SYLLABUS
PSC 2377:
Comparative Politics of the Middle East
(AS OF January 2, 2014)

Spring 2014

Class Meets in Monroe Hall, Room 115
Wednesday: 3:30 to 6 PM

FACULTY INSTRUCTOR
Christopher P. Dallas-Feeney, PhD
E-mail: edalfeen@gwmail.gwu.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday 1 to 3PM, Room 409 Monroe Hall.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a deeper appreciation for the complexity as well as the importance of the study of the comparative politics Middle East. I have designed this course to enable you to increase not only your domain expertise about the comparative politics of the Middle East but also to increase your analytic skills in explaining the underlying causal logic of important political phenomena in the region. The course is designed to address what Max Weber (and I) believe to be the fundamental dilemma in politics: “turning raw power into legitimate authority.”

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Better understand the diversity as well as the consistency of important political structures, processes and socioeconomic phenomena across the ME
- Take a closer look at Iran and Israel with respect to its particular efforts to legitimate its power to its key stakeholders domestically and internationally
- Equip you with a set of analytic tools to assist you in the analysis and explanation of a set of fundamental and policy-relevant questions about the comparative politics of the ME (CPME).
- Engage you actively and encourage you to confidently explore the complexities of the questions posed in this syllabus
- Deepen your interest in and awareness of the subject.
- Increase your critical thinking skills with regards to contemporary comparative politics of the Middle East.
- Strengthen your critical writing skills.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS, GRADING & EXPECTATIONS

Readings and Participation
We will meet only once a week and each class is 2.5 hours long. You can expect approximately 75 to 100 pages of reading per class. The books required for this class are noted below. In addition, there will be additional readings on Blackboard (marked ‘BB’ on the syllabus). In addition to required readings I may also include some recommended readings and/or films, videos or websites that explore that week’s topics in more detail. Students are NOT required to read or watch these, though you may choose to for your personal enrichment.

I expect you to have completed the assigned readings prior to class. I highly value productive class discussion – we learn from each other in an interactive fashion. While we all learn and engage the material differently I expect you to make your best effort to participate actively in class discussion. I want you to learn to be confident that you can explore the material and use the public space in class to safely sharpen your critical thinking skills.

Participation is worth **10% of the final grade**.

In addition, four times during the semester there will be an unannounced quiz on the readings for that class. The quiz will be handed out at the start of class and will feature two multiple-choice questions (each worth 2 points). Pop quizzes will be worth **10% of the final grade** (meaning you can get three questions wrong over the duration of the course and still receive full marks).

*Note: Attending class is important in general. Since we only meet once a week it is critical for this class. More than two (2) unexcused absences will result in a grade penalty. If you know that you will miss a class, please clear with me before the missed class occurs.

Written Assignments

**3 Briefs (20% of final grade)** - Students are expected to hand in three briefs over the course of the semester on readings assigned for a particular class. Each of the briefs should be no more than 3 pages that are double-spaced. I will review the structure with you in the Introduction session. You will be employing the ACH method for these briefs as well as using these concepts as a model for class discussions as well.

You will need to submit a brief ON A SPECIFIED SCHEDULE until complete. **The first brief is due no later than the start of class on February 5th. The second brief is due no later than the start of class on February 26th and the final brief is due no later than the start of class on April 2nd.** **NOTE:** You can choose any of the readings for one of the classes in each of the ‘windows’ to write a brief.

**Mid-term (30% of final grade)** – On the date noted below students will be required to take a mid-term exam in class. This mid-term will be a combination of short questions and an essay and will draw on all the content covered through that point. This will be a Blue Book style exam and I will allot the full 2.5 hours for you to complete the exam.
Paper (30% of final grade) – A paper assignment will be handed out. The specific assignment will be distributed in lecture and posted online two weeks before the due date. The paper should be no longer than 8 to 10 pages, double-spaced, with standard font and margins. The paper is due no later than midnight four days after last day of class.

“Standard font and margins” means that papers should be written in Times New Roman 12 point, 1” top/bottom, 1.25” left/right (these are the defaults on Word). Papers must conform to the GW Code of Academic Integrity. Students turning in papers containing plagiarism will fail the course.

All late work will be docked 5% of the assignment grade per 24-period it is overdue unless excused by me.

