

POLSC653: INTERNATIONAL POLITICS OF MIDDLE EAST
Kansas State University
Fall 2015

T-TH 9:30-10:45 am, Willard 115

Dr. Sabri Ciftci
Waters Hall 222
Phone: 785 532 3514
Email: ciftci@ksu.edu

Office Hours:
T: 11:00am – noon
TH: 1:00pm– 2:00pm
OR by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a review of international politics of the Middle East. It has three sections. The first section will introduce the foundations of international relations in the Middle East and will be in the traditional lecturing format. The second section will discuss the current events in the region and it will be discussion based with guidance from the instructor. The third section will include the presentation and discussion of the student papers. A wide array of topics will be covered including colonialism and state formation, history of IR in the Middle East, US foreign policy in the region, conflict and terrorism, oil politics, the rise of ISIS, and regional power rivalry. The purpose of this course is to give you a better understanding of the international relations of the region and help you to gain an informed perspective about the US foreign policy in the region.

Course Website

I will be using K-State online powered by CANVAS. The online course is accessed through <http://public.online.ksu.edu>. You will have to check CANVAS regularly to access the reading assignments, the class schedule, and the course documents.

Reading Requirements

There is one required textbook for this course:

Louise Fawcett, International Relations of the Middle East, 2013, 3rd edition, Oxford University Press.

The textbook is available at KSU Bookstore. You may also purchase your book online. In addition to the main textbook, there will be additional readings (book chapters or articles) during some weeks. These readings will be available online. I also recommend that you check daily political news in the Middle East via online resources of your choice.

Structure and Student Responsibilities

Attendance (5%): It is imperative that you complete the assigned readings and attend the class regularly. Attendance will be taken randomly. You can miss up to three attendances with no penalty on your attendance grade. If you have to miss more than three, only *documented medical emergencies* and *university related activities* will be excused. You don't have to send me an email if you will be missing a class, but in case you have an official document for your excuse, you will need to submit a copy. *During Section III of the course, I will take daily attendance.*

Participation (20%): Participation points can be earned in the following ways:

- (i) Lead a class discussion during the second section of the class. Your responsibilities will include a brief introduction to the topic and maintaining a lively discussion. As your instructor, I will also help you in carrying a good debate. More information about efficient discussion facilitation strategies is listed at the end of this syllabus (5%).
- (ii) Participate in the discussion sessions, demonstrate your knowledge of the assigned readings, and make meaningful contributions during the discussion (5%).
- (iii) Ask and answer questions, and provide comments during the lecture.
- (iv) Ask questions and make comments during the student presentations.
- (v) Post your comments online to the relevant message board online (optional).

Review Exams (40%): There will be four review exams in this course (each with 10% weight). The exams will include true-false, short definition, and short essay questions. None of these exams will be cumulative. The first three exams will cover the readings, lecture notes, and class discussion from **Section I** of the course. The last exam will cover the readings and class discussion from **Section II**. The exams will cover material from the readings, lecture notes, class discussion, and student presentations. If you miss an exam, there will be a *make-up exam day* as listed in the course schedule.

Foreign Policy Paper (25%): As a part of this project each student will write an analytical paper about a foreign policy topic in the Middle East. At the beginning of the semester, each student will be assigned a foreign policy topic. This project will teach you about foreign policies, the role of domestic politics in international relations, and the relation of Middle Eastern countries with the major world powers. You will write an analytical paper to fulfill the requirements of this assignment. The analytical paper should be 5-7 pages long, double-spaced with 12-font size. No exceptions! More information about this assignment is attached to the end of this syllabus.

Foreign Policy Presentation (10%): In addition to writing an analytical paper, you will also present the results of your research about the foreign policy research. The presentations should be about 20 minutes and you will be given 10 minutes to answer the questions from the audience. The presentation will be carried as a group project.

Extra Credit: Extra credit points are possible for a maximum of 5% of the final grade. You will need to read a scholarly article and write a reaction paper to earn extra credit points. One paper is worth 2.5%. Writing a review paper does not guarantee that you will be awarded full points. Your extra credit assignment grade will depend on the quality of your work.

Academic Honesty/ Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Kansas State University has an Honor System based on personal integrity, which is presumed to be sufficient assurance in academic matters and that one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate and graduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning. The honor system website can be reached via the following URL: www.ksu.edu/honor.

