Syllabus for Fall Semester 2018
WELCOME!

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Office: Research Hall – room 358 (third floor)
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 3:00 pm-4:00 pm and by Appointment
I will also be in class 15 minutes early and after class to respond to any questions and comments. Other times – please contact me via email and we can arrange a convenient time.

Course Description:
There are so many changes that are currently taking place in the political governance of many countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). So, an examination of the history, political systems; the main economic, social and political issues and challenges; and international relations of the countries in the MENA region is a timely and essential endeavor to get a better understanding of these dramatic changes. This course will review the essentials (historical, social, economic and political developments) in the Middle East: Maghreb, Mashreq and the Gulf.

Class Goal: To gain a better understanding of the modern Middle East and North Africa during this most tumultuous time. This will be accomplished through a comprehensive and accessible study of the politics within the MENA countries; and the international relations between the MENA countries and the external influences on this volatile and important region.

Class Objectives:
- Knowledge of the major dates, treaties, events (especially the Arab Spring 2010/11) that shape the political, economic and social policies currently in MENA countries
• Strengthen the knowledge of why and how MENA countries behave politically and the current state of affairs in key countries particularly war, conflict and deteriorating economic conditions
• Enable students to understand the internal and international politics in the MENA region; develop an understanding of the Arab/Middle Eastern culture, traditions, and norms that affect the political behavior
• Support/add to the knowledge of the students who are learning the Arabic language

**Required Textbooks:** All available in the Library’s reserves section in the Johnson Center (JC)

1. *Understanding the Contemporary Middle East* - Fourth Edition, Editor: Jillian Schwedler  
   - Textbook Binding: 480 pages  
   - Publisher: Lynne Rienner Publishers; 4th edition (July 25, 2013)  
   - Language: English  

2. *The Middle East* - 14th Edition  
   - Editor: Ellen Lust  
   - Paperback: 1056 pages  
   - Publisher: CQ Press; 14th edition (May 13, 2016)  

3. *A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil, from Tahrir Square to ISIS*  
   (Paperback – April 18, 2017) by Robert F. Worth  
   - Paperback: 272 pages  
   - Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Reprint edition (April 18, 2017)  

**Optional Text (for those not as familiar with the Middle East) & Available at our library:**


- Paperback: 269 pages  
- Publisher: University of California Press; 1 edition (February 12, 2005)  

*The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* [Paperback]  
Mark Gasiorowski & Sean L. Yom (Editors)

- Paperback: 544 pages  
- Publisher: Westview Press; 8th Edition (July 12, 2016)
Course Administrative Details:

Introduction:
Welcome to the fascinating and complex world of the Middle East and North Africa – we must explore a few key events and dates in history to comprehend the current political situation in the region to be able to discuss, analyze today’s issues for the future policy makers (that someday you will be) or for the future implementers of foreign policy, mandates, and decisions that you will carry out. My hope that this course will introduce you to several current topics and will give us the opportunity to discuss, analyze and dissect the issues at hand in a constructive critical manner particularly during some interesting and challenging events taking place in the region now.

"Man was born to work towards a peaceful world, but not necessarily to live in one!" An observer of world affairs

To quote, a noted Middle East scholar, Fred Halliday, “the vocation of an internationalist intellectual, actually is to try and promote informed discussion which may feed into public debate and education.”

(MERIP, Summer 2010, Obituary, page, 47).

In this course, my goal is to ask the questions, encourage “informed” discussion and to add to your knowledge about this most complex and interesting region of the world that today occupies the front pages of the major newspapers, and the lead story of the evening news. Completing this course and going on to your chosen professions – I hope you will feel enriched with the points of view based on scholarship and maybe, you would have formed “new” opinions and thoughts. You are now on your way to becoming a “Middle East Scholar!” …. Let us begin this journey of learning and discovery together!

Course Grading and Assessment Details: You will need a laptop for this course to take the tests and the final exam. Please be prepared to have a laptop with the Respondus Lockdown Browser downloaded (available via Blackboard)
1. **Homework & Reading assignments**: There is a reading assignment to complete to be prepared for course sessions. Plus, there are **THREE (3) homework assignments** due via Blackboard before class by no later than **1:00 pm**. Please answer all questions. **Instructions**: One page minimum per question; 1.5 spaced. Please place your name & date at the top of the page. Then please write the question(s) you are answering first then your response. Please use a consistent form of citations throughout your response paper. Referencing our readings does support your arguments and greatly helps your grade :-) 

   The dates are: **25th September, 23rd October, & 6th November**

   Homework is 30% of your grade.

2. **Final Exam**: There will be a **final exam** that will count for 20% of your final grade. **Final Exam: Tuesday, 18th December 1:30 pm – 4:15 pm**. The Final Exam will be cumulative of all tests and homework assignments.

