



## **Course Syllabus: POLS 3563: Government and Politics Middle East**

**College of Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Spring 2024**

Meeting time: Tuesday and Thursday (9:30 – 10:50 a.m.)

### **Contact Information**

**Instructor:** Dr. Mohsen Jalali

**Office:** O'Donohoe Hall, Room 204

**Office hours:**

- Monday & Wednesday: 11:00 -12:30 p.m.
- Tuesday & Thursday: 11:00-12:00 p.m.
- and by Appointment

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- In case you could not reach me by that email, you can also contact me at [mohsen.jalali@msutexas.edu](mailto:mohsen.jalali@msutexas.edu)

**Course Description.** In public perception in the West, the Middle East is widely perceived as a bastion of violence, sectarianism, radicalism, and terrorism; it is economically, politically, and culturally stagnated; it is where modernizing attempts have largely failed, most visibly in the matter of individual freedoms and most particularly in the case women's rights and gender equality. Overcoming these perceptions, the course asks an overarching question: *what are the forces of change in the Middle East?* To answer this question, the course focuses on political systems, political institutions, political cultures, economic (under-)development, and social movements. The course investigates questions such as

1. What is political Islam, and what role does it play in politics on the ground in the Middle East?
2. What does explain the move between dictatorship and democracy in the region? What is the relation between the existing economic (under-)development and the political development?
3. What role the colonial history plays in the region and more recently the ongoing foreign and military interventions?
4. What are the causes of the social movements in the region and what explains their success or failure? The course particularly focuses on the Arab Spring uprisings in the region?

**Course Objectives.** The course objectives are to explore some responses to the key questions and debates in the field of Middle East politics. By the end of the course, students learn briefly about the region's pre-modern history and more extensively the modern history of the region since 18<sup>th</sup> century. Students learn about the making of the modern Middle East, its cultures, its political economy, political systems, identity politics, and the ongoing wars and violence. Students will be able to critically assess the everyday news production about the region. The course aims to give students an understanding of forces of modernization, ethnoreligious unities and divides, nation buildings, social mobilization to democratize, foreign interventions, and attempt for economic development.

No previous knowledge of the region is required.

### Course Requirements

Assignments	Points
Weekly in-class quizzes (10*3)	30
Interviews with MSU students	5
Interviews with people in Wichita Falls	5
Responses on Papers/Policy Memos (2*10 + 1*20) OR A Research Paper	40
Class Participation (attendance, presentations, participation in conversations)	20
Total Points	100

- 1) **30 points:** Weekly in-class quizzes (short answer to examine your understanding of the weekly readings) (10\*3)
- 2) **5 points:** interview with students regarding their perception of the middle east. What they know about the middle east
  - ◆ I will work with you regarding the questions
- 3) **5 points:** interview with 5 Wichita Falls citizens
  - ◆ I will work with you regarding the questions
- 4) **\*Response Papers (2\*10 points)**
  - ◆ Instructions will be given before the dates assignments are due.
- 5) **\*Policy Memo (1\*20 points)**
  - ◆ Instructions will be given before the dates assignments are due.

**OR**
- 6) **\*\*Research Project (30 points)**

- ◆ I encourage students to work with the instructor to choose their research topic and formulate their research questions.

7) **Class Participation (20 points):**

- ◆ Students must attend the lectures. In addition, engagement during class is as important as attendance. Students are expected to participate in group discussions and class debates and demonstrate that they are fully present. Students observed using mobile phones, reading non-class materials, or otherwise not fully engaged in class, will not receive engagement credit for that class period. This syllabus serves as the notice of the above policies. Over the course of the semester, 2 absences will be allowed for all students. More than 2 absences will significantly lower your final grade.

## **News Websites**

**We will often read news reports and analyses on these websites:**

- Al Jazeera: <http://aljazeera.com/>
- Al Arabiya: <http://english.alarabiya.net/>
- Al Ahram: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/>
- Haaretz: <http://www.haaretz.com/>
- BBC Middle East: [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle\\_east/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle_east/)
- Jaddaliya (blog) <http://www.jadaliyya.com/>
- Foreign policy

Textbooks to be Purchased

## **Textbook & Instructional Materials**

- ❖ Purchase of no textbook is required for this course.

Recommended Textbook (optional)

- ❖ Ellon Lust, *The Middle East*, (19<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- ❖ William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (6th Edition)

## **Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the [Office of Student Conduct](#).

### **A Note on Chat GPT**

**\*AI use is strictly prohibited.**

This course assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any substantive portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and using artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT. The

online portal for uploading assignments detects and flags sections of writing that has been generated by AI.