"Any student with a disability that needs a classroom accommodation, access to technology or other assistance in this course should contact Disability Support Services and/or their instructor."

Grading

Letter grades for the course will be assigned along the following scale:

A: 89.5% or greater B: 80-89% C: 70-79% D: 60-69% F: Below 60%

Graduate Student Track

All rules apply to the graduate students. However, graduate students are required to write a research paper in place of the term paper. I expect students to write a well-researched graduate paper. Your paper should have a clear research question, a good literature review, a strong theoretical section, methods and data analysis, and the results. The paper should be 20-25 pages long and it must be written according to the academic standards. If this is your first year in the graduate program and if you need help, let me know in advance. The grading criteria for graduate students are as follows:

Participation and attendance (20%)

Review Exams (40%)

Presentation (10%)

Research Paper (30%)

COURSE SCHEDULE

SECTION I: FOUNDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Notes
August 25	Introduction IR Theory and the Middle East	Fawcett, Chapter 1 (Lawson, IR theory and the Middle East)	Introduction and the course rules Sign up for currents event discussion and the paper.
August 27	Formation of the state system	Fawcett Chapter 2 (Rogan, The Emergence of State Sytem)	Sign up for currents event discussion and the paper
September 1	A Brief History of International Relations in the Middle East	Fawcett, Chapter 3 (Sluglett, The Cold War in the Middle East)	
September 3	A Brief History of International Relations in the Middle East	Fawcett, Chapter 4 (Korany, The Middle East Since the Cold War)	
September 8	***Exam 1*** Video	Study material covered during August 25- September 3	Video topic TBA
September 10	Alliances and Regional Rivalry	Fawcett, Chapter 9 (Fawcett, Alliances, Cooperation)	
September 15	US and the Middle East	Fawcett, Chapter 16 (Hudson, The United States in the Middle East)	
September 17	International Politics of the Gulf	Fawcett, Chapter 14 (Gause, The International Politics of the Gulf)	
September 22	Regional Foreign Policy	Fawcett, Chapter 11 (Hinnebusch &Ehteshami, Policy- Making in the Middle East)	
September 24	US Foreign Policy in the Middle East	Guest Lecturer	TBA
September 29	***Exam 2*** Video	Study material covered during September 10- September 22	Video topic TBA
October 1	Oil and Politics	Fawcett, Chapter 5 (Luciani, Oil and Political Economy)	
October 6	Religion and IR in the ME	Fawcett, Chapter 8 (Mandaville, Islam and International Relations...)	

October 8	Israel-Palestine	Fawcett, Chapter 12 (Smith, The Arab-Israeli Conflict)	
October 13	Iraq War	Fawcett, Chapter 15 (Robins, The War for Regime Change in Iraq)	
October 15	***Exam 3*** Video	Study material covered during October 1-October 15	Video topic TBA

SECTION II: CURRENT EVENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Notes
October 20	International Relations of Syrian Civil War	1. RAND Report on Syrian Civil war 2. TBA	1. http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE100/PE115/RAND_PE115.pdf 2. A current reading will be posted to CANVAS
October 22	The Rise of ISIS	1. Islam and International Order, POMEPS Studies, #15, pp. 1-19 2. TBA	1. Available online at: http://pomeps.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/POMEPS_Studies_15_Islam_Web.pdf 2. A current reading will be posted to CANVAS
October 27	Iranian Nuclear Deal	1. TBA	1. Current readings will be posted to CANVAS
October 29	Israel's Foreign Policy	1. Shitrit, "Israel" in The Middle East, pp. 535-545, 556-563 2. TBA	1. Available on CANVAS 2. A current reading will be posted to CANVAS
November 3	International politics of Yemeni conflict	1. Yemen at War, International Crisis Group 2. A current article on Yemeni Conflict	1. Available online at: http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iran%20Gulf/Yemen/b045-yemen-at-war.pdf 2. TBA
November 5	US Presidential Elections and the Middle East	Select videos of presidential debates	TBA
November 10	**Exam 4***		Take Home Exam No Class

