

Middle East Politics and Government

PSC 24800 • Fall 2020

Mondays and Wednesdays
11:00 am - 12:15 pm
Zoom link [here](#)
Meeting ID: XXX XXX
Password: XXXXXX

Professor: Diana Greenwald
Email: dgreenwald@ccny.cuny.edu
Virtual office hours: M/W, 3:30-5:00 PM, sign-up [here](#)

1. Course Description

This course provides an overview of the modern political history of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), then transitions to recent theoretical and empirical social science research on the region. We will examine themes and issues such as: colonialism and decolonization; the rise and fall of Arab nationalism; the role of natural resources, such as oil, in the region's development; the significance of Islam in politics; the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; and the Arab uprisings and their aftermath, among other topics. At the end of this course, students will be able to engage in informed and civil discussions about regional politics with their peers. Students will also develop a grasp of how qualitative and quantitative research methods are used for inference in the social sciences.

2. Assessment and Deadlines

<i>Item</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Maximum points</i>
Discussion posts		25 (+up to 5 EC)
Midterm exam	Oct 14	25
Final project		
Topic approval	Nov 16	5
Oral presentation	Nov 30-Dec 9	10
Final paper	Dec 16	25
Participation		10
		100 (+up to 5 EC)

3. Class Attendance and Participation

Our class will meet online, Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 12:15 pm, in accordance with the college academic calendar. Attendance will be taken at every online meeting. Recordings of all class meetings will be posted after class on Blackboard. Absences for illness, emergency, religious observance, and select professional development or career-related opportunities will be excused with appropriate communication. The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced unprecedented challenges for many of us. Your health and safety, and the health and safety of your loved ones, must be your highest priorities. I simply ask that you do your best to communicate with me about any extended absences you may need to take during the semester. If you are

absent for more than three (3) online meetings without explanation, your participation grade will be affected.

Class participation is defined broadly, and includes: regular attendance; completing readings in advance of class; actively participating in class discussions; and engaging with your peers in an attentive and respectful manner. If you find it hard to ignore internet distractions during class, I highly recommend downloading an app such as [Freedom](#) that will temporarily block your access to certain websites (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc).

4. Readings

Please consult the schedule below for the assigned readings. You are not required to purchase any books. Electronic copies of all assigned readings will be provided via Blackboard. On a completely optional basis, you might find it useful to have your own copy of this textbook:

Ellen Lust, ed. 2020. *The Middle East*. 15th Edition. Sage/CQ Press.¹

You are unlikely to pass the course if you attend class but do not do the readings. Similarly, you are also unlikely to pass the course if you do the readings but do not attend class. If you are struggling with the reading material, please find a time to meet with me early in the semester.

As a CUNY student, note that many resources are available to you for free online via [the CCNY library](#). For those of you interested in international affairs, I encourage you to keep up with world news. For this class, you might find it helpful to keep up with news from the MENA region, in particular. As a CUNY student, you can get free access to the *New York Times* [here](#) and the *Wall Street Journal* [here](#). Other sources of news and analysis include: [The Washington Post](#), [Los Angeles Times](#) and [The Guardian](#). MENA-specific English-language sources include: [Al-Monitor](#); [Al Jazeera English](#); Atlantic Council's [MENASource](#); and Carnegie's [Diwan](#) blog. There are, of course, many more sites depending on your countries/topics of interest. If you have questions about the reputability, reliability, or potential biases of a particular source, do not hesitate to ask me for input. You aren't alone if you find it hard to determine where information on the internet is coming from. We should all read widely and expose ourselves to diverse perspectives, but we should do so with an informed, critical eye.

5. Discussion Posts

You are required to submit five (5) discussion posts on Blackboard over the course of the semester, each of which will be worth a maximum of 5 points. You may submit up to one (1) additional post for extra credit. Discussion posts should be 250-300 words in length. Please proofread your post for spelling and grammar before submitting it. All posts must be submitted by the last day of December 9 at 11:59 PM EST in order to be graded. There are three types of posts:

¹ Electronic copies posted on Blackboard will be from the 14th Edition, published in 2017. You can read either version.

1) Reading response posts (2 required)

This is a post in response to one of the assigned readings. A reading response post should briefly summarize the subject of the reading and respond to the questions contained in the Reading Guide posted on Blackboard. Reading response posts must be submitted on Blackboard by 11:00 AM EST the day that the assigned reading is due. Responses submitted after the deadline will not receive credit.

