughout the course, particularly after the introductory portions. This will entail interesting comparative analyses across countries, between men and women and age groups in order to determine if there are similarities in views cross nationally in an effort to develop a more nuanced understanding of MENA politics and society. We will draw on surveys used for academic research, development organizations, think tanks, polling organizations, etc.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- You will hopefully come away with a greater understanding of MENA political systems and society.
- Students will be able to assess political systems by using public opinion surveys along with other existing approaches.
- You will learn to appreciate similarities and differences in MENA public opinion and politics in comparative perspective.

Course Requirements

Class Participation

The course will be organized in seminar fashion. The success of the class will hinge on your having read the assigned readings and coming to class ready to discuss them with your instructor and fellow students. Our classes will be structured around series of questions on the readings and the subjects that they cover: I will ask you questions, you will ask me questions, and we will ask questions of each other. It will be particularly helpful if you prepare in advance two to three questions to ask before each class.

Please note that attendance is **MANDATORY**. For each unexcused absence, you will lose 2 percentage points from your final grade. For example, one unexcused absence would drop a 90% A- grade down to an 88% B+. Please consult the Attendance and Tardiness section below for more details.

Note on Guest Speakers: We will have a number of guest speakers throughout the semester, coming from the fields of politics, academia, and civil society. It is particularly important that you pay them the utmost respect, listen attentively to their presentations, and engage them in a constructive way during the question and answer sections following their talks. They come from a variety of fields and may have valuable career advice for you, so feel free to ask them questions about your career goals in addition to discussing their fields of expertise.

Mid-Term

There will be a mid-term exam during the first portion of the semester. The mid-term will cover key concepts and trends. We will review what is required prior to the exam.

Reaction Papers

Each student is responsible for writing three (3) well-written, thoughtful reaction papers (4-5 pages in length, 12-point font, double-spaced) engaging the assigned readings in class. The questions will be provided for you at least a week in advance. The response papers should critically discuss the readings (while some summary is necessary it should be kept to a minimum as the papers are really about your opinions and critique). For instance, you can raise new questions based on the materials, juxtapose different texts, or focus on one set of readings. You should develop a single argument (or a couple) and adequately support them. Any standard citation format will suffice. **Papers must be submitted in class in hard copy format with the exception of the final paper.**

Note: In order for you to best understand the requirements of this course before the end of the add/drop period, the first reaction paper will be due in Week 2. Given that this is very early in the semester, if you are unhappy with your grade you will have the opportunity to submit a revised version the following week. This will allow you to improve your paper after having received feedback. I will then grade the revised version, replacing the initial grade.

Group Presentations

In groups of 2 or 3, you must complete **one (1)** oral group presentation that discusses all of the readings in a given week. You may choose your week. Essentially, the group should summarize the readings from the articles of the week (some articles will be very short). The group presentations should point out the major arguments and conclusions. A thoughtful presentation will include your own assessment of what is interesting about the articles and will also lead the class discussion, which involves asking interesting questions such as: what aspects of the reading(s) were most convincing, or least convincing? Are there other examples in the region or historically that support or refute the authors' arguments? Are there any other factors that should have been considered in the analysis? You are also welcome to ask questions of the class. The presentation should last roughly 30 minutes, though length may vary due to article detail or length. PowerPoint and handouts are not necessary.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class Participation	10%
Mid-Term	20%

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Reaction Papers	3 x 15% = 45%
Group Presentations	25%

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A	4.00	94-100
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.00	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.00	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.00	65-66
F	.00	Below 65

View Grades

Your grades will be available on NYU Classes.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 6- Feb-19	Course Introduction, Review of Syllabus, Course Themes and Topics	None	None
Session 2 13- Feb-19	Themes and Approaches to Understanding the MENA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schwedler, Chapter 1• Edward Said, Introduction and Chapter 1, Covering Islam (Vintage, Revised Edition, 2015) [NYU Classes]• Zachary Lockman, “Orientalism and Empire” in Contending Visions of the Middle East, the History and Politics of Orientalism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 66-98. [NYU Classes]• Salim Yaqub, Introduction, Containing Arab Nationalism (University of North Carolina Press, 2004) [NYU Classes]• Tessler, Introduction• Pew Research Survey: Muslims and Islam: Key Findings, 2016, accessed here at http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/07/22/muslims-and-islam-key-findings-in-the-u-s-and-around-the-world/	First Reaction Paper Due
Session 3 20- Feb-19	Political and Cultural History of MENA I: Empires	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schwedler, Chapters 2-3.• Linda Darling (2008), “Islamic Empires, Ottoman Empires and the Circle of	Revised Version of First Reaction Paper Due (Optional)

