

War and Peace in the Middle East

POLS 265
MWF 10-10:50am
McGannon 121
Office Hours: MW 11-11:50am

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Course Description and Objectives:

This course examines the modern politics of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), emphasizing the years 1960 to 2010. As with any region, the boundaries of the MENA are contested. For the purposes of this class, this term refers to the following countries: Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Turkey is an important player in the Middle East, as is Iran, but their location in the region is debatable. This course has several goals. The first is to provide historical and social context to understanding recent political developments in the MENA. This is accomplished through course readings, lectures, a movie and the extra credit assignment. Secondly, the course assignments aim to encourage the development of critical thinking and writing skills that will serve students in upper-division and graduate coursework. Finally, the course is designed to assist students in gaining an understanding of how knowledge about the world is produced and reproduced.

Students who complete each of the written assignments for this course will gain a stronger understanding of the system of contemporary knowledge production. The first assignment, a review of a Middle Eastern news source, requires students to regularly read news from an author whose assumptions about the world are likely different than those of American journalists. The goal of the assignment is for students to develop a critical eye toward a newspaper article and begin to ask questions such as: What is the argument of this article? What evidence is presented? What evidence was not presented? Who was relied upon as a source or “expert” on this matter? Were there any important questions left unaddressed by the journalist? Students will also begin to notice trends across the news source in general. Are particular parties or groups given more critical or more positive news coverage than others? Is the source pro-regime? Is the source pro-America? By developing a critical spirit in the consumption of news, students are prepared for the second assignment in this course, the annotated bibliography.

In an annotated bibliography, students follow a similar line of critical reasoning as used for the newspaper analysis but the object of critique is the scholarly journal article. A well-written annotated bibliography will spend very little time summarizing the source and will concentrate on *evaluating* the source. What is the argument? What evidence is presented? What is the method for gathering and presenting the evidence? Finally, students will begin to assess the quality of the source, answering the question, “Is the scholar’s argument convincing?” Because many scholars rely on newspaper accounts, as students develop concerns about the quality of journalism they will become more critical of scholars who rely on newspaper accounts without investigating their sources.

Finally, students will write a mock grant proposal. They will identify an interesting research question and design a plan of how they would answer this question. This exercise brings the understanding of the production of knowledge full circle. By crafting a grant proposal, students begin to think like scholars and also gain an understanding of the challenges and incentives faced by scholars. Who funds research? How do the interests of the funders influence the grant proposals that scholars write? How does this influence the production of knowledge? Because many scholars rely on newspaper accounts as preliminary research on a topic, students will also begin to understand the connections between the various organs of knowledge production.

Course Requirements:

Successful completion of this course requires attendance at lectures, active participation in course discussions, completion of all reading assignments in a thoughtful and thorough manner, commitment to reading one Middle Eastern news source on a daily basis, and completion of all written assignments.

Attendance Policy/Participation Grade:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in discussions in order to gain full participation credit. The professor will provide guidance on what types of comments in class discussions are acceptable and beneficial for fulfillment of the participation grade. Four unexcused absences are allowed before the student's grade is impacted. Completion of online evaluation at the end of the course is a part of classroom participation and is expected from all students.

Reading Assignments:

Students are expected to complete ALL reading assignments. Student progress toward this goal will be evaluated through class discussions as well as the annotated bibliography project. It is expected that students already possess the ability to read and understand scholarly-level publications. Those who are new to reading scholarly writing should consult with the instructor for further resources.

Office Hours:

All students are required to visit professor office hours within the first three weeks of classes.

Non-Western News Sources:

Students are expected to maintain an awareness of developments in the region through daily consultation with an English-language news source located in the region of study. Some suggested sources include: *al-Jazeera English*, *al-Arabiya English*, *al-Masry al-Youm English*, *The Jerusalem Post*, *Haaretz*, or *Asharq al Awsat*. Students are expected to select a news source during the first week of class and write a brief reflection detailing why they have chosen the source, who owns it, who the intended audience is and how it has been evaluated by other news sources. This brief reflection is due **Friday, 6 September, 2013**. Students will be evaluated on this requirement through course discussions on recent events and a final written review (see below).

