Florida Atlantic University

Department of Political Science

**Comparative Politics: The Middle East**

CPO 4403, Fall 2011

Credits: 3

Dr. Robert G. Rabil

Class Hours: Tuesday 6:00-8:50 PM

Office Hours: M and T: 1:45-3:45 PM; and W: 5:00-6:00 PM or by appointment

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No pre-requisites required for the course

**Course Description:**

The Middle East has moved to the center of US foreign policy. Yet, the Middle East as a framework of reference for major contemporary political debates remains tenuous and at cross-purposes. This course is designed to present a comprehensive portrait of the Middle East taking into consideration the historical processes that led to its modern emergence and the main challenges and areas of conflicts that have influenced and marked the politics of Middle Eastern states. The course will briefly survey the early history of the region, devoting special attention to the origins and “pillars” of Islam and the rise and fall of pre-modern empires. It will investigate the ethno-religious composition of the region and the impact of Western influence on the social, cultural and intellectual currents of the Middle East. It will examine the Arab-Israeli conflict, regional security, totalitarian regimes and human rights, peace negotiations and the politics of oil. It will then investigate the phenomenon of radical Islam, placing special emphasis on its rise, teachings, polemics and practices. Lastly, scrutinizing the Ba’thi regime of Saddam Hussein and the US invasion of Iraq, the course will look at the implications of the complexities of this region for the US.

**Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes:**

The objectives of this course are to prepare students to: 1) understand the rich history of the civilizations and peoples of the Middle East; 2) understand the political landscape against which the modern countries of the Middle East have emerged following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire; 3) comprehend the political setting against which the Arab-Israeli conflict emerged; 4) understand the ideology (ies) and politics of radical Islam and its implications for the region; and 5) understand the implications of the U.S. invasion of Iraq for regional politics.

The course will enable students to develop an understanding of the political development of the Middle East and to think critically about the origins and dynamics of the regional conflicts. It will also enable students to develop a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the intersection of political cultures, state policies and regional conflicts.

**Required Material:**

Bernard Lewis, *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2000 Years* (New York: Scribner, 1995).

Robert G. Rabil, *Embattled Neighbors: Syria, Israel and Lebanon* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003).

L. Carl Brown, *Religion and State: The Muslim Approach to Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).

Course Rearder: A Collection of articles.

Internet access to:

*The New York Times:* [*http://www.nytimes.com/*](http://www.nytimes.com/)*.*

*Haaretz*: [www.haaretzdaily.com](http://www.haaretzdaily.com).

*The Daily Star*: <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/home.asp?edition_id=10>.

*The Washington Post*: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>.

*The Brookings Institution:* [*http://www.brookings.org/*](http://www.brookings.org/)*.*

*The United States Institute of Peace:* [*http://www.usip.org/*](http://www.usip.org/)*.*

*The Council on Foreign Relations:* [*http://www.cfr.org/*](http://www.cfr.org/)*.*

*The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace:* [*http://www.ceip.org/*](http://www.ceip.org/)*.*

*The Washington Institute for Near East Policy:* [*http://www.washingtoninstitute.org*](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org)*.*

*The Center for Strategic and International Studies:* [*http://www.csis.org/*](http://www.csis.org/)*.*

**Suggested Reading:**

Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner, *A Concise History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 4th edition, 2002).

Barry Rubin, *The Tragedy of the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong*? *The Clash between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East* (Harper Collins, 2003).

Richard C. Clark, *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror* (Free Press, 2004).

George W. Bush, *The National Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>.

Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).

Robert G. Rabil, *Syria, United States and the War on Terror in the Middle East* (Praeger, 2006).

Robert G. Rabil, *Religion, National Identity and Confessional Politics in Lebanon: The Challenge of Islamism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

**Grading Scale:**

The grading scale for this course is as follows: 94-100%= A; 93-90%= A-; 87-89%= B+; 84-86%= B; 80-83%= B-; 77-79%= C+; 74-76%=C; 70-73%= C-; 67-69%= D+; 64-66%= D; 60-63%=D-; 60% and below= F.

**Course Evaluation:**

Attendance and class participation 10%

Presentation/Paper 20%

Mid-term examination 35%

Final examination  35%

**Course Policies:**

Attendance: Students are urged to attend all classes to follow through and keep abreast of course material and assignments. Attendance will be taken regularly. Students may not be penalized for absences due to participation in University-approved activities, including athletic or scholastic teams, musical and theatrical performances, debate activities, and religious observance.

Class participation: The course promotes interactive class discussion. Toward this end, students are expected to read assignments and participate in the discussion of designated readings offered by a team of students every other session.

Assignments/Written work/Presentations are required to be submitted (performed) on time. They should be proofread carefully for spelling and grammar. Quotes and others’ ideas must be properly cited (Chicago Manual of Style) to avoid the implication of plagiarism. Plagiarism will result in an F grade. A bibliography of written works cited must be included. Papers, including presentation papers, will be reviewed for clarity, depth of research, analysis and creativity in mind.