SECTION III: FOREIGN POLICIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Date	Topic	Notes
November 12	Panel 1 1. Turkish Foreign policy in Syria 2. Iran's Foreign Policy in Syria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for #1: Ziya Onis, Turkey and the Arab Revolutions: Boundaries of Middle Power Influence in a Turbulent Region • Recommended for #2: M. Ayoob, The Arab spring: its geostrategic significance
November 17	Panel 2 1. China's Foreign Policy in the Middle East 2. European Union and the Middle East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for #1: Alterman, China's Balancing Act in the Gulf • Recommended for #2: Rivetti and Cavatorta, EU Foreign Policy and the Middle East
November 19	Panel 3 1. Qatar and the international politics of soccer 2. Saudi-Iranian Rivalry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for #1: Dorsey, James M. "Wahhabism vs. Wahhabism: Qatar Challenges Saudi Arabia" • Recommended for #2: M. Ayoob, The Arab spring: its geostrategic significance
November 23- November 27	No CLASS Student Holiday	
December 1	Panel 4 1. Graduate Student Panel 1 2. Graduate Student Panel 2 3. Graduate Student Panel 3	
December 3	Panel 5 1. The Kurdish Question in the Middle East 2. Israel Lobby and American Foreign Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended for #1: Yasin Duman, Syrian Civil War: Emergence Of A Kurdish Autonomy In Rojava • Recommended for #2: John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt. 2008. "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy", Middle East Policy, 13(3): 29 – 87
December 8	Make-up Exam Day	Schedule a time!
December 10	NO CLASS Work on your papers	All Papers Due in Dropbox by 5:00 PM

Foreign Policy Project

Overview:

Each student will independently work on a Foreign Policy Project. As a part of this assignment, you will research a foreign policy problem in the Middle East, write an analytical paper, and present your findings in the class. For presentation component, you will work as a group and have a single presentation. **For the paper component, you will need to do your own research and write your own paper.**

Expectations:

Your paper should have three sections. The first section is an introduction and it should provide a brief overview of the research topic. In this section, you should discuss the background of the foreign policy problem at hand (what is the significance of this problem, who are the actors, which international actors are involved) and prepare the reader for the main discussion. This section should not exceed 1 page. The second section should provide an analysis building on the first section but also should go beyond by discussing the geopolitical significance of the problem. In this section you need to write an in-depth analysis of your topic by providing details about the significance of your topic for regional and global politics. You can add historical details or relate your discussion to the current events. The second section of the paper should be about 3-4 pages long. The third and final section of your paper should put your analysis in perspective by using the knowledge you gained in class. I would like to see you demonstrate that you have learned about the foundations of IR in the Middle East. In other words, in this section you should relate the knowledge gained in the class to the research topic you are writing about. A good conclusion should also be part of this part. This last section should not exceed 2 pages. In addition to the analytical presentation, I expect to see your own comments in the paper. I expect well-organized and well written papers. The analytical papers should be double spaced, 5-7 pages long, and typed in word. Please include page numbers for direct quotes, and properly cite the resources you may use. I prefer APA style for formatting and referencing (Check any APA manual or <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/664/01/> for more information). Late submissions will be penalized by 1/3rd of a letter grade for each late day. *You must conduct your own research for this project and rely on peer-reviewed journals, university press books, reports published by prominent research foundations, and prestigious policy journals (e.g. International Affairs, US Foreign policy).*

In addition to writing a paper, you will also present the results of your research in class. We will organize panels with two presentations. Each presenter will have 20 minutes to present their research. Then we will move to the Q & A in the last 10-15 minutes. A student will be assigned as a panel chair to keep the time, to take questions from the class, etc. Serving as a panel chair is optional, but if you serve as a panel chair, this can be used as an excuse for a missed attendance.

Current Events Discussion

In the second section of the course (October 20-November 5), we will discuss current events in the international politics of the Middle East. While I will guide these discussion sessions, this is mainly a student activity. The success of this event depends on your preparation and willingness to participate. Thus, it is essential that you complete the assigned readings, participate in class activity, and contribute to the discussion. I will assign two-three students to each discussion session to serve as discussion facilitators. Current events discussion should start with a summary of the assigned readings (3-5 minutes at most). You may use slides to present your summary. The discussion leader(s) should talk about the main problem and introduce the controversies related to it. Once the presentation is complete, the discussion facilitators should start a class discussion about the assigned topic. Here are some ideas for engaging the students:

- Discussion questions
- Group Activity
- Playing a game

- Showing a video and discussing the contents
- Small-scale role playing or simulation (e.g. assign groups to different roles within a pre-formatted rubric)
- Or any other creative activity