Students are also encouraged to subscribe to the Foreign Policy Middle East Brief, which delivers a summary of news story dealing with the region to your inbox each morning. You can subscribe to the brief here: <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/newsletters>

Written Assignments:

Upper-level undergraduate students need to be developing strong analytical writing skills, particularly if they have intentions of applying for graduate school. Students who successfully complete the written assignments for this course will progress toward meeting this goal in an accelerated manner. There are three written assignments in this course: a grant proposal, a review of a non-Western news source and an annotated bibliography. ALL written assignments should be done with one-inch margins, 11 or 12 point Times New Roman font, and double-spaced. Any deviations from this norm are discouraged, as they will put your professor in a negative mood while she is grading your work. For assistance with written work contact the Student Success Center at 977-3484 or <http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml>.

Grant Proposal:

A grant proposal is a request for funding for a particular research project. Students will write a sample grant proposal, following the template provided by Fulbright to one of the following countries: Bahrain, Israel, Kuwait, Oman, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, United Arab Emirates. Students will complete both the Statement of Grant Purpose and the Personal Statement. The directions, taken from the webpage, are:

“Statement of Grant Purpose: This 2-page document outlines the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How of what you are proposing for your Fulbright year. Developing a strong, feasible and compelling project is the most important aspect of a successful Fulbright application. The first step is to familiarize yourself with the program summary for your host country. The program design will vary somewhat depending upon the country and the field

of study. The proposal should indicate a clear commitment to and description of how you will engage with the host country community.”

“Personal Statement: This 1-page narrative is designed to give the reviewers a picture of you as an individual. It is an opportunity to tell the committee more about the trajectory that you have followed and what plans you have for the future. Whereas the *Statement of Grant Purpose* focuses on what you will be doing in the host country, the Personal Statement concentrates on how your background has influenced your development and how that relates to the Fulbright opportunity.

The statement can deal with your personal history, family background, intellectual development, and the educational, professional, or cultural opportunities to which you have or have not been exposed; explain their impact. This should not be a reiteration of facts already listed in the Biographical Data sections or an elaboration of the *Statement of Grant Purpose*.”

The most difficult part of the grant-writing process is picking an interesting question that you have the means of answering through on-the-ground fieldwork. It is highly recommended that students consult with the professor on the research question that will frame their proposal during their initial office hours visit. Strategic students will critically examine their MENA news source to look for ideas for research projects. Students will receive feedback on their applications and are encouraged to submit their proposals to Fulbright upon completing the course.

The first drafts of the Statement of Grant Purpose and Personal Statement are due **Friday, 4 October 2013**. Students will receive feedback on their proposals and be expected to implement suggested changes prior to the final due date of **Friday, 1 November 2013**.

For more details see: <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/application-components/academic>

Review of News Source:

In addition to the brief reflection paper detailing the selection of a news source (discussed above in the section titled “Non-Western News Sources”), students are also expected to write a five-page review of their media source. The review is due **Friday, 25 October 2013**. Students will be expected to evaluate the news source critically. The review may concentrate on questions such as: What stories tend to dominate headlines? Who is the intended audience of the source? What are the source’s biases? What other sources might you read to gain a balanced perspective on issues in the region? Who finances the source? Are there any significant political or economic ties that may influence reporting? What is the writing style of the publication? For whom is such a publication ideal?

Annotated Bibliography:

Students will submit an Annotated Bibliography of all reading assignments (except for those assigned after the due date) by **Friday, 22 November 2013**. The professor reserves the right to suggest additional texts from lectures that must be included for full credit.

The format for each entry is highly formulaic. The average length of an entry should be 250 words. Do all of the following: Identify the main argument of the scholarship (maybe an actual quote), rephrase this argument in your own words, identify the scope conditions (to what/whom/when does this theory apply?) and clarify if there are any articulated or implied biases. Finally, evaluate the argument. Does it offer an appropriate solution to a problem? Why or why not? Is the argument well supported? What evidence is particularly strong or weak? Each entry should begin with a full citation. Follow the style guide from the journal *Comparative Politics* available at: <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/jcp/style.htm>

Annotation versus abstract (source: <http://lib.skidmore.edu/library/index.php/li371-annotated-bib>):

“The annotation is a concise description of a particular source, including important aspects of content not evident in the title. It enables the researcher to establish the relevance of a specific journal article, book, research report, or government document, etc. and to decide whether to consult the full text of the work. Abstracts, such as those found in various periodical databases or those accompanying scholarly journal articles are usually just descriptive summaries.”