3. **Tests**: There will be three tests during the semester = 30% of your grade. The dates are:
   - 18th September = Test #1,
   - 4th October = Test #2, and
   - 20th November = Test #3.

4. **Class Attendance & Participation; and In-Class Country/Chapter Presentations** are very important. Please ask questions, raise issues, and present arguments to support your point of view – participation is the key to learning. **Plus, please sign-up for country/chapter (Worth book) presentations – there will be a sign-up sheet available on: Thursday, 30th August 2018**. Please prepare notes or power-point slides and submit by midnight the day before you are presenting. I will post those in the Course Contents section on Blackboard for everyone to review. **Class attendance & participation (10%) & in-class presentations (10%) will count towards 20% (total) of your final grade.** It will be your job to please come and introduce yourself to me and ensure that I know your name so that I can correctly give you the deserved participation grade. I look forward to meeting you!
Grading Scale:
A+ = 97–100; A = 94–96; A- = 90–93; B+ = 87–89; B = 84–86; B- = 80–83; C+ = 77–79; C = 74–76; C- = 70–73; D+ = 67–69; F = 0–59

A few key policies to help make our lives easier, to enjoy the course, and to learn together about the Middle East:

Class Conduct:
To help create a beneficial active learning environment in class, I would appreciate that we are conscientious and respectful of the others in class. Class conduct guidelines include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Please no cell phone use in class and laptop use in class is for taking notes only 😊
- Class attendance, in-class presentations, and active participation to foster discussion are mandatory and will contribute greatly to your grade – it will be (as mentioned above) 20% of your grade. I am very interested in your opinions and especially after you have completed the readings.
- Please listen to each other as allies, attentively and without judgment to others’ opinions in class.
- I expect assignments to be turned in on time please. An assignment that is turned in late will receive a deduction of a letter grade per day until it is turned in. An assignment that is more than three days late without an excuse from the Dean or the student’s medical professional will receive a failing grade. After seven days – the assignment will not be accepted.

George Mason University Honor Code:
Plagiarism: It is assumed that all written work submitted is entirely your own. If you obtain ideas, data, phrases, etc. from elsewhere, you must cite the source. A violation of the University Honor Code your final grade will become automatically an “F” and you will be reported to the student/faculty honor committee.

I take the Honor Code and its enforcement very seriously with a zero tolerance policy.

The Honor Code in its entirety can be found in your Student Handbook. All violations of the honor code will be reported to the Honor Committee.
http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html

**Academic Integrity:** It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at [http://oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu)

**Students with Disabilities:** Students who self-identify and provide sufficient documentation of a qualifying disability are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations, such as modifications of programs, academic adjustments, or auxiliary aides as a means to participate in programs and activities. If you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Problems that may arise** – Please if you are experiencing any problems that are affecting your schoolwork and/or class attendance --- please feel free to meet with me and let us see what we can do to help. I will be glad to listen and assist to help you. There are many available resources. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to inform me that you are dealing with a problem(s) since the beginning of the semester. Let us talk and work on getting you the needed assistance early on in the semester so it does not affect your school work down the road. **I am here to help you succeed!**

**Student Support Resources:** We have several academic support and other resources to facilitate student success. Please be sure to include links to relevant student support resources (e.g., Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, the Writing Center, etc.).

**Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence**

*George Mason University* is committed to providing a safe learning, living and working environment free from discrimination. The University’s environment is meant to be experienced as vibrant and dynamic, and one that includes ample opportunities for exploration of self, identity and independence. Sexual misconduct and incidents of interpersonal violence deeply interrupt that experience, and *George Mason University is committed to a campus that is free of these types of incidents in order to promote community well-being and student success.* *George Mason University encourages individuals who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support.*
Confidential resources are available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu), Student Health Services (shs.gmu.edu), the University Ombudsperson (ombudsman.gmu.edu), and Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education and Services (waves.gmu.edu). All other members of the University community (except those noted above) are not considered confidential resources and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the University IX Coordinator. For a full list of resources, support opportunities, and reporting options, contact the University Title IX Coordinator at integrity.gmu.edu and/or at 703-993-8730. Our goal is to create awareness of the range of options available to you and provide access to resources.

