

Political Science 307F (Spring 2016)
Topics in Comparative Politics: Politics of the Middle East
Instructor: Farideh Farhi
Webster 103 (TTH 9:00-10:15)

Office Hours: TTH 10:30-12:00 a.m. or by appointment. **Office:** 626 Saunders Hall.
Phone: I can best be reached at 781-7422 (cell). Please feel free to call, leave a message or **e-mail** me at farideh@hawaii.edu.

Course Objectives: This course offers students and overview of politics in the Middle East. It also teaches some basic tools about comparing and contrasting the politics of rather diverse countries in a region in the midst of conflicts and turmoil. As such, we will compare and contrast different forms of governance, socioeconomic policies, and modes of political expression, repression, resistance, exclusion, cooperation and conflict. The course will also deal with a number of core dynamics that have been prominent in the region in the past few decades such as the rise of religious ideologies and tensions associated with religious revival, activism and violence, impact of changing demography and gender roles, the imposition of neo-liberal economic policies, political challenges posed by the reliance of some economies to oil exports and dependence of others on external support, and the impact of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as well as repeated armed interventions and conflicts in the region.

Text: Michele Penner Angrist, *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East*, Second Edition Paperback (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013) Additional readings can be accessed electronically, either online or through Laulima. You are also encouraged to check some of the Middle East dedicated websites, some of which are listed below, to keep up with fast changing dynamics of the region. Below are also links to several newspapers and news agencies producing news in English in various Middle Eastern Countries. Following the news and commentary for a particular country will help you in the assignment due on the last day of the class. As is the case for all courses, you will get more out of this course if you read more.

BBC News on the Middle East, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/default.stm

The New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>

The Washington Post <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/world/mideast/index.html>

CNN on the Middle East <http://edition.cnn.com/middle-east>

The Christian Science Monitor <http://www.csmonitor.com/world/middleEast.html>

The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/middleeast/roundup>

Aljazeera, <http://www.aljazeera.com/topics/regions/middleeast.html>

Al-Monitor, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/home.html>

The Middle East Research and Information Project, www.merip.org

Foreign Policy, <http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com>

Jadaliyya, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/>

Muftah, <http://muftah.org>

Electronic Intifada, <http://electronicintifada.net/new.shtml>

+972 Magazine <http://972mag.com>

Informed Comment at www.juancole.com.

Syria Comment at <http://joshualandis.com/blog> on Syria.

Lobelog at www.lobelog.com

The Gulf 2000 Project <http://gulf2000.columbia.edu>. This site has excellent maps and links for each country for Persian Gulf countries.

The National (Abu Dhabi, UAE), www.thenational.ae

The Daily Star (Lebanon), <http://www.dailystar.com.lb>

Ha'aretz (Israel), <http://www.haaretzdaily.com>

The Jerusalem Post (Israel), <http://www.jpost.com/>

Zaman Online (Turkey), <http://zaman.com/>

Tehran Times (Iran) <http://www.tehrantimes.com/>

The Jordan Times, <http://www.jordantimes.com/>

Khaleej Times, <http://www.khaleejtimes.com/Index00.asp>

Gulf News, <http://www.gulfnews.com/home/index.html>

Turkish Daily News, <http://www.turkishdailynews.com.tr/>

The Middle East Daily, <http://www.middleeastdaily.com/>

Today's Zaman (Turkey) www.todayszaman.com/tz-web

The Gulf News (Dubai, UAE), www.gulfnews.com

Arab News (Saudi Arabia), www.arabnews.com

Al-Ahram Weekly (Egypt), <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/>.

Middle East Times (Egypt), www.metimes.com

Syria News Agency, http://www.sana.org/index_eng.html

Saudi Press Agency, <http://www.spa.gov.sa/English/index.php>

Iranian Press Agencies <http://english.farsnews.com/> and

<http://www.isna.ir/ISNA/Default.aspx?Lang=E> and <http://www.irna.ir/en/>

Grades: Course works include one quiz, one short assignment (4-5 pages), a take-home midterm exam, and an in-class final exam. Details of each of these will be described in class. The quiz will count as 10 percent of your grade. The best two of your three other grades will each count for 30% of your final grade; the worst will count for 20%.

The final 10% of your grade will be determined by your class attendance and participation, which can be through input in class discussions or direct conversation with me in person or via email. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading material assigned for the day.

Exams will consist of essay questions. I will allow exams outside the slotted time only under exceptional circumstances and only with *prior* permission. **Late assignments will face a grade deduction.**

CLASS SCHEDULE

1. **Introduction to the Class** (January 12)

2. **Where is the "Middle East"?**

- Angrist, pp. 1-6 (January 14)
 - Ian R. Manners and Barbara McKean Parmenter. "The Middle East" A Geographic Preface," in *Understanding the Middle East* edited by Jillian Schwedler and Deborah Gerner (on Laulima)
 - Nikki R. Keddie, "Is There a Middle East?" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 4, 3 (July 1973), pp. 255-271. (on Laulima)
- 3. What is the Middle East: Encountering or Clash with the Middle Eastern or Muslim Other and Implications for Understanding the Region** (January 19 & 21)
- Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage." *The Atlantic Monthly* (September 1990)
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/09/the-roots-of-muslim-rage/304643>
 - Thomas L. