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GOV 485 – POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST (4 credits)

Course Description

This course analyzes the history and current situation of one of the most problematic regions in the world: “The Greater Middle East”. This course will give a general overview of its history, its strategic importance and the role and performance of the different regional and international actors present in the area. Special attention will be placed on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Course Format

It is a Madrid Campus lecture course. Each session will be presented by the instructor in class. Students will participate in the discussions that will follow the professor’s explanation of each topic, which implies preparing the program for the discussion in class. Specific cases on current Middle East issues will illustrate the topic. Students must be updated by reading newspapers and journals. Students must also write a paper (6 to 8 pages, usual stylistic standards) on a particular aspect of Middle Eastern politics covered in the class. Creative thinking will be encouraged and valued.

Course Objectives

The course aims to give the students a chance to understand current events in one of the world’s most shaken regions in the present moment. It may also be useful for the understanding of international terrorism.

Course Evaluation-Grade Breakup

Midterm exam: 30 %

Final exam: 35%

Paper: 25%

Teacher’s evaluation of the student’s participation in class discussions: 10%

Homework and Participation

The Madrid Campus requires regular attendance. Following the reading assigned for each session will be required. Participation is key and it is a 10% of your grade.

Textbooks / Required Materials

We will use articles and chapters of books, covering the different topics that we analyze during the semester. The basic textbooks used for readings will be in the university library. In addition, both the professor and the students will bring articles for class reading and discussion. The required material as well as the class slides will also be available in the *public drive* of the University computers.

Textbooks

Segev, Tom (1999), *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*, New York: Henry Holt & Co.

KEPEL, G. (1994), *The Revenge of God. The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity and Judaism in the Modern World*, Cambridge: Polity.

Chapters from the following textbooks will be used:

CLARKE, R. (2004), *Against All Enemies. Inside America's War on Terror*, London: R.A.C. Enterprises Inc.

ESPOSITO, J. (1999), *The Islamic Threat. Myth or Reality?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

HUDSON, M (Ed.)(1999), *Middle East Dilemma. The Politics and Economics of Arab Integration*. NY: Columbia University Press.

NEFF, D. (1995), *Fallen Pillars. US Policy Towards Palestine and Israel since 1945*. Washington D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies.

Magazines and periodicals: The Economist, Time, The Guardian, El País.

Course Outline:

Week 1: Introduction to the course. Rules of the game. Placing things in context: chronological overview of International events.

Week 2: Historical Background. Israel and the Partition of Palestine. The Illusion (1917-1927)
Readings: One Palestine Complete, Intro and Part I.

Week 3: The "Mess": from the Balfour Declaration to the White Papers.
Terror (1928-1938)
Reading: One Palestine Complete. Part II

Week 4: Anti-colonial Terrorism: The Thirties in Palestine
Reading: One Palestine Complete. Part II (cont.)

Week 5: The Resolution? (1939-1948)
Reading: One Palestine Complete, Part III

Week 6: Review for the Midterm

Midterm Exam

Week 7: The Middle East. Country studies: Iran & Iraq
Reading: TBA

Week 8: The Middle East. Country Studies: Egypt
Reading: TBA

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10: The Middle East. Country Studies: Lebanon
FILM: *Waltz With Bashir*, by Ari Folman (Israel 2008)

Week 11: The Crisis of Modernity. Religions in a Confused World
Readings: The Revenge of God, Introduction and Conclusion

Week 12: The Islamic Reaction I: The Sword and the Koran
Reading: Revenge of God, Chap. 1

Week 13: The Islamic Reaction I: The Sword and the Koran
Reading: Revenge of God, Chap. 1

Week 14: The Jewish Reaction: The Redemption of Israel
Reading: Revenge of God, Chap. 4

Week 15: The Jewish Reaction II: The Redemption of Israel
Reading: Revenge of God, Chap. 4

Week 16: Wrap up? Current events in the Middle East. Review for the Final

Classroom Philosophy:

- Respect for all religions, ideologies, ethnic groups and genders is most expected. Be open, respectful and engaged.
- You are required to attend each class session prepared to participate and think critically during lecture and discussion sessions. I will value creativity and criticism.
- The Madrid Campus requires regular attendance. Following the reading assigned for each session will be required. Two unjustified absences will be allowed. Further **unjustified absences will lower the grade** half a point for each subsequent absence. Justified absences require relevant documentation. Attendance is a must. 10 % of your final grade will be given on your participation in class. Keep this numbers in mind.
- All required assignments are to be submitted on time. Essay's that are handed in late will be marked down.
- Anyone who has problems to attend class or deliver work on time should speak to the Instructor beforehand. We all have problems, but talk to me!
- Punctuality is needed. Tardiness is at best a rude disruption to your fellow classmates who are punctual.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

See Suffolk's online Student Policy and Procedure Handbook statement:

<http://www.suffolk.edu/student-services/pol-procedure/ac-reg.html>