Class Schedule, Topics to be discussed and Reading Assignments

[Please note: this schedule is a guide and is subject to change/adjustment based on our discussion needs]

1. **Tuesday, 28th August 2018 – First Day of Class**  
   Welcome, introductions, review of syllabus, review of readings, expectations, goals & objectives, homework and tests, and grades…. All that good stuff on the first day of class!!  
   Power point overview & MENA Map discussion and review

2. **Thursday, 30th August 2018**  
   Part One: Introduction & Overview of the Middle East and North Africa  
   **Reading assignment**: Introduction – Jillian Schwedler Textbook pp. 1-9  
   “The Middle East: A Geographic Preface” by Ian R. Manners  

3. **Tuesday, 4th September 2018 (Last day to drop/add class)**  
   **Optional yet highly recommended**: “The Historical Context” by Arthur Goldschmidt - **Reading Assignment**: Schwedler Textbook pp. 41-89

4. **Thursday, 6th September 2018**  
   In-Class presentations: Algeria & Egypt  
   **Reading Assignment**: Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 403-454

5. **Tuesday, 11th September 2018**  
   Middle Eastern Politics by Philip A. Schrodt and Deborah J. Gerner  
   **Reading Assignment**: Schwedler Textbook pp. 89-139

6. **Thursday, 13th September 2018**  
   In-class Presentations: Iran & Iraq
Reading Assignment: Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 455-515

7. Tuesday, 18th September 2018 -- Test #1 on Overview, Historical Overview, MENA Map, Middle Eastern Politics, Geography and four countries: Iran, Iraq, Egypt, and Algeria

8. Thursday, 20th September 2018

9. Tuesday, 25th September 2018
Chapter 2 - Social Change in the Middle East by Valentine Moghadam and Tabitha Decker
Reading Assignment: Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 74-105
Role of Women Reading Assignment: Naciri, Mohammad. "Arab Women in 2015: Hope Amidst Chaos." Religions, no. 8, 2015 [available on Blackboard], and in Schwedler pp. 345-377; “The Role of Women” by Lisa Pollard; Chapter 11

Homework Assignment #1 Due Today via Blackboard:
Questions – Please answer all the following questions –
1) What were the major agreements that contributed to and redrew the maps of the Middle East during and after WWI? (Lust Textbook);
2) How did the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire spur a new era of nationalism in the ME? What cultural, ideological, and ethnic tensions did this nationalism create?
3) What accounts for the Muslim Brotherhood’s (MB) rise to power in post-Mubarak Egypt? (Lust Textbook);
4) Explain the struggle between Arab Nationalism and Zionism (Ch. 3 in Schwedler)
5) What are the areas of tension between change and preservation of traditional family and gender roles in the MENA region? What are the legal and religious dimensions of these tensions? (Ch. 2 Lust)

10. Thursday, 27th September 2018
Chapter 4 - Institutions and Governance by Ellen Lust - Reading Assignment: Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 160-204
Chapter 6 - Actors, Public Opinion, and Participation by Janine A. Clark and Lina Khatib
Reading Assignment: Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 242-287

11. Tuesday, 2nd October 2018
In-Class Presentations: Kuwait & Lebanon [Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 570-614] and Saudi Arabia [Lust Textbook pp. 737-754]

12. Thursday, 4th October 2018
13. Thursday, 11th October 2018
Chapter 3 - The Political Economy of Development in the Middle East by Melani Cammett and Ishac Diwan (Lust Textbook) - **Reading Assignment**: Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 106-159


14. Tuesday, 16th October 2018
**In-Class Presentations**: The Lower Gulf States: The United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Qatar, Bahrain; [Ellen Lust Textbook pp.644-673] & Yemen [Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 895-915]

15. Thursday, 18th October 2018
The Political Economy of Middle East Oil by Mary Ann Tetreault - **Reading Assignment**: Schwedler Textbook pp. 259-287


16. Tuesday, 23rd October 2018
**In-Class Presentations**: Tunisia and Turkey [Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 808-894] and Sudan & South Sudan [Lust Textbook pp. 755-779]

**Homework Assignment #2 Due Today via Blackboard**: Please answer all the following Questions:

1) How have the structures of MENA political economies (regime type and oil vs. non-oil) correlated with levels of conflict in the Arab Spring?
2) How did the oil boom of the 1970s affect the political economy of oil-rich states?
3) Explain the relationship between Rentier state system and democracy? In other words, does a Rentier state promote or believe in democratic practices?
4) Compare the challenges of building strong judiciaries, party systems and media. And what are common challenges to building strong institutions?
5) Why and how do authoritarian regimes restrict civil society activism in the MENA? How does this impact the nature of civil society and what it accomplishes?
6) How might informal gatherings, such as qat sessions and diwaniyyas, be considered political?
Thursday, 25th October 2018
Religion, Society and Politics in the Middle East

17. Tuesday, 30th October 2018
In-Class Presentations: Libya and Morocco [Ellen Lust Textbook pp. 615-643 and 674-706] Somalia and Mauritania

18. Thursday, 1st November 2018
The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
Reading Assignment: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict by Simona Sharoni and Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Schwedler Textbook pp. 175-215

Reading Assignment: 1) Farsakh and Witkin articles available on Blackboard; 2) “Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, A Primer” By Joel Beinin and Lisa Hajjar, MERIP, February 2014 [On Blackboard]

Optional yet highly recommended: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict by Mark Tessler [Lust Textbook pp. 288-368]