Academic dishonesty on exams, quizzes and assignments will result in a *Zero* on the quiz, assignment, or exam and the student or students in question may receive an F in the course and/or be turned over to the University for sanction. **\*More than one incident of academic dishonesty during the course will automatically result in a course grade of F.**

The MSU Honor Creed applies in this course, and students are expected to abide by it. Student work in this course expected to be original and produced only for this course. Students may not use the textbook, chapter summaries, notes, PowerPoints, lectures, or any online material during quizzes and exams. Students may not collaborate with each other during quizzes or exams or to create substantially similar responses to writing assignments.

## Grading

Completing ALL the readings and regular attendance (online) will be required of all students. Active participation in discussions is critical for students to succeed in this course.

Grade	Points
A	90 to 100
B	80 to 89
C	70 to 79
D	60 to 69
F	Less than 60

## Class Policies

### Absences

You should attend class. Students who do not attend class often have difficulty with the course and receive lower grades. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting and will be noted in Attendance and Engagement. **\*Students missing more than 9 course periods may be dropped from the course without notice.** Excused absences will be those as follows: illness, death in the family, legal proceedings occurring during class period, university-approved absence such as travel as member of a MSU sports team, or emergency situation as determined by me. To excuse an absence, I must be notified in advance of the class meeting.

### Safe Zone Statement:

This classroom is a place where students will be treated with respect. We will work together to be create an inclusive space that respects equality and diversity in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, political beliefs, culture, age, or ability.

All students are free to express their ideas even the ones that might sound controversial so long as they are presented as an argument which can be defended and countered with another argument. Diversity of

thought is appreciated, encouraged, and it is all what the class is about provided you can agree to disagree.

It is the expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment. Harassment, sexual misconduct, violence, bullying, and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated will result in removal from the classroom and reporting to the appropriate university authority. This syllabus is your warning.

### **Late Work**

*\*Late work is accepted* with grade deduction. So, I encourage students to submit their assignments even if it is late.

In case of unforeseen circumstances such as a medical emergency requiring hospitalization for which documentation is provided, late submission is graded for full grade.

### **Make Up Work/Tests**

There are no make-up exam/tests if you miss any of the assignments, except for insinuating circumstances.

## **Important Dates**

**Last day for term schedule changes:** Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

**Deadline to file for graduation:** Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

**Last Day to drop with a grade of “W:”** Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

## **Desire-to-Learn (D2L)**

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

**Web Browser for D2L:** The preferred web browser for D2L is Google Chrome. While it works in Safari for many functions, Chrome is a more reliable browser for D2L. If you do not have Chrome or a similar web browser installed on your computer, I suggest that you do so before working through the course material.

## **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

## **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

### **College Policies**

#### **Campus Carry Rules/Policies**

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

#### **Smoking/Tobacco Policy**

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

#### **Alcohol and Drug Policy**

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

#### **Campus Carry**

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

## **Active Shooter**

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

## **Grade Appeal Process**

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

## **Weekly Readings and Assignments**

### **Module 1 (Jan 16 – 19) Syllabus - Rise of Islam**

**Tue:** Review the Syllabus

**Thu:** The Rise and Expansion of Islam

- ◆ John Esposito. Chapter 1: Muhammad and the Quran: Messenger and Message (from *Islam: The Straight Path*)
- ◆ “Islam: Sunnis and Shiites”, Congressional Research Service, 2009

*\*Documentary.* Watch “The Messenger” (part of and the PBS documentary *Islam: Empire of Faith* (2001) (54 mins).

### **Module 2 (Jan 22 – 26) Ottoman Empire (Age of Empires)**

**Tue:**

- ◆ Cleveland - The Ottoman and Safavid Empires

**Thu:**

- ◆ Gasper - The Making of the Modern Middle East

### **Module 3 (Jan 29 – Feb 2) Formation of the Modern M-E**

**Tue:**

- ◆ Gasper - The Making of the Modern Middle East

**Thu:**

- ◆ Fromkin - How the Modern Middle East Map Came to be Drawn

*\*Movie.* Watch “Lawrence of Arabia” (1962) – (Optional)

### **Module 4 (Feb 5 – 9) On Israel-Palestine I**

**Tue:**

- ◆ “The Palestine Mandate and the Birth of the State of Israel” (Chapter 13 of *A History of Modern Middle East*) (30 pages)

