

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
Department of Political Science
Political Science 407D.1

Political Systems of the Middle East and North Africa

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Spring, 2009
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PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This Comparative Politics course is designed to:

- Familiarize students with the methodological and theoretical tools for the study of developing political systems; and
- Provide them with an in-depth analysis of the contexts, characteristics, and dynamics of the Political institutions, processes, and policies in the Muslim Middle East and North Africa.

Although references to, and comparisons with, the state of Israel will be made throughout the semester, the scope of our methodological framework, which is designed to study only developing/underdeveloped political systems, does not allow for an adequate and independent treatment of this developed system. Furthermore, this framework does not allow for an extensive treatment of the structural aspects of Middle Eastern political systems. However, it enables us to take an issue-oriented approach to the study of this region with a focus on case studies rather than country-by-country analysis. As specifically indicated in the course outline, we will discuss a broad range of issues related to the historical, socio-cultural, demographic, geographic and economic contexts of the political systems and processes in this region. While discussing historical events and classical Islamic political thought is useful, and sometimes unavoidable, my intent here is to concentrate on contemporary issues and thoughts. This requires that students keep up with current developments in this rapidly changing region.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; 2005.
2. Tim Jacoby, *Social Power and the Turkish State*, London: Frank Cass Publishers; 2004.
3. Marina Ottaway and Julia Choucair-Vizoso (eds.), *Beyond the Façade: Political Reform in the Arab World*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace ; 2008.
4. Khaldoun Samman and Mazhar Al-Zo' Bat (eds.), *Islam and the Orientalist World-System*, Boulder: Paradigm Publishers; 2008.
5. Ray Takeyh, *Hidden Iran: Paradox and power in the Islamic Republic*, New York: Henry Holt; 2006.

Students are **not** required to purchase or read the following books. However, these books are useful for those who would like to have readings on class lectures at the beginning of the semester.

*1. James A. Bill and Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., *Comparative Politics: The Quest for Theory*, U.S.: University Press of America, 1981.

*2. Mehran Tamadonfar, *The Islamic Polity and Political Leadership*, Boulder: Westview Press; 1989.

*On reserve at the Lied Library.

Office Hours:

I will hold extended office hours. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need to see me at any time other than my regular hours. Your questions, comments, and criticisms are always appreciated.

COURSE CONDUCT AND EVALUATION POLICY:

The reading assignments are simply a supplement to class lectures. Attendance is critical for satisfactory performance in this course, given the types of topics that are covered, the quality of reading assignments, and the nature of exams. If you are unable to attend lectures regularly and participate in discussions effectively, you are advised to drop the course.

Preparation for and participation in class discussions are keys to a meaningful understanding of some of these complex and somewhat novel (at least to many of you) topics.

Please feel free to express yourself. Quite often, students do not express their views, especially if their views do not coincide with those of the professor. Remember that the teaching quality is partly a reflection of the audience. With your effective participation and challenges we will have a worthwhile mutual learning experience.

Students are not allowed to tape record class lectures and discussions under any circumstance. If your computer has voice recording capacity, you are not allowed to use

PART TWO: THE CONTEXTS OF POLITICS AND POLITICAL PROCESS IN THE
MUSLIM MIDDLE EAST

January 27, 29 &
Feb. 3 & 5 DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, GEOGRAPHIC, AND GEO-POLITICAL
CHARACTERISTICS:

- People and ethnicity
- Land and resources

Required reading: Jacoby, Chapters 1,3 & 4.

Feb 10, 12 ,17,
19 & 24 CULTURE, SOCIETY, ECONOMY AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS:

- Social stratification (group and class politics)
- ideologies and movements (nationalism, Arab socialism,
communism, Islamism (etc.)
- Classical and contemporary Islamic political thought (communalism,
Sectarianism, the Islamic state and ideology)
- Economic development

Required reading and other assignments:

- Smman, Chapters 5,6,7, 9 & 12.
- Takeyh, Chapters 1 & 2.
- Ottaway, Introduction.
- Film: The Sword of Islam.

Feb 26 FIRST WRITTEN MID-TERM EXAMINATION

THE STATE, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

March 3, 5 10,12,
17, 19, 24 & 26 -Civil society & governmental institutions
-Political leadership (functions, succession and legitimacy)
-Revolutionary and evolutionary change
-Political development and modernization

Required Reading:

- Jacoby, Chapters 2 & 5.
- Haqqani, Chapters 3,4, 6 &8.
- Ottaway, Chapters 1, 2,3,4,5,6,7, 8, 9 &10

from the internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources.” See the “Student Academic Misconduct Policy” (approved December 9, 2005, located at <<http://studentlife.unlv.edu/judicial/misconductPolicy.html>>).

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Missed Class (es) / Student –

As a general rule, a student missing a class or laboratory assignment because of observance of a religious holiday shall have the opportunity to make up missed work. Students must notify the instructor of anticipated absences by the last day of late registration, August 31, 2007, to be assured of this opportunity. Faculty may give students an additional week, but are encouraged to set a clear deadline. NOTE: Students who represent UNLV at any official extracurricular activity shall also have the opportunity to make up assignments, but the student must provide official written notification to the instructor no less than one week prior to the missed class(es).

Rebelmail –

By policy, faculty and staff should only e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after admission to the university. Non-admitted students should contact the

Student Help Desk at (702) 895-0761, in the Student Union Room 231, or by e-mail: studenthelp@unlv.edu. See <http://rebelmail.unlv.edu/> for information.

UNLV Writing Center –

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>