2) News analysis posts (1 required)

In a news analysis post, you will choose a recent news article or piece of analysis and respond to it. (See section 4, “Readings”, above for some suggested websites and sources.) Each post should contain a working web link to the original item followed directly by your post. You do not need to include a lengthy summary of the news article in your post – assume the reader has read the article. In your post, you must link the subject of the article to a concept, theme, or historical development covered in our class. Did something we covered in class help you better understand this article? If so, how? Does this article touch on something important that was missing from a recent class reading or discussion? Note: News analysis posts are not a venue for sharing personal opinions. News analysis posts can be posted any time throughout the semester.

3) Reply posts (2 required)

Instead of starting your own thread, you will respond to a peer’s reading response or news analysis post. In a reply post, you should engage with the original post by your peer, and you should also read any other replies that have come before yours. In your reply post, you should engage with concepts, themes, or developments that we have covered in our class. Reply posts can be posted any time throughout the semester.

All discussion posts will be graded on a 5-point scale. Posts that follow the instructions above and that demonstrate a high level of originality, thoughtful reflection, and effective writing style will receive full credit.

6. Midterm Exam

The take-home midterm exam will be distributed on October 7 and due on October 14. It will include three (3) components:

- 1) A “Wiki” (a crowdsourced, online encyclopedia of key concepts from the course)
- 2) Short answers
- 3) Essay

You will have full access to your readings and notes for the exam. You are required to complete the exam by yourself. More details will be provided as the date approaches.

7. Final Project

The largest assignment of the course is your own research project, culminating in a final paper due on **December 16**. In the final research project, you will apply concepts and methods from the course to a particular event, conflict, political regime, institution, popular movement, feature of the economy, or another “case” of your choosing from the broad field of MENA politics. The assignment has three (3) components, summarized below. More details will be provided for each component.

- 1) You must submit a one-paragraph summary of your topic for approval by November 16. I will provide feedback on your topic after receiving your summary.
- 2) You will provide an 8-10 minute video presentation of your topic during class time between November 30 and December 9.
- 3) Your final paper should be 8-10 pages (double-spaced, 12 point font, 1” margins).

8. Virtual Office Hours and Email

A link to sign up for my virtual office hours can be found at the top of this syllabus. Office hour appointments can be held on Zoom or by phone, depending on the student’s preference. Office hours are periods of time that professors specifically dedicate to you, the students, to review course material and answer any questions you may have. Please come to office hours as often as you wish. If you cannot attend my regularly scheduled office hours due to a conflict, please email me to find another mutually convenient time to meet.

I make every effort to respond to email within 24 hours (or, if over the weekend, the next business day). There are two exceptions. First: Emails sent less than 48 hours prior to the midterm or final paper due date are not guaranteed a response. Second: Questions whose answer is clearly stated on this syllabus are not guaranteed a response.

9. Grade Grievances

If you believe a grade you have received is unfair or in error, you will need to:

- Wait 24 hours after receiving the grade before approaching me.
- Within one week (7 days) of receiving the grade, provide an explanation in writing for why you believe the grade you received was unfair or in error and submit it with the original assignment. The entire assignment will be re-graded. Note that this may raise or lower your grade.

For more information on appealing grades, please consult the Office of Academic Standards’ website [here](#).

10. Academic Integrity

Cheating – including plagiarism – will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism means presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own without giving credit. Plagiarism is very easy to avoid by giving recognition to the original author or source from which the material came. Academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarism, will result in a zero grade for that assignment and possibly trigger disciplinary action. The CUNY Academic Integrity Policy is available [here](#). If you have made it this far through the syllabus, please [email](#) me a cute animal picture or meme.

11. Disability and Accessibility Accommodations

The AccessAbility Center/Student Disability Services (AAC/SDS) ensures equal access and full participation to all of City College's programs, services, and activities by coordinating and implementing appropriate accommodations. AAC/SDS continues to operate remotely. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations and services, please contact AAC/SDS via email (disabilityservices@ccny.cuny.edu).

