

Spring 2013

U.S. Involvement in the Middle East

Chris Ferrero Dr.

US INVOLVEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST
DIPL 4187
SPRING 2013
SYLLABUS

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Office Hours: M 10-12, TH 2-4

Course Description and Objectives:

This course provides students with an in-depth view of American involvement in the Middle East. We begin with a brief tour de force of 20th century history through the Cold War; we then proceed to expend most of our energy dissecting and analyzing decisions, events, and dynamics from the Clinton administration onward. Contemporary issues will be woven into the course, but this is not a current events class. The Middle East has produced much news in recent years and months. Some things must unfortunately be left aside. We will pay particular attention to America's relationship with two noteworthy countries: Israel and Iran. In particular, we will look at how the United States has played the role of peacemaker between the Israelis and Arabs/Palestinians. We will also spend substantial time considering the nature of US-Iran relations. Other topics addressed will be the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the fight against al Qaeda, and relations with Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

At the conclusion of the course, students should have a strong command of American successes and missteps with regard to major Middle East issues and substantial knowledge of the parameters of peace and conflict in the region. Students should also have a strong basis on which to make informed predictions and policy recommendations going forward. No prior academic study of the Middle East is necessary to succeed in this course.

Assignments, Expectations, and Grading:

This course will primarily be conducted seminar-style, meaning that active participation on the part of all students is *critical*. Student must do all of the readings, attend class, and come ready to discuss matters thoughtfully. Some lectures will be given, but guided discussion led by the professor is the primary format. The professor reserves the right to cold call on students to answer questions or to share their opinions and analysis. Students must engage thoughtfully and critically with the material in order to succeed.

Attendance, again, is mandatory. More than two absences could substantially affect your grade (unless permission is granted for exceptional circumstances). Habitual tardiness is also unacceptable – it is disrespectful and distracting. Please talk to the professor if you have any concerns or require special consideration.

Students' final grade will be comprised of performance on a research paper, a final exam, four pop quizzes, and quality/quantity of class participation. The breakdown is as follows:

Four Pop Quizzes: 5% each (20% total)*
Research Paper: 30% (Due April 17th)
Final Exam: 30% (Date & Time TBD)
Class Participation: 20% (Quality & Quantity)

**If you miss a quiz, you have one week to make it up during office hours. Failure to make up a quiz will result in a grade of 'zero.'*

Books:

Four books are required for purchase. They can be found cheaply online if SHU Bookstore prices are prohibitive. Additional readings will be posted to Blackboard. The books required for purchase are:

- David Lesch and Mark Haas, eds., *The Middle East and the United States: History, Politics, and Ideologies, 5th Edition*
- Martin Indyk, *Innocent Abroad: An Intimate Account of American Peace Diplomacy in the Middle East*
- John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, *The Israel Lobby and US Foreign Policy*
- Trita Parsi, *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Israel, Iran, and the US*

Computer/Electronics Policy:

Computers are NOT allowed in class. Please take notes by hand and leave all electronic devices at home or in your bag (including phones). Computers invariably create distractions and degrade the quality of the classroom environment.

Disability Support:

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and §504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, students who have a disability may be eligible for accommodations in this course. Should a student require such accommodations, he or she must self-identify at the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 67, Duffy Hall and work with DSS to develop a plan for accommodations.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND TOPICS:

WEEK 1 – JANUARY 16

Introductory Meeting

- No assigned reading

WEEK 2 – JANUARY 23

Background: The Making of the Modern Middle East Map

- Gelvin: pp. 171-215, 257-267 [Blackboard]
- Lesch & Haas (L&H): Introduction, Chapters 1 and 17 (pp. 1-32, 315-325)

WEEK 3 – JANUARY 30

Middle East as Cold War Chessboard

- L&H: Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 (pp. 55-105, 128-172)

WEEK 4 – FEBRUARY 6

Arab-Israeli Conflict and Peacemaking, Part I

- L&H: Chapters 11, 13, 14 (pp. 177-190, 220-259)

We will spend roughly one hour of class watching a video about the 1967 War and its aftermath.

WEEK 5 – FEBRUARY 13

Arab-Israeli Conflict and Peacemaking, Part II

- Indyk: Introduction, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, Agreements in Appendix (pp. 1-10, 60-145, 417-433)

We will spend roughly one hour of class watching a video about the Oslo Peace Process.

WEEK 7 – FEBRUARY 20

NO CLASS – Professor Presenting at Conference

- ***Research Paper proposal due via e-mail by 5pm***

WEEK 8 – FEBRUARY 27

The Israel Lobby

- Walt & Mearsheimer: Preface and Part One (pp. vii – 169)

WEEK 9 – MARCH 6

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 – MARCH 13

Arab-Israeli Conflict and Peacemaking, Part III

- Indyk: Chapters 15-19, Chapter 21 (pp. 288-376, 391-415)

WEEK 11 – MARCH 20

After Clinton: Israel, Palestine and More on the Lobby

- L&H: Chapter 15
- Walt & Mearsheimer: Chapter 7
- Eisenstadt & Pollock: *Asset Test - How the US Benefits from its Alliance with Israel* [Blackboard]

WEEK 12 - MARCH 27

Iran and Iraq – Dual Containment to Neoconservatism

- Indyk: Chapters 2, 8, 9, 11
- Walt & Mearsheimer: Chapters 8 and 10

WEEK 13 - APRIL 3

Iran, the US, and Israel - Part I

- Parsi: Chapters 1-12

WEEK 14 - APRIL 10

Iran, the US, and Israel - Part II

- Parsi: Chapters 13-19 (Chapter 20 is optional)

WEEK 15 - APRIL 17

Al Qaeda and Afghanistan

- L&H: Chapters 23 and 27
- Possible additional reading TBD
- **RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS [HARD COPY] AND VIA SAFE ASSIGN**

WEEK 16 - APRIL 24

The Iraq War

- L&H: Chapters 20 and 21
- Possible additional reading TBD

WEEK 17 - MAY 1

The Others Guys – Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Syria...

- L&H: Chapters 19 and 22
- Additional readings TBD

Final Exam Date & Time TBD

NOTE: The Professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including the assignment of additional short readings where helpful or necessary. Sufficient notice will be given in class.