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		<p>Justice,” in Constitutional Politics in the Middle East: With Special Reference to Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, S.A. Arjomand (ed.), Oxford, pp. 11-32 [NYU Classes]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selim Deringil, “They Live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery’: The Late Ottoman Empire and the Post-Colonial Debate,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 45(2), April 2003: pp. 311-342 [NYU Classes] • Timur Kuran, “Why the Middle East is Economically Underdeveloped: Historical Mechanisms of Institutional Stagnation,” Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol. 18, No.3, Summer 2004: 71-90 [NYU Classes] 	
<p>Session 4 27- Feb-19</p>	<p>Political and Cultural History of MENA II: Colonialism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edhem Eldem, “Ottoman Financial Integration with Europe: Foreign Loans, the Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman Public Debt.” European Review 13, no. 3 (2005): 431-445. [NYU Classes] • Abdullahi An-Naim, Chapters 1-3, Islam and the Secular State. Harvard University Press, 2010. [NYU Classes] • Ronen Shamir, Introduction and Chapter 1 from The Colonies of Law: Colonialism, Zionism and Law in Early Mandate Palestine. Cambridge University Press, 2000. [NYU Classes] 	<p>None</p>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Pursley, "Lines Drawn on an Empty Map: Iraq's Borders and the Legend of the Artificial State" (Parts 1 and 2), Jadaliyya. June 2, 2015 	
Session 5 6- Mar-19	Political and Cultural History of MENA III: Independence and Authoritarianism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwedler, Chapters 4-5 • Amaney A. Jamal, Introduction and Chapter 1 from Of Empires and Citizens: Pro-American Democracy or No Democracy at All? Princeton University Press, 2012. [NYU Classes] • Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East," in Comparative Politics 36: 2 (Jan 2004), 139-158. [NYU Classes] • Eva Bellin, "Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring," Comparative Politics (January 2012): 127-149. [NYU Classes] • Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "Enduring Authoritarianism: Middle East Lessons for Comparative Theory," Comparative Politics, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Jan., 2004), pp. 127-138). [NYU Classes] 	None
Session 6 13- Mar-19	Mid Term Exam	None	Mid Term Exam
20- Mar-19	Spring Break - No Class		
Session 7 27- Mar-19	The Post-Colonial Era and the MENA:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Joffe, "The Arab Spring in North Africa: 	None

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
	Arab Spring – Democratization or Persistence of Authoritarianism	<p>Origins and Prospects”, in the Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 16, No. 4 (December 2011) 507-532. [NYU Classes]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eva Bellin, “Drivers of Democracy: Lessons from Tunisia,” Middle East Brief, No. 73, Brandeis University, August 2013 [NYU Classes] • John Entelis, “Algeria: Democracy Denied or Revived” in the Journal of North African Studies, Vol. 16, No. 4 (December 2011) 653-678. [NYU Classes] • Peter Pham, “Morocco’s Momentum”, in Journal of International Security Affairs, 2012, pp. 1-19. [NYU Classes] • Tarek Masoud, “Has the Door Closed on Arab Democracy?” Journal of Democracy, 2015, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 74-87. [NYU Classes] • Jason Brownlee, Tarek Masoud and Andrew Reynolds. “Tracking the Arab Spring: Why the Modest Harvest?” Journal of Democracy, 2013, Vol 24, No. 4, pp. 29-44. [NYU Classes] 	
Session 8 3- Apr-19	Religion and Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwedler, Chapter 12 • Tessler, Chapters 6-7 • Khalil Al-Anani, “Upended Path: The Rise and Fall of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood,” The Middle East Journal, 69.4 (2015): 527-543. [NYU Classes] • Jillian Schwedler, “Islamic Identity: Myth, Menace or Mobilizer?” SAIS Review, 	**Second Reaction Paper Due**

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		<p>Vol. XXI, No. 2 (Summer-Fall 2001), pp. 1-17. [NYU Classes]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants," The Atlantic (March 2015) http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/ • Lisel Hintz, "Take it Outside: National Identity Contestation in the Foreign Policy Arena," European Journal of International Relations, 2016, 22(2), pp. 335-361. [NYU Classes] 	
Session 9 10- Apr-19	Iran, Israel, and the US	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trita Parsi. "Israel and the Origins of Iran's Arab Option: Dissection of a Strategy Misunderstood." Middle East Journal 60(3) 2006: pp. 493-512 [NYU Classes] • James K. Sebenius and Michael K. Singh. "Is a Nuclear Deal with Iran Possible?" International Security 37(3) Winter 2012/3: pp. 52-91 [NYU Classes] • Dalia Dassa Kaye, "Israel's Iran Policies After the Nuclear Deal", RAND Corporation, 2016 [NYU Classes] 	None
Session 10 17- Apr-19	Sectarianism: Syria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F. Gregory Gause III, "Beyond Sectarianism: The New Middle East Cold War," Brookings Institution, July 22, 2014. [NYU Classes] • Aron Lund, "Syria's Civil War: Government Victory or Frozen Conflict?" Swedish Defense Research Institute, 2018. [NYU Classes] 	None

