PSC 400/600 The Road to Democracy in the Islamic World

July 1-31, 2012

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IRP 400 and 600 | PSC 400 and 600 | MES 400 and 600
Class Meeting Time: Monday-Friday 9:00 to 12:30
Office: TBA | Classroom: TBA | Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This program will explore the road to democracy in the Islamic World, including road blocks to the formation of democratic governments in the Islamic World, such as ethno-nationalism, competing ideologies, fundamentalism, corruption, conflicts, and cultural-historical factors. The role of the United States as a force for promoting democracy in the Islamic world will be a central focus of the course.

This course is inspired by the mass demonstrations against authoritarian rule in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria that occurred in 2011. These demonstrations, which were organized by young people, provide the United States the opportunity to show support for democratic reform and human rights, but they also carry the risk of empowering Islamic movements which are opposed to American policy throughout the Islamic World.

The primary goal of this unique course is to explore the various dimensions of the issue of transition to democracy in the Islamic World. We will first explore such road blocks to the formation of democratic governments in the Islamic World as ethno-nationalism, competing ideologies, fundamentalism, corruption, conflicts, and cultural-historical factors. Secondly, we will examine the role of the United States as a force for promoting democracy in the Islamic world. Finally, inspired by the mass demonstrations against authoritarian rule in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria, as well as major protests in Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, and Oman that occurred in 2011, we will interrogate the significance of “Arab Spring” and its repercussions. The three units of the course are intertwined and speak to one another. For example, the demonstrations mentioned above provide the most promising opportunity for democratic reform and human rights in the Arab world yet they can also carry the risk of empowering Islamic groups, which are opposed to American policy throughout the Islamic World. The setting for this course is the spectacular and cosmopolitan city of Istanbul,
about which Napoleon Bonaparte once said: “If the Earth was a single state, Istanbul would be its capital.”

Although there are some course offerings on the Syracuse campus that focus on the politics and international relations of the Middle East, there are very few that explore the obstacles, as well as the opportunities for promoting democratic reform in the Islamic World. Turkey is an ideal location for staging this program, because of its position as a Western-style and secular democratic state with a largely Muslim population.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**Participation**

You should complete all assigned readings *before* each class meeting so that you are familiar with the concepts, facts, theories, and controversies to be discussed. Furthermore, you can engage in discussion through the course page in Blackboard (http://Blackboard.syr.edu). We will use this venue to (a) post interesting or informative e-mail messages about the subject matter of the course; and (b) respond to points and issues raised by the instructors or your peers.

**Key Component Exams**

You will have three short Key Component Exams after days six, fifteen and twenty.

**Oral Presentations**

To ensure class participation and to spread out the work, each student is required to make one oral presentation in class concerning one of the topics listed in the syllabus. Presenters will provide a critical summary of the assigned or suggested readings pertaining to the topic that interests them.

They are expected to answer such questions as: (a) what is the author's *thesis*?; (b) what are the primary *assumptions* the author holds (and expects readers to accept) in arguing that thesis?; (c) what are some *useful concepts* s/he presents?; (d) how does the reading *relate to previous readings*?; (e) what are the major *strengths and weaknesses* of the argument?; and (f) what are the *implications for academic research* if the author's thesis and underlying assumptions are valid or true?

Each presentation should last fifteen minutes and should be accompanied by a class handout of two or three single-spaced pages. In order to make this a worthwhile exercise, each presenter is expected to post the handout on
Blackboard at least one day before their scheduled presentations. You will sign up for the presentations during our first class meeting.

**Research paper or Journal**

*Undergraduate Students:*

Turn in a "journal of notes," a reading log with critical commentary and opinion, on the weekly topics, including books and articles, mentioned in the syllabus. In your entries, you are expected to analyze, compare, and contrast works read in the seminar by entertaining the set of questions (a through f) mentioned above under “Oral Presentations.” The deadline for turning in your journal of notes will be announced.

*Graduate Students:*

Write one major research paper, 20-25 double-spaced pages long, focusing on a particular paradigm (i.e., post-colonialism), concept (i.e., modernity), or problem/issue (i.e., state planning) examined in class. This paper, which should have a theoretical rather than a descriptive focus, is due on a date to be announced.

In writing your papers, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. Choose a topic that interests you and encourages you to think deeply. Remember that you are not asked to write a book review and should develop your own thoughts and argument.

2. A good paper has a clear structure with an introduction, a middle section elaborating an argument, and a conclusion. A good introduction guides your reader through the evidence which follows and informs him/her of the overriding purpose of your developed points. We strongly suggest that you have a single sentence that clearly articulates your thesis. It can be as direct as: “The argument of this paper is...” Once you have posed the underlying question and offered a thesis, the body of the essay should be used to defend the thesis.

3. Defending your argument means carefully choosing and analyzing specific evidence, not simply repeating unsupported generalizations with slightly different wordings again and again. For an argument to be convincing, it is necessary to evaluate all possible sides of an issue. You cannot ignore significant contradictory evidence and counter-arguments and will need to address them specifically. The presentation of evidence should not merely be a mindless catalog of facts but rather a selective and careful analysis of details relevant to your case. To decide what evidence to use, lay out the full array of potential evidence in advance of writing your essay. Then choose that which can be best developed.
4. Do not repeat entire sections from books or articles. Quotations are occasionally effective, but you should not need the quotations to do the work for you. Quote only selectively, and quote only that which is particularly valuable as evidence. When using quotations you must always indicate them by the use of quotation marks or, if the quotation is fairly long and needs “block quotation,” by a single-spaced indentation and a specific reference with page number.