**Thu:**

- ◆ “The Arab-Israeli Conflict” by Charles Smith (in *International Relations of the Middle East* edited by Fawcett, Chapter 12)

### **Module 5 (Feb 12 – 16) Democracy and Dictatorship**

**Tue:**

- ◆ Eva Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective,” *Comparative Politics*, 36:2, 2004, 139-157. (15 pages)

**Thu:**

- ◆ Fatima Mernissi, *Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World* (Chapters 1 and 3) (27 pages)

Further Readings:

- ◆ Ross, Michael L. 2001. “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53.
- ◆ Fatima Mernissi, *Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World*
- ◆ Lispet, Seymour Martin - Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy 1959 (the argument)
- ◆

### **Module 6 (Feb 19 – 23) Political Economy (Saudi Arabia)**

**Tue:** Melani Cammett. “The Political Economy of Development in the Middle East.” In Lust, ed.

**Thu:**

Further Readings:



- Timur Kuran. "Why the Middle East is Economically Underdeveloped: Historical Mechanisms of Institutional Stagnation." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18, no. 3 (Summer 2004): 71-90.

### **Module 7 (Feb 26 – Mar 1) Political Islam (Fundamentalism)**

**Tue:**

- Ayoob, Mohammed. 2004. "Political Islam: Image and Reality," *World Policy Journal* (Fall), 1-14.

**Thu:**

- Akyol, Mustafa. 2012. "Can Islamists Be Liberals?" *The New York Times* (Op-Ed), May 13.
- Ayoob, Mohammed. 2008. *The Many Faces of Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Muslim World*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

### **Module 8 (Mar 4 – 8) The Arab Spring**

**Tue:**

- "The Puzzle of Political Reform in the Middle East" by Augustus Norton in Fawcett Chapter 6

**Thu:**

Dabashi, *The Arab Spring*, 1-40

Further readings

- Cleveland Ch. 26,
- "The Arab Spring: The 'People' in International Relations by Larbi Sadiki in Fawcett
- Filiu, *The Arab Revolution*, vii-xii, 31-56
- Ragui Asaad, "Demographics of the Arab Revolts," *The New Arab Revolt*, 236-241
- Richard Cincotta, "Life Begins at 25: Demography and the Societal Timing of the Arab Spring," Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Note (Jan. 2012) (Sakai)

### **\*Module 9 (Mar 11 – 15) Spring Break**

### **Module 10 (Mar 18 – 22) The Arab Spring and Syria**

**Tue:**

David LESH, *Syria: The Fall of the House of Assad* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012). (selections)

**Thu:**

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/syria-undercover/#a> (“the regime” part).

### **\*Module 11 (Mar 25 – 29) Holiday Break**

**Tue:** Gender Politics

- Milani, Farzaneh. 2008. “On Women’s Captivity in the Islamic World,” *Middle East Report*, No. 246 (Spring 2008).
- Tetreault, Mary Ann, Katherine Meyer, & Helen Rizzo. 2009. “Women’s Rights in the Middle East: A Longitudinal Study of Kuwait.” *International Political Sociology* 3: 218-237.

### **Module 12 (Apr 1 – 5) Iranian Revolution**

**Tue:**

- ◆ Kurzman, Charles - The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran (Intro)

**Thu:**

- ◆ Nikki Keddie, Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution (selections).

### **Module 13 (Apr 8 – 12) On Israel-Palestine II**

**Tue:**

Rashid Khalidid, *One Hundred Years on Palestine* (selections)

**Thu:**

“The Rise and Fall of the Oslo Process” by Avi Shlaim in Fawcett Chapter 13

### **Module 14 (Apr 15 – 19) The United States’ Wars in the Middle East**

**Tue:**

AS Al Sarhan - United States foreign policy and the Middle East

**Thu:**

Joel Migdal - *Shifting Sands: The United States in the Middle East* (introduction)

### **Module 15 (Apr 11 – 26) M-Eastern Community in the US**

**Tue:**

A Bakalian, M Bozorgmehr – “Middle Eastern and Muslim American studies since 9/11”

**Wed:**

Amir B. Marvasti, Karyn D. McKinney - *Middle Eastern Lives in America* (introduction)

### **Module 16 (Apr 29 – May 3) M-Eastern Community in Texas**

Readings to be assigned

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**May 3<sup>rd</sup> Last Day of Classes**

**May 4<sup>th</sup> Final Examination Begins**

**May 11<sup>th</sup> Commencement**