

NON-EUROPEAN POLITICAL SYSTEMS
PSCI 333
Fall 2018

Dr. Ozum Yesiltas
Ferguson Social Science Room: 147
Ozum.Yesiltas@tamuc.edu

Office Hours: T-R 12.30 – 2 pm
T-R 3.30 – 4.30 pm
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers students an overview of the government and contemporary politics of the Middle East and North Africa. We will explore the social, political and economic factors shaping the domestic and foreign policies of the Middle Eastern states from a comparative perspective. The course will also draw on current political events with a particular focus on the rise of Islamist movements, sectarian conflict, the Arab Spring of 2011 and growing turmoil in Syria and its potential consequences for the region.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Critical Thinking:** Students will develop critical and analytical skills in discussing the regional events in the Middle East and North Africa.
- **Social Responsibility:** Students will demonstrate an awareness of societal and/or civic issues in the international arena.
- **Personal Responsibility:** Students will form their own research agendas in Middle East politics and will practice academic honesty in their writing assignments.
- **Communication:** Students will enhance their oral skills and communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with evident message and organizational structure.
- **Empathy skills:** Students will develop empathy skills and be encouraged to see the world from multiple perspectives.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Mark Gasiorowski and Sean L. Yom (ed.). 2017. *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*. 8th Edition. ISBN: 978-0813349947. Westview Press.
- Christopher Phillips. 2016. *The Battle for Syria: International Rivalry in the New Middle East*. ISBN: 978-0300217179. Yale University Press.
- Robert F. Worth. 2016. *A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil, From Tahrir Square to ISIS*. ISBN: 978-0374536794 Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

The class will be a mix of lectures, presentations, discussions and simulations. An outline of the reading schedule is provided in this syllabus. Students are required to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned materials.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance & Participation: Attendance is vital to your success in class. More than 3 unexcused absences will automatically drop your final grade by one letter grade (e.g. if the student earned a “B” in the course, the final grade would be a “C”). Acceptable excuses include documented health and family emergencies. If you have “perfect” participation (never missing any class), you will earn an extra “5” points to be added to your final grade in the end of the semester.

Participation points are earned through your contribution to class discussions. Before each session, I will post two discussion questions on our course page on E-College. Students are expected to come to class prepared to answer those questions. In addition, each session will start with a 10-minute Middle East news coverage. Students are required to follow day-to-day regional events throughout the semester. You may peruse the following sites daily:

<https://www.nytimes.com> (Middle East section)

<https://www.aljazeera.com>

<https://www.al-monitor.com>

<https://www.reuters.com> (Middle East section)

<http://www.jadaliyya.com>

<https://english.alarabiya.net>

Country Presentations: One of our textbooks, *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa*, is a survey of the history, government and politics of the countries in the region. Each student will pick one country for presentation. Presentations are expected to be approximately 25-30 minutes long and must be composed of the following:

- A brief outline of the country (geography, population, governance structure, major characteristics that define domestic and foreign policy, what is currently happening, etc.)
- One theme/event/issue that you find most interesting about your country, and why.
- Two discussion questions to be directed at your classmates.
- A written 2-page outline of the first three items to be handed out to your classmates.

Comparative Paper: Regarding the comparative paper assignment, students are required to choose two countries from *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* for comparison. You may stay with your original assigned country as one of the cases, but you’re not required to do so. A detailed grading rubric, guidelines and format requirements for this assignment can be found on E-College.

Map Quiz: There will be a Middle East and North Africa map quiz. The quiz date can be found on the course schedule on this syllabus.

Syrian Conflict Simulation: The course includes a simulation exercise on the ongoing Syrian crisis. Throughout the semester, students will work in groups according to their roles in the simulation. Your simulation grade will consist of your performance during the simulation activity and a brief write-up regarding your role that must be submitted as a group. The write-up must be between 750-1000 words long and include the following:

- Who is your actor and what are its purposes in the conflict?
- What is the relationship of your actor with other stakeholders in the conflict? Who are your allies, who are your enemies?
- From the perspective of your actor, what are the issues that are negotiable and what are the issues that are not open to compromise (red lines)?
- What is your actor's vision of a post-conflict Syria?

Final Exam: The final (in-class) will only focus on the book *A Rage for Order* and will take place during the finals week. The exam will consist of definitions of terms/concepts, and short and long essays. More info regarding the final will be provided as we approach the finals week.

Format Requirements: All assignments must be double-spaced, typed and written with Times New Roman, 12-point font. Sources for each assignment must include books, academic articles and news pieces. All sources must be cited properly and listed in a bibliography or in footnotes/endnotes format. Regarding citations, you may use any academically accepted format.

GRADING

Course Requirements	Weight
Attendance & Participation	10%
Country Presentations	10%
Comparative Paper	20%
Simulation Performance & Write-up	20%
Map Quiz	10%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100

GRADE SCALE

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Below 60 =F

MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-ups are allowed only under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. However, you must request it prior to the deadline and present documentary proof. Post-deadline make-up requests will not be granted under any circumstances. If you submit any of your assignments late without an excuse, I will cut off 5 points for each day after the deadline.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY DURING CLASS

Unless we assign a day to use technology as part of the learning process, use of cell phones, tablets, computers or any other electronic devices in the classroom is strictly prohibited.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. I expect everyone to be respectful of each other's perspectives and opinions during class discussions. Any behavior that disrupts the class or impedes other student's ability to fully engage with the course will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is required to be responsible for purposefully pursuing and honestly submitting research and work that is original and is the sole work of the individual. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs when a student purposefully or unintentionally takes information directly from a source without proper citation. If you are unclear about the ethics of an academic action, please consult me during my office hours.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Texas Senate Bill-11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued

and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02R1.pdf> (and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

8/27 Introduction to the course/Overview of the syllabus

8/30 The Middle East and North Africa in Comparative Perspective Gasiorowski & Yom Intro

Week 2

9/4 Republic of Iraq Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 8

9/6 Islamic Republic of Iran Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 9

Week 3

9/11 Kingdom of Saudi Arabi Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 10

9/13 The Gulf (Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE & Oman) Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 11

Week 4

9/18 Republic of Yemen Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 12

9/20 Arab Republic of Egypt Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 13

Week 5

9/25 State of Israel Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 5

9/27 Palestine Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 6

Week 6

10/2 Republic of Turkey Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 7

10/4 Syrian Arab Republic Gasiorowski & Yom Ch 2

Week 7

10/9 Syria and the Middle East on the Eve of Civil War Phillips Intro & Ch 1

10/11 The Arab Spring comes to Syria Phillips Ch 2, 3

Comparative Paper due October 14, 11.59 pm on E-College

Week 8

10/16 The Opposition in Syria Phillips Ch 4, 5

10/18 Assad's Allies vs the West Phillips Ch 6, 7

Week 9

10/23 The Rise of ISIS Phillips Ch 8, 9

10/25 Enter Russia Ch 10 & Conclusion

Week 10

10/30 Simulation workshop

Simulation Write-up due October 30

11/1 **Simulation**

Week 11

11/6 **Simulation**

11/8 **Simulation**

Week 12

11/13 **Simulation**

11/15 **Simulation**

Week 13

11/20 The Arab Spring Worth Intro

11/22 **Thanksgiving No Class**

Week 14

11/27 The Arab Spring Worth Ch 1, 2

11/29 The Arab Spring Worth Ch 3, 4

Week 15

12/4 The Arab Spring Worth 5, 6

12/6 The Arab Spring Worth 7 & Epilogue

Week 16

Finals Week

Final Exam: December 13, 8.00 – 10.00 am