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aron Lund, "The Making and Unmaking of Syria Strategy under Trump." The Century Foundation, 2018. [NYU Classes] • Thomas Pierret, "Salafis at War in Syria: Logics of Fragmentation and Realignment." [NYU Classes] • Ayse Tekdal Fildis, "Roots of Alawite-Sunni Rivalry in Syria." Middle East Policy 19.2 (2012): 148-156. [NYU Classes] 	
Session 11 24- Apr-19	Third Party Actors in the MENA: Russia, U.S., Iran, and Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Hannah, "Russia's Middle East Offensive" • Walter Posch, "Ideology and Strategy in the Middle East: The Case of Iran" • Sladden et al., "Russia's Strategy in the Middle East" • "Saudi and Iran Spat a Battle for Influence" at http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2016/1/5/saudi-iran-spat-a-battle-for-regional-influence.html • "Politics, Governance, and Reconstruction in Yemen," POMEPS Studies No. 29, January 2018 [NYU Classes] 	None
Session 12 1- May-19	Political Economy of Oil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwedler, Chapters 7-8 • Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy," World Politics 53(3) April, 2001 [NYU Classes] • Timothy Mitchell, "Carbon Democracy," Economy and Society 38(3): pp. 399-432 • Robert Vitalis, Chapter 1 from America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier. (Stanford University Press, 2006). 	None

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 13 8- May-19	Women and Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwedler, Chapter 11 • Tessler, Chapter 11 • Mona Eltahawy, "Why Do They Hate Us? The Real War on Women in the Middle East." Foreign Policy, (April 2012). [NYU Classes] http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/23/why_do_they_hate_us • In response to Eltahawy: Sara Mourad, "Politics at the Tip of the Clitoris," Jadaliyya (May 2012). [NYU Classes] http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/5355/politics-at-the-tip-of-the-clitoris_why-in-fact-do • Nima Naghibi, "Bad Feminist or Bad Hejabi? Moving Beyond the Hejab Debate," Interventions 1: 4 (1999): 555-571. 	None
Session 14 15- May-19	Israel and Palestine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwedler, Chapter 6 • Tessler, Chapter 12 • Alexandre Kedar, Ahmad Amara and Oren Yiftachel, Introduction and Chapter 1 from Empty Lands: A Legal Geography of Bedouin Rights in the Negev (Stanford University Press, 2018) [NYU Classes] • Robert Malley and Aaron David Miller, "Trump is Reinventing the U.S. Approach to the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," The Atlantic, Sept. 20, 2018 	None
Session 15 22-May-19	Finals Week		Third Reaction Paper Due

Tests and Quizzes

- Mid Term Exam - March 13th, 2019

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

- Schwedler, Jillian, Understanding the Contemporary Middle East (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 4th Edition) ISBN-13: 978-1588269102 (paperback)
- Tessler, Mark. Public Opinion in the Middle East: Survey Research and the Political Orientations of Ordinary Citizens (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2011) ISBN 978-0-253-22315-9 (paperback)

Optional Textbooks & Materials

- None

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades.** Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure. At all Global Academic Centers, unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade (for courses that meet once per week; for courses that meet twice per week, it is a one percent reduction per missed class).

To seek an excused absence for medical reasons, students must use the online absence reporting form within 24 hours of their first missed class. Students may be required to produce a doctor's note with that day's date, especially if the student has missed any classes already that semester or if exams/presentations/papers occurred in the missed class.

Non-medical absences must be discussed with the Academic Staff at least 7 days before the missed date(s) in question. If faculty members do not receive notification of an excused absence, the student has not procured an excused absence.

NYU Washington, DC expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks), to be attentive, and to remain for the duration of the class. If full class attendance and participation becomes a problem, it is the prerogative of each lecturer to apply the rule for unexcused absences, which may include a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade.

Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. This means they should initiate email and/ or office hour discussions to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave Washington, DC before the end of the finals week.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at the announced meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion. Staff members may always be reached by cell phone for advice regarding public transportation.

Late Assignment

- 1) Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.
- 2) Late work should be emailed to the faculty as soon as it is completed.
- 3) Late work will be reduced for a fraction of a letter grade (e.g., A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) for every day it is late, including weekends.
- 4) Written work during the semester that is submitted 5 days after the submission date (including weekends) without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.
- 5) Students who arrive to class late for an exam do not have automatic approval to take extra time to complete the exam.
- 6) Students who miss an exam (including the final) without previously arranged permission will receive a zero on that exam.
- 7) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An "incomplete" is a temporary grade that indicates that the student has, for good reason, not completed all of the course work. This grade is not awarded automatically nor is it guaranteed; rather, the student must ask the instructor for a grade of "incomplete," present documented evidence of illness, an emergency, or other compelling circumstances, and clarify the remaining course requirements with the instructor.

In order for a grade of "incomplete" to be registered on the transcript, the student must fill out a form, in collaboration with the course instructor and the academic administration at the site; it

should then be submitted to the site's academic office. The submitted form must include a deadline by which the missing work will be completed. This deadline may not be later than the end of the following semester.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." **Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.**

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

NYU Washington, DC takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to the lecturer. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Religious Observances

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday.

Students must notify their professor and the Washington, DC Academics team in writing via email at least 7 days before being absent for this purpose.