Grading Event Summary
Readings and Participation – 10%
Unannounced Quizzes – 10%
Briefs – 20%
Midterm – 30%
Final Paper – 30%

REQUIRED COURSE BOOKS


Michael Herb, All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democracy in the Middle East, http://www.amazon.com/All-Family-Absolutism-Revolution-Monarchies/dp/0791441679/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=all+in+the+family+absolutism+revolution+and+democracy+in+the+middle+eastern+monarchies

In addition to selected chapters from the required course books, I will also assign additional readings that will be posted on blackboard (BB noted next to reading if posted on the site). Though a low probability, course schedule or readings subject to change. Please pay attention to e-mail/blackboard announcements.

FOCUS FOR OUR CLASSES AND READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS

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| Jan 15 | I. THE PLAN Introduction to the Course & Analytic | • Ottaway, Brown et al; “The New Middle East” (BB)  
• Collier, Geoffrey; “We Pretend to Teach, They Pretend to Learn”, Wall Street Journal (BB) |
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<th>Section</th>
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| Jan 22 | II. SOURCES AND STRUCTURES OF MODERN POLITICS | - Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (1 of 2) (BB)
- Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (2 of 2) (BB)
Recommended Readings:
- Angrist, Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 7
- “Zionism”, MERIP (BB)
- Read item 1, 4 and 6 from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2011 edition) (BB). This is a summary of the views of Yeshayahu Leibowitz.
Recommended Readings:
- Beetham, David, The Legitimation of Power (http://www.amazon.com/Legitimation-Political-Analysis-Palgrave-Paperback/dp/0230279732/ref=sr_1_sc_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1388268787&sr=8-1-spell&keywords= legitimation+of+power
| Feb 5 & 12 | IV. RELIGION AND POLITICS | - Brown, Nathan and Hamzawy, Amr; Between Religion and Politics, Chapter 1 (BB)
- Brown, L. Carl, Chapter 3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 14, 15 and conclusion

**Recommended Readings:**
- Angrist, Chapter 5
- Wilford, Hugh, America's Great Game: The CIA’s Secret Arabists and the Shaping of the Modern Middle East (http://www.amazon.com/Americas-Great-Game-Arabists-Shaping/dp/046501965X/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1388443359&sr=8-3&keywords=great+game)
### Feb 12 Readings

- **Check BB for additional postings (brief excerpts from Foreign Policy and news outlets)**
- ICG, “Israel's Religious Right and the Question of Settlements” (BB)
- Check BB for additional postings (brief excerpts from Foreign Policy and news outlets)

**Recommended Reading**
- Qutb, Milestones (BB)

### Feb 19

**V. DEMOCRACY, PLURALISM AND OTHER LIMITS ON EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY**

Why has democracy taken root in only limited states in the ME? Does it matter? How and why has this influenced power legitimation?

- Brumberg, Daniel and Diamond, Larry; “Introduction” to *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East* (BB)
- Bayat, Asef, *Making Islam Democratic*, Chapters 1 and 6 (BB)
- Al Khouri, Riad, “The Future of Democracy in Lebanon” (BB)
- Brumberg, Daniel, “The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy” in *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East* (BB)
- Herb, Michael; *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democracy in the Middle East*, Chapter 10 – “The Theory of the Rentier State and the Constitutional Monarchy in the Middle East”
- Check BB for additional postings (brief excerpts from Foreign Policy and news outlets)

**Recommended Readings:**
- TBD

### Feb 26

**VI. MILITARY FORCES & DOMESTIC SECURITY FORCES**

**How do the military and the domestic security forces influence the politics within the ME?**
How and why has this influenced power legitimation?

- **Owen, Robert; The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life, Chapter 2 – The Origins of the Presidential Security State (BB);**  
  [http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_0_25?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+rise+and+fall+of+arab+presidents+for+life &sprefix=The+rise+and+fall+of+arab%2Cstripbooks%2C206](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_0_25?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+rise+and+fall+of+arab+presidents+for+life &sprefix=The+rise+and+fall+of+arab%2Cstripbooks%2C206)


- **Iran Primer, “The Basij Resistance Force”**  

- **Check BB for additional postings (brief excerpts from Foreign Policy and news outlets)**

**Recommended Readings:**
- **Filkins, Dexter, “The Shadow Commander”,**  
  [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/09/30/130930fa_fact_filkins](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/09/30/130930fa_fact_filkins)

**Mar 5**

**VII. PERSISTENCE OF AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES**
Why have so many authoritarian regimes in the ME been so persistent? Has the latest political turmoil degraded that persistence? How and why has this influenced power legitimation?