The first draft of the annotated bibliography is due **Friday 20 September 2013**. Students will receive comments on their annotations. Their implementation of these suggestions will be assessed in the final grade of the assignment. In other words, your final draft should demonstrate that you read my comments on your draft, considered them, and adjusted your annotations judiciously.

Grading Detail:

20% Attendance/Participation
20% Grant Proposal
40% Annotated Bibliography
15% Review of Media Source
5% Office Hours

Grade Scale:

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	F	below 60
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

Required Texts:

- Kepel, Gilles. 2002. *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Donohue, John J., and John L. Esposito. 2007. *Islam in Transition: Muslim perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Recommended Text: (Also available as a free e-book through SLU library)

- Cleveland, William L., and Martin Bunton. 2008. *A History of the Modern Middle East, Fourth Edition*. 4th ed. Westview Press.

Extra credit:

There is one extra credit opportunity in this class, equal to two percentage points on one’s final grade. In order to obtain full credit, write a book review (3-4 pages) of one of the below texts and present it to the class in a 5 minute presentation. Only one student may read each work for credit, so let me know as soon as possible which book you would like to read. When requesting a book, also let me know on what date you would like to present your work. It would be ideal if you select a class lecture that corresponds to your book. All requests must be made by **Friday 6 September 2013**. In the review, the student should refrain from summarizing the text and seek to *evaluate* the work. In that vein, the review should address the following questions: In what time period is the work set? From who’s perspective is it written? Is the text realistic? What does reading of the text contribute to the study of the Modern Middle East? Read this review before you write your own:

http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2010/01/18/100118crbo_books_pierpont

Available texts (students may petition for an alternative text):

- Hanan al-Shaykh, *Women of Sand and Myrrh* (Lebanese) PJ7862.H356 W66 1992
- Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass* (Moroccan) CT2678.M47 A3 1994
- Leila Abouzeid, *Year of the Elephant* (Moroccan) PJ7808.Z22 A513 1989
- Naguib Mahfouz, *Palace Walk* (Egyptian) PJ7846.A46 B313 1990
- Ghassan Kanafani, *Men in the Sun...* (Palestinian) PJ7842.A5 R513 1999

- Ghada Samman, *Beirut Nightmares* (Syrian) not available at SLU
- Elias Houry, *Gate of the Sun* (Lebanese) PJ7842.H823 B3313 2005
- Rajaa Alsanea, *Girls of Riyadh* (Saudi) not available at SLU
- Riverbend, *Baghdad Burning* (Iraqi) DS79.76 .R587 2005 and volume II is an ebook
- Mahmoud Saeed, *Saddam City* (Iraqi) not available at SLU
- Sinan Antoon, *I'jaam* (Iraqi) not available at SLU
- Emile Habiby, *The Secret Life of Saeed the Pessoptimist* (Israeli) not available at SLU
- Ibrahim al-Koni, *Gold Dust* (Libyan) not available at SLU
- Hisham Matar, *In the Country of Men* (Libyan) PR6113.A87 I515 2007
- Ahlam Mosteghanemi, *Memory in the Flesh* (Algerian) not available at SLU
- Mustapha Tlili, *Lion Mountain* (Tunisian) not available at SLU
- Zayd Mutee' Dammaj, *The Hostage* (Yemeni) not available at SLU

Academic Honesty:

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in *an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment* and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

Student Learning and Disability Statement:

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [314-977-8885](tel:314-977-8885) or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Weekly Assignments and Themes:

All readings in parenthesis are due ON THE DAY they are listed

UNIT 1: HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Week One: Introduction and background

26 August 2013: Syllabus, get to know one another, first map quiz

- If you did poorly on the map quiz, study here: <http://www.maps.com/games/quiz-middle.aspx>
- Read the extra credit review essay