19. Tuesday, 6th November 2018
Watch Documentary Film: Disturbing the Peace http://disturbingthepacefilm.com
Running time: 87 mins, Color
Country of Origin: United States, Israel, Palestine
Languages: English, Arabic and Hebrew w/ English subtitles

ABOUT THE FILM
“IN A WORLD TORN BY CONFLICT—IN A PLACE WHERE THE IDEA OF PEACE HAS BEEN ABANDONED—AN ENERGY OF DETERMINED OPTIMISM EMERGES. WHEN SOMEONE IS WILLING TO DISTURB THE STATUS QUO AND STAND FOR THE DREAM OF A FREE AND SECURE WORLD, WHO WILL STAND WITH THEM?

DISTURBING THE PEACE IS ABOUT PEOPLE BORN INTO CONFLICT, SWORN TO BE ENEMIES, WHO CHALLENGED THEIR FATE. THE FILM Follows EVERYDAY PEOPLE WHO TOOK EXTRAORDINARY ACTIONS BY STANDING FOR WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN, JUST LIKE THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE THEM – MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., ROSA PARKS, GANDHI, NELSON MANDELA AND MANY OTHERS WHOSE NAMES WE DON’T KNOW. THE MOVIE CHALLENGES ALL OF US – TO UNDERSTAND THE NARRATIVES WE LIVE WITHIN, TO LOOK AT OUR CURRENT ROLES IN OUR SOCIETIES, AND TO DECIDE WHAT ROLE WE ARE GOING TO PLAY IN CREATING A MORE HUMANE WORLD, FOR ALL. AND IT STARTS WITH OUR WILLINGNESS TO DISTURB THE PEACE.
DISTURBING THE PEACE IS A STORY OF THE HUMAN POTENTIAL UNLEASHED WHEN WE STOPParticipating in a story that no longer serves us and, with the power of our convictions, take action to create new possibilities. Disturbing the Peace follows former enemy combatants – Israeli soldiers from elite units and Palestinian fighters, many of whom served years in prison – who have joined together to challenge the status quo and say “enough.” The film reveals their transformational journeys from soldiers committed to armed battle to nonviolent peace activists, leading to the creation of combatants for peace.

At a time in our world when societies are becoming more polarized and painfully few people are speaking of nonviolent solutions to our conflicts, popular movements like combatants for peace have the potential to capture the public’s imagination and shift the conversation from the inevitability of conflict, to the possibility and process of establishing lasting peace. Disturbing the Peace evokes universal themes relevant to us all and inspires us to become active participants in the creation of our world."

Homework Assignment #3 Due Today (on Tuesday, 6th November) via Blackboard:
Please answer all the following questions –
1) Who was Sayyid Qutb (1906-66) and what were his contributions to religious extremism?
2) What were the territorial, demographic, and political consequences of the war of June 1967?
3) How has makhzen (patronage) been used since 1961 as an economic tool of political control? How have the limitations of this instrument of control manifested?
4) What are some of the factors that contributed to Hamas’ establishment and growth in popularity?
5) Libya: How has the country's institutional deficiencies impacted the democratization process? How has the NTC managed these factors?

20. Thursday, 8th November 2018
(Continued) Documentary Film: Disturbing the Peace & Complete Worksheet (extra credit)

21. Tuesday, 13th November 2018

22. Thursday, 15th November 2018
International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa
Reading assignment: International Relations by Marc Lynch, Chapter 8 pp. 369-401 (Lust Textbook)

23. Tuesday, 20th November 2018
Test #3 will cover the following topics: Political Economy of Development in the Middle East; The Political Economy of Oil; Religion, Society & Politics; Israeli–Palestinian Conflict; and International Relations of the MENA region plus the following countries: Tunisia, Turkey, Persian/Arabian Gulf Countries, Libya, Morocco, Israel and Palestine

No Class on Thursday, 22nd November – Happy Thanksgiving!

24. Tuesday, 27th November 2018: The Arab Uprisings and Thereafter
A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil by Robert F. Worth
Readings: Introduction, One People (Egypt) and Revenge (Libya) pp. 3-61

25. Thursday, 29th November 2018
A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil by Robert F. Worth
Readings: Sects (Syria); Prisoners of the Sheikh (Yemen) pp. 61-127

26. Tuesday, 4th December 2018
A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil by Robert F. Worth
Readings: Brothers (Egypt); In the Caliph’s Shadow (Yemen & Syria) pp. 127-196

27. Thursday, 6th December 2018 [Last Class]
A Rage for Order: The Middle East in Turmoil by Robert F. Worth Readings: Reconciliation (Tunisia); Epilogue; and Timeline pp. 196-241

Final Exam: Tuesday, 18th December 2018 1:30 pm – 4:15 pm

Thank you for traveling on this learning journey with me!