5. Try to consult a variety of sources (books, periodicals, internet sources, lectures, etc.). If you need to do research on a particular country for your paper, you may wish to consult the Library of Congress Country Studies available at http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html.

EVALUATION OF PAPERS

Your paper will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. The strength of your basic position and its connection to the course and outside readings.
2. Coherence and persuasiveness of major thesis and arguments presented.
3. Ability to counter possible objections.
4. Form/style (spelling, grammar, and composition)

Papers will be graded down if they:

1. Do not have a major thesis.
2. Are purely descriptive.
3. Do not show evidence that you have done the readings.
4. Suffer from sloppy/colloquial writing.
5. Are full of personal stories not related to the topic.
6. Rely on excessive quotations.

Statement Regarding Disability-Related Accommodations

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 304 University Avenue, Room 309, (315) 443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructors and review those accommodations with the instructors. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. For further information, see the ODS website, Office of Disability Services, http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/.
Academic Integrity Statement

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn the instructors’ expectations and the general academic rules with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete policy, see http://academicintegrity.syr.edu.

GRADING CRITERIA

Quality and degree of participation in class and Blackboard discussions: 10%
Oral presentations with handouts: 10%
Key Component Exams: 45%
Journal | Final Paper: 35%

REQUIRED TEXTS


Dates of the Course:

July 1, 2012 (Program begins)
July 2 – July 10 (Professor Heradstveit)
July 11 - July 19 (Professor Bonham)
Reading Assignments

Obstacles to Democracy in the Muslim World (Heradstveit)

*Democracy without Democrats (Day 1)*


Further Readings:


*Culture (Day 2)*


Propaganda (Day 2)


**Further Readings:**


Alexander L. George, (1959), *Propaganda Analysis*. Evanston, Illinois, Row, Peterson

The Role of Social Attribution (Day 3)


**Further Readings:**


Conspiracy Theories (Day 3)


Belief Systems (Day 4)


Further Readings


Avi Shlaim (2001), The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World, New York: Norton


Robert Jervis (1976), Perception and Misperception in International Politics. Princeton: Princeton University Press,

Ethno-nationalism (Day 4)


Does Islam Hinder Democracy? (Day 5)


Further Readings


Does Oil Hinder Democracy? (Day 5)


**Further Readings**


**Corruption (Day 6)**


**Further Readings**


**Case Studies: The Oslo Accords, Israel and Palestine, Nagorno-Karabakh (Day 6)**


**Further Readings**


Key Component Exam

Course Evaluation (Day 6)

American Foreign Policy in the Islamic World: Is the United States in the Driver’s Seat? (Bonham)

The American Approach to the Region (Days 7 and 8)


Learning from the Past: the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Day 9)


**Learning from the Past: Iraq (Day 10)**


[Optional] **Green Zone**, Universal Pictures, 2010 (video). Full Length (streamed): Blackboard | Documents | Videos [MAC users may have to download and install a plugin for WMV: flip4mac.]

**Learning from the Past: Afghanistan (Day 11)**


**Learning from the Past: Iran (Day 12)**


G. Matthew Bonham, "The 'Axis of Evil' Metaphor and the Restructuring of Iranian views toward the US," Word | PDF
Making American Foreign Policy: The President, Congress, and Societal Forces (Day 13)


The Diplomatic and Military Bureaucracy (Day 14)


Alternative Futures (Day 15)


Key Component Exam

Course Evaluation (Day 15)

The Arab Spring: The Development of Democracy in the Islamic World (Boroujerdi)

Transitions to Democracy (Day 16)

Indices of Democracy and Democratization? (Day 16 | Session 2)

Larry Diamond (2003), Can the Whole World Become Democratic? Center for the Study of Democracy, University of California, Irvine.


The State of Civil Society in the Middle East (Day 17)


Why Has Democracy Not Flourished in the Middle East? (Day 17 | Session 2)


Making Sense of Arab Spring (Day 18)


Islamic Parties and Democratic Process (Day 18 | Session 2)


**Foreign Powers and the Arab Spring (Day 19)**

Larry Diamond (2004), What Went Wrong in Iraq" *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 5 (September/October), pp. 34-56

Ryan Lizza (2011), The Consequentialist: How the Arab Spring Remade Obama’s Foreign Policy, *The New Yorker* (May 2) [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/05/02/110502fa_fact_lizza](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/05/02/110502fa_fact_lizza)


**The Role of (Social) Media in the Arab Spring (Day 19 | Session 2)**


Ethan Zuckerman (2011), "The First Twitter Revolution?" *Foreign Policy* (14 January)


**Successful Revolutions of 2011: Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya (Day 20)**


Revolutions in Progress? Bahrain, Syria, Yemen (Day 20 | Session 2)


Economics of the Arab Spring (Day 21)


Key Component Exam (Day 21 | Session 2)

Course Evaluation (Day 21)