- **Davidson, Christopher M.; After the Sheiks: The Coming Collapse of the Gulf Monarchies, Introduction and Chapter 2 (BB)**  
  [http://www.amazon.com/After-Sheikhs-Coming-Collapse-Monarchies/dp/0199330646/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1388514735&sr=1-1&keywords=after+the+sheikhs](http://www.amazon.com/After-Sheikhs-Coming-Collapse-Monarchies/dp/0199330646/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1388514735&sr=1-1&keywords=after+the+sheikhs)

- **Owen, Robert; The Rise and Fall of Arab Presidents for Life, Introduction and Chapters 3, 4 and 6 (BB);**  
  [http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_0_25?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+rise+and+fall+of+arab+presidents+for+life &sprefix=The+rise+and+fall+of+arab%2Cstripbooks%2C206](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_0_25?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+rise+and+fall+of+arab+presidents+for+life &sprefix=The+rise+and+fall+of+arab%2Cstripbooks%2C206)

- **Herb, Michael; All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution and Democracy in the Middle East, Chapter 9 – “Dynastic Monarchism and the Persistence of Hereditary Rule”**

**Recommended Readings:**
- **TBD**

**Mar 12**

**SPRING BREAK**
NO CLASS

**Mar 19**

**Midterm**
IN CLASS

**Mar**

**VIII. CONTENTIOUS**

- **Wickham, Carrie; Mobilizing Islam, Introduction and**
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| 26   | POLITICS – OPPOSITION MOVEMENTS & COUNTER REVOLUTIONS | Who are they? What are their demands? How have they mobilized and legitimated themselves? How successful have they been? How and why has this influenced power legitimation? | Chapter 9 (BB);  
- Saad-Ghorayeb, Amal & Ottoway, Marina; “Hezbollah and its Changing Identities” (BB)  
- Mattheisen, Toby; Sectarian Gulf: Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the Arab Spring that Wasn’t, Chapter 7 (BB)  
- Lynch, Marc; The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East, Chapter 6 – The Empire Strikes Back, the Counterrevolution (BB)  
Recommended Readings:  
- Encarnación, Omar, “Even Good Coups Are Bad”, Foreign Affairs, July 2013 (BB) |
| Apr 2 | IX. POLITICAL ECONOMY | How and why do politics and macroeconomics interact? How and why has this influenced power legitimation? | Angrist, Chapter 5, Political Economy  
- Davidson, Christopher M.; After the Sheiks: The Coming Collapse of the Gulf Monarchies, Chapter 1 (BB)  
- Moore, Peter; “The Bread Revolutions of 2011: Teaching Political Economies of the Middle East”, *PS Political Science & Politics*, 46.2 (Apr 2013): 225-229 (BB)  
- World Economic Forum, Arab World Economic Competitiveness Report 2011-2012; Selected Readings TBD  
Recommended Readings:  
- TBD |
<p>| Apr 9 | X. IRAN – A CLOSER LOOK | | Angrist, Chapter 11, Iran |</p>
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(http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/challenge-iran)  
- Sadjadpour, Karim, “The Supreme Leader”, The Iran Primer.  
(http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/supreme-leader)  
(http://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-democracy)  
Recommended Readings:  
- Wright, Robin; The Iran Primer  
(http://iranprimer.usip.org/frontpage) |
| Apr 23 | XII. WHAT’S NEXT? A look ahead in the region. | - TBD  
Recommended:  
- TBD |

**Additional Information**

**Academic Integrity**

All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty and competence in their academic work. Students have a special responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Deliberate failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the
proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.

**Laptop Policy**
I am allowing laptops in class. I expect, however, that you will honor the commitment to use them for productive class use; i.e., note taking, following my Powerpoint presentation and supporting class discussions with relevant searches.

**Support for Students with Disabilities**
GW’s Disability Support Services (DSS) provides and coordinates accommodations and other services for students with a wide variety of disabilities, as well as those temporarily disabled by injury or illness. Accommodations are available through DSS to facilitate academic access for students with disabilities. Additional information is available at www.gwu.edu/~dss.

**In the Event of an Emergency or Crisis during Class**
If we experience an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave the classroom, we will meet at the top of the second floor stairwell proximate to our classroom in order to account for everyone and to make certain that everyone is safe. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/.

**Counseling Services**
The University Counseling Center offers assistance with personal, social, career, and study skills problems, with services including crisis consultations and confidential assessments. For more information please review http://www.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices