

Middle East Comparative Politics
POLC-3340-01, 3 credits
Fall 2020
TTh 10:55am-12:05pm, Woldenberg
Art Center (Art Gallery)

Contact Information

Dr. Drew H. Kinney

Office Hours: MW 10:45am-12:45pm, by [appointment](#) (via Zoom)

Email: dkinney@tulane.edu

Course site: [Canvas](#)

Course Description. This course surveys the politics of the Middle East by focusing on four broad themes: 1) state capacity and the provision of order, including issues affecting regime legitimacy; 2) society, such as social movements, activists, labor organizations, political parties, protest and social movements, and civil society organizations; 3) regime-type and institutional design, beyond distinctions between democracy and autocracy to include comparative authoritarianism, elections, consociational power-sharing, and decentralization; and 4) political economy of development, e.g., ISI, populism, neoliberalism, rentierism/oil politics, Gulf capital, regional and national wealth inequality, corruption, global financial integration, foreign investment, and labor. The second half of the course is case-specific, and includes discussions on the Israel-Palestine conflict; revolutionary upheaval in 2011 and its aftermath in Yemen, Libya, Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia; the "oil curse" in the Persian Gulf; and the contemporary politics of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq.

Course Objectives. This class will, first, teach you to make and evaluate arguments about politics in comparative perspective and, second, introduce you to the methods political scientists use in their research. Upon completion of the course, you should be able to:

- 1) think analytically about intellectual debates about and events in the Middle East, in two broad ways:
 - i. *Cases*: you will learn about Middle East political and social systems.
 - ii. *Methods*: you will learn how to compare these systems.
- 2) think reflectively about the effects that academic findings and your own political footprint have on the Middle East, especially with respect to labeling regime-types and discussing identity.
- 3) apply skills 1 & 2 to the conduct of rigorous independent analysis of questions related to Middle East politics and society.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Break-down of course grades:

Midterm Exam (due Oct. 4)	25%
Reaction Papers (see below)	30%
Final Exam (due Dec. 2)	25%
Participation	20%

Participation. Individual participation is worth 20% of your grade. Simply showing up for class is not sufficient to earn participation points. You are expected to attend classes regularly and participate in discussions. I want you to talk so that you engage with the material and your classmates. It is not any more complicated than that. You are free to ask about current events, readings you did not understand, et cetera. This way we can learn interactively.

Reaction Papers. You will submit three 2-page reaction papers (each worth 10% each for a total of 30% of your grade) on all sections minus the two sections in which we take the midterm and final exams. You have a ***choice*** as to which topic you would like to discuss in the third paper. These papers are critical summaries of the main themes for each corresponding section. Here is a [rubric](#) that explains in more detail how to complete this assignment. All must be turned in via Canvas by 11:59 pm on the due date.

Paper 1: Where is the Middle East? (due Aug. 31)

Paper 2: States in the Middle East (due Sept. 6)

Paper 3: Political Economy (due Oct. 18) ***or*** The 2011 Uprisings (due Nov. 6)

Midterm Exam. The midterm exam covers most of the first two units. The exam will be an open-note, open-book take-home exam. This means that I expect answers to be of higher quality than in-class responses. Answers will be typed into an existing Word.docx, which I will provide. You will then submit your exam via Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on October 4th. Exams are to be completed alone, not through consultation with classmates.

Final Exam. The final exam will cover units three through five. The exam will be an open-note, open-book take-home exam. This means that I expect answers to be of higher quality than in-class responses. Answers will be typed into an existing Word.docx, which I will provide. You will then submit your exam via Canvas by 11:59 p.m. on December 1st. Exams are to be completed alone, not through consultation with classmates.

Course Grading Policies

Makeup exams. You are not automatically entitled to a makeup examination, which are only given in cases of compelling and well-documented excuses, e.g., acute illness, religious observances, athletic events. Oversleeping is not included on that list. You must also have documentation from a physician (not a nurse) or the appropriate administrator at the College. If you have sufficient cause to warrant a makeup exam, I will determine the date and time of the exam.

Late submissions. If you submit work late, I reserve the right to fail you (with a 0) on that particular assignment. If you need more time to complete assignments, please proactively contact me via email and ask for an extension.

Grading. I encourage you to come see me if you have questions about a grade for an assignment. However, I do ask that you wait one week (a cooling off period). During that time, please re-read your assignment and be prepared to defend your position by incorporating relevant course materials.

Computers & cell phones. If you bring a laptop to class, it should be used only for taking notes or consulting assigned readings. It is both distracting and disrespectful to me and your colleagues if you are web-surfing, etc. when you are supposed to be participating in classroom discussion. I do notice, and it will affect your participation grade. Cell phones should be silent and put away, and texting should be minimized. I will disallow the use of electronics if this policy is abused.

Readings. You are responsible for all reading assignments. Come prepared to discuss them, and please make sure to have them handy during class. All readings are available through the syllabus via links, which are marked in blue (below). Clicking on the Further Reading “doc” will bring you to a Google Doc of additional readings on each course topic. These links will remain active beyond the length of the course, so you can use them for independent research, capstones, and the like. Clicking “Notes” brings you to a Google Doc that raises general and specific questions related to the readings for each topic. Ideally, you will click this link before you read for class. “Notes” also serve as your study guide for exams.

Nota Bene. It is essential that you complete all course readings. If it becomes apparent the class is not keeping up with readings, I reserve the right to administer surprise quizzes. If this occurs, I will redistribute the relative weight of course assignments.

Course Feedback. Aside from the formal evaluation at the end of the term, I welcome and encourage feedback throughout the semester on course structure, readings, lectures, et cetera. If you would like to see additional topics covered, please let me know and I will give it consideration. Comments, suggestions, and criticisms will have no bearing (positive or negative) on your grade. You may leave anonymous feedback via Google Forms by: 1) signing in to the course Canvas site; 2) clicking the “Modules” tab; 3) clicking “Course Feedback” tab.

Attendance. Attendance is a requirement if you wish to do well in this course. In-class notes, discussion, and lecture material are the basis for the course’s exams.

I give you two allowed absences, no questions asked. You will be responsible for course material and discussion content for days that you miss. For absences beyond the given two allowed absences, you must provide some sort of documentation, excluding in certain circumstances as discussed with me. Missing more than three courses without good cause, e.g., illness, religious holidays, family deaths, will result in a 2% grade reduction per absence. It is possible to earn a failure due to absence (FA) in this course.

COVID-19 Guidelines. Faculty and students must comply with University policies on COVID-19 testing and isolation, which are located here. Faculty and students must wear face coverings in all common areas, including classrooms, and follow social distancing rules. Failure to comply is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct and students will be subject to University discipline, which can include suspension or permanent dismissal.

ADA/Accessibility Statement. Any students with disabilities or other needs, who need special accommodations in this course, are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor and should contact Goldman Center for Student Accessibility: <http://accessibility.tulane.edu> or 504.862.8433.

Code of Academic Conduct. The Code of Academic Conduct applies to all undergraduate students, full-time and part-time, in Tulane University. Tulane University expects and requires behavior compatible with its high standards of scholarship. By accepting admission to the university, a student accepts its regulations (i.e., [Code of Academic Conduct](#) and [Code of Student Conduct](#)) and acknowledges the right of the university to take disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, for conduct judged unsatisfactory or disruptive.

Religious Accommodation Policy. Per Tulane’s [religious accommodation policy](#), I will make every reasonable effort to ensure that students are able to observe religious holidays without jeopardizing their ability to fulfill their academic obligations. Excused absences do not relieve the student from the responsibility for any course work required during the period of absence. Students should notify me within the first two weeks of the semester about their intent to observe any holidays that fall on a class day or on the day of the final exam.

Title IX. Tulane University recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. As such, Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination including sexual and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence like sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone. Resources and support are available: you can learn more at allin.tulane.edu. Any and all of your communications on these matters will be treated as either “Confidential” or “Private” as explained in the chart below. Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am mandated by the university to report to the Title IX Coordinator, as Tulane and I want to be sure you are connected with all the support the university can offer. You do not need to respond to outreach from the university if you do not want. You can also make a report yourself, including an anonymous report, through the form at tulane.edu/concerns.

Confidential	Private
Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to one’s self or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.	Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.
Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (504) 314-2277 <i>or</i> The Line (24/7) (504) 264-6074	Case Management & Victim Support Services (504) 314-2160 <i>or</i> srss@tulane.edu
Student Health Center (504) 865-5255	Tulane University Police (TUPD) Uptown: (504) 865-5911 Downtown: (504) 988-5531
Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) (504) 654-9543	Title IX Coordinator (504) 314-2160 <i>or</i> msmith76@tulane.edu

