Prof. Gregory P. Nowell  
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POS 367 Politics of the Middle East (class no. 8027)  
RPOS 367 Politics-Middle East  
MWF 11:30 AM-12:25 PM HU0124 Uptown office hrs Monday 1-3  
Book orders have been placed exclusively at campus bookstore and MJB, Quail & Western  
Midterm Exam: October 18th in class  
Optional “parachute paper” due December 8  
**Final Exam date: Monday December 18th 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.**

**Course Books:** Have been ordered at Mary Jane Books, at the corner of Quail and Western, and the campus bookstore. You may also order books via Internet, and prices vary considerably by vendor. Used books can be had at [http://www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com) and other sources. A certain number of articles will be on the class web site and/or JSTOR.

The academic objective of this course is to explore the political and social organization of the Middle East with an aim to understanding the material underpinnings of seemingly “irrational” tendencies. The main focus is on Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

**Authors to buy:**


**Course grading.** The course grade will be based on a midterm (nominally 40% of the grade each) and one final (nominally 60% of the grade plus adjustments due to attendance and subjective appreciation of such factors as class participation and pop quiz
results. The exams are required, that is, you can’t not take an exam and get a passing grade.

The course includes a map quiz. You MUST PASS the map quiz. You can take it several times, but you MUST PASS. Not taking the quiz or putting it off past October is a FAIL in the course.

**Parachute Paper.** Students who are unhappy with the results of the midterm may write a short “parachute paper” of about 3 to 5 pages near the end of the semester. If the grade of the parachute paper is higher than the midterm, that grade will be substituted for the midterm grade. (1) There is no guarantee that the paper will lead to a higher grade. (2) **Students who punt the midterm are not eligible to write a parachute paper.** Papers must follow prof’s required format regarding use of citations and bibliography. (3) The parachute paper is optional. If the paper is not turned in class on the due date (December 6th, and uploaded to Safe Assign on or before that date) it means that the student has exercised the option NOT to write the paper. Therefore, there is no such thing as a late parachute paper.

The main on-line source of information will be the BLACKBOARD for this course AND ALSO such materials as are distributed from the prof’s account on docs.google.com.

The purpose of this class is to make students conversant in four aspects of the contemporary Middle East: 1. A general overview 2. Saudi Arabia 3. Iran and 4. Iraq. Additional educational goals include 5. Islamic finance and 6. Other economic aspects of the region including oil.

The principal tools will be: a variety of assigned texts. Certain non-Middle East materials are assigned to show how comparative politics methodologies inform strategic thinking and political analysis.

The principal evaluation metric will be the required in class midterm and final exams, an optional make-up paper, pop quizzes; participation and attendance.

A student who successfully completes this course will understand basic aspects underpinning key past and present conflicts in the Middle East including: imperial rivalries, conflicting systems of property rights, economic dislocations, cultural and religious antagonisms.

Students who require special accommodations for disabilities must signal their needs at the beginning of the semester, per university policy.

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Week-by-week schedule
**Week 1** – Monday 28 August, Wednesday 30 August, Friday 1 September. Class Introduction and Organization. General Overview of issues in the Middle East.


**Week 2** Monday 4 September NO CLASS
Wednesday 6 September,
Friday 8 September

General Overview: the U.S. as a Middle Eastern country

FILM: PBS Front line “Saudi Arabia Uncovered,”

**Week 3**

Monday 11 September.
Wednesday 13 September,
Friday 15 September

General Overview: Oil and the Middle East


Week 4 Saudi Arabia

Monday 18 September
Wednesday 20 September
Friday 22 September NO CLASS


Dore Gold, pp. 41-184

Week 5 Saudi Arabia

Monday 25 September
Wednesday 27 September
Friday 29 September

Dore Gold, pp. 41-184

Week 6 Saudi Arabia

Monday 2 October
Wednesday 4 October,
Friday 6 October

Chaudhry, 43-136, 139-192

Week 7 Saudi Arabia,

Monday 9 October
Wednesday 11 October NO CLASS
Friday 13 October

Chaudhry, 193-307

Week 8
Monday 16 October
Wednesday 18 October:
Friday 20 October
Monday: In class question period for exam

=> Wednesday 18 October: MIDTERM EXAM

Friday: Begin Iraq

**Week 9** Iraq. Iraq (British and U.S. invasions of).

Monday 23 October
Wednesday 25 October
Friday 27 October

Hahn, pp. 7-66.
Vinogradov (1972)

http://tinyurl.com/vinogradov-1920-revolt-in-Iraq

**Week 10**
Monday 30 October,
Wednesday November 1
Friday November 3

Ferguson “No end in Sight.” On Iraq.

Hahn, pp. 113-197.

Anderson, New Yorker, “Inside the surge.”
thttp://tinyurl.com/anderson-inside-the-surge

U.S. military analogies:

Willis, After the Blitzkrieg
thttp://tinyurl.com/willis-after-the-blitzkrieg

Siegrist, Apache Insurgency
http://tinyurl.com/siegrist-apache-insurgency

**Week 11** Iran

Monday 6 November
Wednesday 8 November
Friday 10 November

Afary 17-59; 63-115
Abrahamian, pp. 34-62

**Week 12 Iran**
Monday 13 November  
Wednesday 15 November  
Friday 17 November

Afary, 258-342  
Abrahamian, pp. 63-96

Shuster, *Strangling of Persia*  
chapters X, XI, 247-318 (available on google books and archive.org; also hard copies)

**Week 13 Iran**

Monday 20 November  
Tuesday: catch up session, discussion  
Wednesday 22 November NO CLASS  
Friday 24 November NO CLASS

**Week 14 Iran**

Monday 27 November,  
Wednesday 29 November  
Friday 1 December

Abrahamian, pp. 97 to end  

**Week 15 Property Rights**

Monday 4 December  
Wednesday 6 December  
Friday 8 December  **Parachute Paper due**

8 December: Due date for optional “parachute paper” HARD COPY REQUIRED. SAFE-ASSIGN REQUIRED.


**Week 16 Monday 11 December**

Last day of Class final exam questions etc. Distribution of questions for final exam.

Final exam: Monday 18 December 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR POS 367

THIS IS NOT A BUY LIST


LIST OF ADDITIONAL BOOKS. This is not a “to buy” list. Just here for those that are interested in more books on the Middle East, a bunch of stuff I’ve liked.


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