Make-up exam, class activities, and extension for paper assignment will be given only when the student provides verifiable written proof of an emergency (Only illness, involvement in a severe accident, and death of an immediate family member are considered cases of emergency). Incomplete papers are not accepted. Late work and papers are penalized by deducting 5 points per day for a maximum of one week. No late work or paper is accepted after one week. An incomplete grade (“I’) will be given for students who have not completed all the required work because of emergencies (see above).

A student who misses a lecture is solely responsible to find out about all announcements made during that lecture, including but not limited to possible changes made to this syllabus.

Appearances by guest speakers and viewing of documentaries will be announced in class.

**Academic Honor Code & Honors Statement**

**STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf>

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); or in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010)—and follow all OSD procedures. <http://osd.fau.edu/>

# Week 1 & 2- August 23 and 30

**Introduction to the course. Geography of the Middle East.**

Part A- **The Middle East Before Islam**

1. Bernard Lewis, “Before Christianity, Before Islam,” *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2000 Years* (New York: Scribner, 1995), pp. 21-51.

Part B- **The Dawn and Noon of Islam**

1. Bernard Lewis, “Origins and pillars, The Abbasid Caliphate, the Coming of the Steppe Peoples, the Mongol Aftermath, the Gunpowder Empires*,*” *The Middle East*, pp. 51-129.

**Week 3- September 6**

Part A- **Minorities of the Middle East**

1. A. H. Hourani, “A General Survey,” *Minorities in the Arab World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), in Course Reader.
2. A. H. Hourani, “The Origin and Development of Minorities,” *Minorities in the Arab World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), in Course Reader.

Part B- **The Tenets of Islam and The Religious Sunni-Shi’a Divide**

Presentation.

Recommended Reading:

1. H. Hourani, “The Nineteenth Century,” *Minorities in the Arab World,* in Course Reader.

**Week 4 & 5- September 13, 20**

Part A- **The Arab-Israeli Conflict and the Birth of the State of Israel**

1. “Negib Azoury: Program of the League of the Arab Fatherland,” Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, Editors, *The Israeli-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East* (New York: Penguin Books, 5th edition, 1995), p. 5, in Course Reader.
2. “Theodor Herzl: The Jewish State,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 5-10, in Course Reader.
3. “The Basle Declaration,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 10-11, in Course Reader.
4. “The Sykes-Picot Agreement,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 11-14, in Course Reader.
5. “The McMahon Letter,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 14-16, in Course Reader.
6. “The Balfour Declaration,” Laqueur and Rubin, p. 16, in Course Reader.
7. “Towards a Jewish State: The Biltmore Program (1942),” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 66-67, in Course Reader.
8. “From the Report of the Palestine Royal Commission (Peel Commission)-1937,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 48-49, in Course Reader.
9. “The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry-1946,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 72-91, in Course Reader.
10. “The United Nations Takes Over,” Laqueur and Rubin, p. 91, in Course Reader.
11. “State of Israel Proclamation of Independence,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 107-109.

Recommended:

1. “The Feisal-Weizmann Agreement,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 17, in Course Reader.
2. “Jabotinsky: A Jewish State Now,” Laqueur and Rubin, pp. 50-53, in Course Reader.

**Week 6 & 7- September 27, October 4**

Part A- **The Israel-Lebanon-Syria Aspect of the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

1. Robert G. Rabil, “Decades of Direct Conflict,” *Embattled Neighbors: Syria, Israel and Lebanon* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), pp. 1-43.

Part B- **The Struggle for Lebanon**

1. Robert G. Rabil, “The Struggle for Lebanon,” *Embattled Neighbors*, pp. 43-85.

Part C- **Documentary: The Arab-Israeli Conflict (part 1)**

Part D- **Review Session**

**Week 8- October 11- Mid-Term Exam**

**Week 9 & 10- October 18 and 25**

Part A- **The US-Syria-Israel Triangular Relationship**

1. Robert G. Rabil, “The Role of the United States in the Israeli-Syrian Relationship,” *Embattled Neighbors*, pp. 85-119.

Part B- **Regional Security**

1. Robert G. Rabil, “Regional Security and Water,” *Embattled Neighbors,* pp. 169-199.

Recommended Reading: Tareq Y. Ismael, *Iraq and Iran*: *Roots of Conflict* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1982), pp. 1-40.

Part C- **Peace Negotiations**

1. Robert Malley and Hussein Agha, “Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors,” *New York Review of Books*, August 9, 2001 ([www.nybooks.com](http://www.nybooks.com)).
2. Benny Morris, “Camp David and After: An exchange,” *New York Review of Books*, June 13, June 27, 2003. ([www.nybooks.com](http://www.nybooks.com)).
3. Robert G. Rabil, “Elusive Peace: The Israeli-Syrian Negotiations,” *Embattled Neighbors,* pp. 199-241.