Emergency Preparedness & Response.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM: TU ALERT	RAVE GUARDIAN
<p>In the event of a campus emergency, Tulane University will notify students, faculty, and staff by email, text, and phone call. You were automatically enrolled in this system when you enrolled at the university.</p> <p>Check your contact information annually in Gibson Online to confirm its accuracy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Download the RAVE Guardian app from the App Store • Communicate with dispatchers silently by selecting “Submit Tip” feature in the app • Use the Safety Timer feature to alert your “guardian” (TUPD, family, friend) when travelling alone at night <p>For more information, visit publicsafety.tulane.edu/rave-guardian</p>
ACTIVE SHOOTER / VIOLENT ATTACKER	SEVERE WEATHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RUN – run away from or avoid the affected area, if possible • HIDE – go into the nearest room that can be locked, turn out the lights, silence cell phones, and remain hidden until all-clear message is given through TU ALERT • FIGHT – do not attempt this option, except as a last resort <p>For more information on Active Shooter emergency procedures or to schedule a training, visit emergencyprep.tulane.edu</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow all TU Alerts and outdoor warning sirens • Seek shelter indoors until the severe weather threat has passed and an all-clear message is given • Do not attempt to travel outside if weather is severe • Monitor the Tulane Emergency website (tulane.edu/emergency/) for university-wide closures during a severe weather event

Course Outline

I. What is the Middle East?

Further Reading (doc)

(Notes)

August 20, Introduction

Film: *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*.

August 25, Where is the Middle East?

Khalil, O. (2014). *The Crossroads of the World: U.S. and British Foreign Policy Doctrines and the Construct of the Middle East, 1902-2007*. *Diplomatic History*, 38(2), 299-344.

August 27, The Ottoman Legacy

Keyder, C. (1997). *The Ottoman Empire*. In Barkey, K., & Mark Von Hagen, M. (Eds.), *After empire*. New York, N.Y.: Westview Press.

Danforth, N. (2015). *The Middle East That Might Have Been*. *The Atlantic*. February 13.

II. States in the Middle East.

Further Reading (doc)

(Notes)

September 1, Defining the Middle East State

Harik, Ilya. (1985). *The Origins of the Arab State System*. *International Spectator*, 20(2), 20-32.

September 3, War & State Formation in the Middle East

Tilly, C. (1985). [War making and state making as organized crime](#). In P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, & T. Skocpol, Eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (pp. 169-191). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lustick, I. S. (1997). [The absence of Middle Eastern great powers: political “backwardness” in historical perspective](#). *International Organization*, 51(4), 653-683.

III. Identity in the Middle East.

Further Reading (doc)

(Notes)

September 8, Political Islam

Zubaida, S. (2000). [Trajectories of Political Islam: Egypt, Iran and Turkey](#). *Political Quarterly*, 71 (1), 60-78.

Hegghammer, T. (2008). [Islamist Violence and Regime Stability in Saudi Arabia](#). *International Affairs*, 84(4), 701-715.

September 17, Nationalism

Campos, M. U. (2005). [Between ‘Beloved Ottomania’ and ‘The Land of Israel’: The Struggle Over Ottomanism and Zionism Among Palestine’s Sephardi Jews, 1908-13](#). *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 37: 461-83.

IV. Regimes: Democracy and Dictatorship

Further Reading(doc)
(Notes)

I. Democracy and Dictatorship in the Middle East

September 22, Middle East Democracies

Hudson, M. C. (1969). [Democracy and Social Mobilization in Lebanese Politics](#). *Comparative Politics*, 1(2), 245-63.

Ghannouchi, R. (2016). [From Political Islam to Muslim Democracy](#). *Foreign Affairs*.
September/October.

September 24, Middle Eastern Strongmen, Single Parties, and Selectorates

Nassif, H. B. (2015). [A military besieged: The armed forces, the police, and the party in Bin ‘Ali’s Tunisia, 1987-2011](#). *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 47(1), 65-87.

Wedeen, L. (2008). [Peripheral visions: Publics, power, and performance in Yemen](#). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press (only pp. 1-21, 103-146).

September 29, Political change, authoritarian persistence ¹

Lust, E. (2011). [Missing the Third Wave: Islam, Institutions, and Democracy in the Middle East](#). *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 46(2), 163-190.

Bellin, E. (2004). [The robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in comparative perspective](#). *Comparative Politics*, 36(2), 139-157.

October 1, Democratization

Angrist, M. P. (2006). [Party building in the modern Middle East](#). Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press (introduction).

Tessler, M., & Gao E. (2005). [Gauging Arab support for democracy](#). *Journal of Democracy* 16(3): 83-97.

Midterm ¹

¹ Midterms will be made available via Canvas after class on September 29. They are due on October 4 by 11:59 pm via Canvas's Turnitin submission app.

II. Institutional Design

October 6, Federalism

Kane, S., Hiltermann, J. R., & Alkadiri, R. (2012). [Iraq's Federalism Quandary](#). *The National Interest*. February 28.