28 August 2013: Intro to Islam, in-class annotation (Hourani, Ch. 1)

30 August 2013: The study of Islam and politics, in-class annotation (Eickelman and Piscatori, Ch. 1)

Week Two:

2 September 2013: NO CLASS (Labor Day)

4 September 2013: Ottoman Empire, part I (Cleveland, Ch. 3, ebook)

6 September 2013 Ottoman Empire, part II (Cleveland, Ch. 9, ebook)

- **News source reflection paper due/ Extra credit book and presentation date due**

Week Three:

9 September 2013: Colonialism and Islamic modernism ((Esposito, part I “Early Responses: Crisis...”))

11 September 2013: Orientalism (Said, Ch. 1, pages 1-31)

13 September 2013: Nationalism (Esposito, section “Islam and Nationalism”)

Week Four:

16 September 2013: Arab-Israeli conflict, part I (Dershowitz, The Case for Israel, Ch. 1-2)

18 September 2013: Arab-Israeli conflict, part II (Walt, 2006, available at:

<http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/john-mearsheimer/the-israel-lobby>)

20 September 2013: **First draft of Annotated Bibliography due** (include the reading due today!)
(Esposito, section “Islam and Socialism”)

UNIT 2: EXPANSION OF POLITICAL ISLAM

Week Five:

23 September 2013: (Kepel Introduction and Ch. 1)

25 September 2013: (Kepel Ch. 2)

27 September 2013: (Kepel Ch. 3)

Week Six:

30 September 2013: (Kepel Ch. 4)

2 October 2013: (Kepel Ch. 5)

4 October 2013 **First draft of grant proposal due** (Esposito sections by Ayatullah Ruhllah Khumayni, Ayatollah Mohammad Khatami and Abdolkarim Soroush)

Week Seven:

7 October 2013: (Kepel Ch. 6)

9 October 2013: (Kepel Ch. 7)

11 October 2013: (Kepel Ch. 8 and Esposito section “The Islamic Veil (Hijab)”))

Week Eight: Violence and Jihad

14 October 2013: (Kepel Ch. 9)

16 October 2013: (Esposito section “Jihad defined and redefined”)
18 October 2013: Grant Proposal Workshop hosted by Duane Smith, Director of Post-Baccalaureate Scholarships & Fellowships, smithdh@slu.edu (*Bring your drafts to class!*)

UNIT 3: DECLINE OF POLITICAL ISLAM

Week Nine:

21 October 2013: NO CLASS (Fall break)
23 October 2013: (Kepel Ch. 10)
25 October 2013: **Review of non-Western news source due** (Kepel Ch. 11)

Week Ten:

28 October 2013: Battle of Algiers (in-class movie)
30 October 2013: Battle of Algiers
1 November 2013 **Final grant proposal due** Battle of Algiers

Week Eleven:

4 November 2013: (Kepel Ch. 12)
6 November 2013: (Kepel Ch. 13)
8 November 2013: (Kepel Ch. 14)

Week Twelve:

11 November 2013: (Kepel Ch. 15)
13 November 2013: Islam and democracy compatibility debate (Lewis, “The Roots of Muslim Rage”)
15 November 2013: NO CLASS

UNIT 4: CONTROVERSIES IN POLITICAL ISLAM

Week Thirteen:

18 November 2013: (Esposito, section “Islam and Democracy”)
20 November 2013: Gender (Ahmed, Ch. 3)
22 November 2013: **Annotated Bibliography Due** In class film: Wide Angle: Class of 2006)

Week Fourteen:

25 November 2013: (Esposito, section “Islam and the West: Clash and Dialogue”)
27-29 November 2013: NO CLASS (Thanksgiving break)

Week Fifteen:

2 December 2013: War in Afghanistan (Excerpts from the Looming Tower by Wright, Poetry of Matiullah Turab)
4 December 2013: War in Iraq (Excerpts from Packer, 2006 - The Assassin’s Gate)
6 December 2013: Conclusion: The MENA prior to the Arab Spring

Week Sixteen:

9 Lecture: “What I tried to accomplish in this class”