Part D- **Documentary: The Arab-Israeli Conflict (part 2).**

**Week 11- November 1**

Part A- **The Challenge of Modernity**

1. Bernard Lewis, “Challenge,” *The Middle East*, pp. 273-285.
2. Bernard Lewis, “Response and Reaction,” *The Middle East*, pp. 305-314.
3. Bernard Lewis, “New Ideas,” *The Middle East*, pp. 315-332.
4. L. Carl Brown, “Islam and Politics in Modern Times,” *Religion and State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), pp. 79-86.

**Week 12- November 8**

Part A- **Response to Western Challenge**

1. L. Carl Brown, “Meeting the Western Challenge: The Early Establishment Response,” *Religion and State*, pp. 87-98.
2. L. Carl Brown, “The Early Anti-Establishment Response to Western Challenge,” *Religion and State,* pp. 99-110.

Part B- **Totalitarian Governments, Human Rights and Politics of Oil**

1. Kanan Makiya, “Landscapes of Cruelty and Silence,” *Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, Uprising, and the Arab World* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Ltd, 1993), pp. 284-311, in Course Reader.
2. F. Gregory Gause III, “Saudi Arabia over a Barrel,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 79, No. 3, May/June 2000.

Part C. **Clash of Civilizations?**

1. Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3, Summer 1993.

**Week 13- November 15**

Part A. **Radical Islam**

1. L. Carl Brown, “The Radical Muslim Discourse,” *Religion and State*, pp. 134-142.
2. L. Carl Brown, “Al-Banna, Mawdudi, and Qutb,” *Religion and State,* pp. 143-160.
3. Ervand Abrahamian, “Khomeini: A Fundamentalist?” pp. 109-123, in Course Reader.

Part B- **Al-Kufr (Un-belief): Terrorism Justification**

1. Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj, “Al-Faridah Al-Gha’ibah,” (Neglected Duty), in Johannes J. G. Jansen, *The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat’s Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986).
2. Walid Phares and Robert G. Rabil, “Neglected Duty: Terrorism’s Justification,” *In The National Interest,* Vol. 3, Issue 18, May 5, 2004. <http://www.inthenationalinterest.com/Articles/Vol3Issue18/Vol3Issue18RabilPFV.html>.
3. World Islamic Front Statement, “Jihad Against Jews and Christians,” 1998. <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/980223-fatwa.htm>.

Recommended Reading:

Quitan Wiktorowicz, “The New Global Threat: Transnational Salafis and Jihad,” *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 2001).

Michael Doran, “Somebody Else’s Civil War,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 1 (January/February 2002).

**Week 14- November 22**

Documentary: Suicide Bombing

Part A. **The Ba’thi Regime of Saddam Hussein**

A. Robert G. Rabil, “The Making of Saddam’s Executioners: A Manual of Oppression by Procedures*,” Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal (MERIA)*, Vol. 7, No. 2, March 2003*.* [*http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2003/issue1/jvol7no1in.html*](http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2003/issue1/jvol7no1in.html)*.*

*B.* Robert G. Rabil, “Operation “Termination of Traitors”: The Iraqi Regime Through Its Documents,*”* Article published in *Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal (MERIA)*, Vol. 6, No. 3, September 2002. <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2002/issue3/jvol6no3in.html>

Part B. **US Invasion of Iraq and its Aftermath**

1. Kenneth Pollack, “Next Stop Baghdad?” *Foreign Affairs*, [March/April 2002](http://www.foreignaffairs.org/2002/2.html).

Part C. **Iraq and the Risk Posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction**

1. <http://bioterrorism.slu.edu/bt/official/congress/cordesman022702.pdf>. Anthony’s Cordesman’s testimony.

Recommended Reading:

Robert G. Rabil, “The Iraqi Opposition’s Evolution: From Conflict to Unity?” *Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal (MERIA),* Vol. 6, No. 4, December 2002. <http://meria.idc.ac.il/journal/2002/issue4/jvol6no4in.html>.

Yitzhak Nakash, “The Shi'ites and the Future of Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2003.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030701faessay15402/yitzhak-nakash/the-shi-ites-and-the-future-of-iraq.html>.

# Last day to submit paper

**Week 15- November 29**

**Implications for US Foreign Policy**

1. Shibley Talhami, “The Ties that Bind: Americans, Arabs, and Israelis after September 11,” *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 83, No. 2, March/April 2004.
2. Colin L. Powell, “A Strategy of Partnerships,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83. No. 1, January/February 2004. <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20040101faessay83104/colin-l-powell/a-strategy-of-partnerships.html>.

Review Session

**Week 16- December 6**

**Final Exam**