October 8, Electoral Design

Amr, Hady. (2009). [The good, the bad and the ugly in Lebanon's elections](#). *The Brookings Institution*, June 12.

IV. Political Economy and Development.

Further Reading (doc)

(Notes)

October 11, Institutions & Culture: Impediments & Catalysts of Growth

Kuran, T. (2004). [Why the Middle East is economically underdeveloped: Historical mechanisms of institutional stagnation](#). *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 18(3), 71-90.

October 13, Oil Politics: Rentierism & the Resource Curse

Mitchell, T. (2018). [Petro-capitalism, Part I](#). *The Dig Podcast*. April 10.

Mitchell, T. (2018). [Petro-capitalism, Part II](#). *The Dig Podcast*. April 13.

October 15, Saudi Arabia

The Economist. (2017). [A shake-up in Riyadh: The tasks facing the new Saudi crown prince](#). *The Economist*. June 22.

Wright, R. (2017). [Saudi Arabia's Game of Thrones](#). *The New Yorker*. June 22.

Perper, R. (2018). [Saudi Arabia is giving many of its citizens \\$3000 for free](#). *Business Insider*. January 8.

Yuhas, A. (2018). [Video on Turkish TV Is Said to Show Khashoggi's Remains Being Moved](#). *The New York Times*. December 31.

October 20, International Political Economy

Mitchell, T. (1999). *No Factories, no Problems: The Logic of Neo-Liberalism in Egypt*. *Review of African Political Economy* 26 (82): 455.

Hanieh, A. (2011). *Capitalism and Class in the Gulf Arab States*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave MacMillan (introduction).

V. The Israel-Palestine Conflict

Further Reading (doc)

(Notes)

October 22, Israel & Palestine in the Nineteenth Century

Makdisi, U. (2000). *Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-Century Ottoman Lebanon*. Berkeley: University of California Press (introduction).

Herzl, T. (1896/1946). *The Jewish State* *Jewish Virtual Library*.

October 27, Israel & Palestine in the early Twentieth Century

Dowty, A., & Epstein, Y. (2001). 'A Question That Outweighs All Others': Yitzhak Epstein and Zionist Recognition of the Arab Issue. *Israel Studies* 6 (1), 34-54.

Davis, Rochelle. (2011). *Palestinian Village Histories: Geographies of the Displaced* Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press (only pp. xvii-26).

October 29, Oslo & After

Rabbani, M. (2001). [Rocks and Rockets: Oslo's Inevitable Conclusion](#). *Journal of Palestine Studies* 30 (3), 68-81.

Roy, S. (2012). [Reconceptualizing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Key Paradigm Shifts](#). *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 41(3), 71-91.

VI. The 2011 Uprisings.

Further Reading (doc)

(Notes)

November 3, the so-called "Arab" Spring

Shavit, A. (2013). [Occupy Rothschild, 2011](#). In *My Promised Land*. New York: Spiegel & Grau.

Kuran, T. (1991). [Now out of never: The element of surprise in the East European revolution of 1989](#). *World Politics*, 44(1), 7-48.

Anderson, L. (2011). [Demystifying the Arab spring: parsing the differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya](#). *Foreign Affairs*, 2-7.

November 5, Responses to Protests

Bellin, E. (2012). [Reconsidering the robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring](#). *Comparative Politics*, 44(2), 127-149.

VII. Case Studies

Additional cases (Gulf, Levant)
Further Reading (doc)
(Notes)

November 10, Egypt

Frontline. (2013). [Egypt in Crisis](#). *Public Broadcasting Service*. September 17 (we will watch in class).

November 12, Syria & Iraq

Polk, W. R. (2013). [Understanding Syria: From Pre-Civil War to Post-Assad](#). *The Atlantic*. December 10.

Filkins, D. (2014). [What We Left Behind](#). *The New Yorker*. April 28.

November 17, Turkey under Kemalism

Anderson, P. (2008). [Kemalism](#). *London Review of Books*, 30 (17), 3-12.

November 19, Erdoğanism

Cagaptay, S., & Aktas, O.R. (2017). [How Erdoganism Is Killing Turkish Democracy: The End of Political Opposition](#). *Foreign Affairs*. July 7.

November 24, Post-Revolutionary Iranian Politics²

Maloney, S. (2015). [Iran's Political Economy Since the Revolution](#). Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press (introduction & conclusion).

Final Exam²

² Final exams will be made available via Canvas after class on November 24th. They are due on December 1st by 11:59 pm via Canvas's Turnitin submission app.