12. Student Mental Health and Well-Being

Your health and well-being is important to me, your other professors, your colleagues and friends, and the City College community. CCNY's Counseling Center is now providing remote services to students, including screening and assessment, crisis intervention, individual short-term counseling, group counseling, referral and case management, and workshops. Contact the Counseling Center via email at counseling@ccny.cuny.edu. The email address is checked during normal business hours. Please include your phone number in the email. See the Counseling Center web page [here](#) for more information and resources. CCNY's Gender Resources has also moved to a virtual platform. For general questions or information about their services, including supporting survivors of violence and members of the LGBTIA+ community, contact them via email at genderresources@ccny.cuny.edu. See the Gender Resources web page [here](#) for more information and resources.

13. Reading and Assignment Schedule

August 26: Introductions

August 31: Early Islam and Islamic States

- Michael Gasper. 2017. Excerpt from “The Making of the Modern Middle East”. In Ellen Lust (Ed.). *The Middle East*. (pp. 1-5)
- Albert Hourani. 1991. *A History of the Arab Peoples*. New York: Warner Books. “Prologue” and excerpt of “Part I: The Making of a World,” (pp. 1-5). “The Formation of an Empire,” (pp. 22-37).

September 2: The Ottoman Empire and European Expansion (I)

- Michael Gasper. 2017. Excerpt from “The Making of the Modern Middle East”. In Ellen Lust (Ed.). *The Middle East*. (pp. 5-21).
- Watch: Meltem Toksöz. “[Why was the Tanzimat an important period in Ottoman history?](#)” The Choices Program at Brown University. April 9, 2014.
- Albert Hourani. 1991. Excerpts from “Part IV: The Age of European Empires” and “European Power and Reforming Governments,” (pp. 263-278)

September 7: NO CLASS

September 9: The Ottoman Empire and European Expansion (I)

- Djene Rhys Bajalan. 2016. “Princes, Pashas and Patriots: The Kurdish Intelligentsia, the Ottoman Empire and the National Question (1908–1914).” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 43(2): 140-157.
- Laila Parsons. 2017. Excerpt from “Ottoman Officer,” (pp. 1-19).

September 14: Colonial States

- Laila Parsons. 2017. Excerpt from “Ottoman Officer,” (pp. 20-37).
- Roger Owen. 2004. *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. “The End of Empires: The Emergence of the Modern Middle Eastern States,” (pp. 5-22)
- Albert Hourani. 1991. “The Climax of European Power (1914-1939),” (pp. 315-332)

Recommended:

- David Siddharta Patel. 2016. “Repartitioning the Sykes-Picot Middle East? Debunking Three Myths.” Brandeis University Crown Center for Middle East Studies. Middle East Brief 103.
- Ian S. Lustick. 2017. “The Balfour Declaration A Century Later: Accidentally Relevant.” *Middle East Policy* 24(4): 166-176.

September 16: Catch-up Day

- Review a reading from September 14 that you did not have time to read thoroughly, and/or get ahead on September 21 readings

September 21: Nation-States and Arab Nationalism (I)

- Adeed Dawisha. 2003. *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair*. “Defining Arab Nationalism”. (pp. 1-13)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lahouari Addi. 2017. <i>Radical Arab Nationalism and Political Islam</i>. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. "The Emergence and Development of Arab Nationalism," (pp. 15-44).
<p>September 23: Israel/Palestine (I)²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Tessler. Excerpt from "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict". In Ellen Lust (Ed.). <i>The Middle East</i>. (pp. 288-305).
<p>September 28: NO CLASS (No classes scheduled)</p>
<p>September 29³: Catch-up Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the reading from September 23 if you did not have time to read thoroughly, and/or get ahead on September 30 readings
<p>September 30: Nation-States and Arab Nationalism (II)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adeed Dawisha. 2003. "The Path to Nationalist Ascent: From the Palestinian Revolt to the Egyptian Revolution" and "Consolidating Arab Nationalism: The Emergence of 'Arab' Egypt". (pp. 107-159)
<p>October 5: Israel/Palestine (II)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Tessler. Excerpt from "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict". In Ellen Lust (Ed.). <i>The Middle East</i>. (pp. 305-335)
<p>October 7: Review Session / Open Office Hours</p>
<p>October 12: NO CLASS (College closed)</p>
<p>October 14⁴: MIDTERM EXAM DUE / NO CLASS</p>
<p>October 19: Varieties of Authoritarianism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose three (3) of the following readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roger Owen. 2004. "The Growth of State Power in the Arab World: The Single-Party Regimes," (pp. 23-38). Roger Owen. 2004. "The Growth of State Power in the Arab World under Family Rule, and the Libyan Alternative," (pp. 39-55). Nadje Sadig Al-Ali. 2007. <i>Iraqi Women : Untold Stories From 1948 to the Present</i>. Zed Books. "Living with the Ba'th," (pp. 109-146). Lisa Anderson. 1991. "Absolutism and the Resilience of Monarchy in the Middle East." <i>Political Science Quarterly</i> 106 (1): 1-15.

² I will try to scan and post these additional, recommended readings on Israel/Palestine for you to read on an optional basis: Rashid Khalidi. 2010 (1st edition 1997). *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. "Contrasting Narratives of Palestinian Identity." (pp. 9-34). Benny Morris. 2008. 1948. "Some Conclusions," (pp. 392-420). Lila Abu-Lughod. 2007. "Return to Half-Ruins: Memory, Postmemory, and Living History in Palestine." In Ahmad H. Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod, eds. *Nakba*. (pp. 77-104).

³ College classes follow a Monday schedule.

⁴ College classes follow a Monday schedule.

October 21: The Politics of Oil

- Michael Ross. 2012. *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations*. "Petroleum Perpetuates Patriarchy." (pp. 111-132)

Recommended:

- Michael Ross. 2012. *The Oil Curse: How Petroleum Wealth Shapes the Development of Nations*. "The Trouble with Oil Revenues". (pp. 27-62)

October 26: Israel/Palestine (III)

- Mark Tessler. Excerpt from "The Israeli Palestinian Conflict". In Ellen Lust. (Ed.). *The Middle East*. pp. 335-367

October 28: Islamist Politics (I)

- Mehrzad Boroujerdi. "Iran." In Ellen Lust, ed. *The Middle East*. (pp. 455-475).

Recommended:

- Jillian Schwedler. 2011. "Can Islamists Become Moderates?: Rethinking the Inclusion-Moderation Hypothesis." *World Politics* 63(2): 347-376.

November 2: Islamist Politics (II) *Guest Speaker: May Darwich

- Carrie Rosefsky Wickham. 2013. *The Muslim Brotherhood: Evolution of an Islamist Movement*. "The Brotherhood's Early Years". (pp 20-45).
- May Darwich. "Creating the enemy, constructing the threat: the diffusion of repression against the Muslim Brotherhood in the Middle East." *Democratization* 24(7): 1289-1306.

November 4: TBD

November 9: Gender, Religion, and Politics

- Lihi Ben Shitrit. 2013. "Women, Freedom, and Agency in Religious Political Movements: Reflections From Women Activists in Shas and the Islamic Movement in Israel." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 9(3): 81-107.

Recommended:

- Saba Mahmoud. *Politics of Piety*. Excerpts (pp. 1-5, and pp. 40-78).

November 11: Revolution and Agency

- Wendy Pearlman. 2016. "Narratives of Fear in Syria." *Perspectives on Politics* 14(1): 21-37.
- Nermin Allam. 2018. "Activism Amid Disappointment: Women's Groups and the Politics of Hope in Egypt." *Middle East Law and Governance* 10(3): 291-316.

November 16: FINAL PROJECT TOPIC SUMMARY DUE

Authoritarian Persistence

- Steven Heydemann. 2013. "Syria and the Future of Authoritarianism." *Journal of Democracy* 24(4): 59-73.
- Frédéric Volpi. 2020. "Algeria: When Elections Hurt Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 31(2): 152-165.

November 18: Post-Conflict Institutions: Lebanon *Guest Speaker: Christiana Parreira

- Paul Salem. "Lebanon". In Ellen Lust. (Ed.). *The Middle East*. Excerpts.
- Christiana Parreira. "[The art of not governing](#)." *Synaps Network*. October 23, 2019.
- Christiana Parreira. "Introduction." From *The Art of Not Governing: Local Politics in Postwar Lebanon*. (Ph.D. dissertation.)

November 23: Sudan and Unfinished Uprisings

- Mai Hassan and Ahmed Kodouda. 2019. "Sudan's Uprising: The Fall of a Dictator." *Journal of Democracy* 30(4): 89-103.
- Zachariah Mampilly. "After Bashir: How Sudan Can Heal From Decades of Dictatorship." *Foreign Affairs*. May 2, 2019.

November 25: NO CLASS (Classes follow Friday schedule)

November 26-29: Thanksgiving Break

November 30, December 2, 7, 9: FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

December 16: FINAL PAPER DUE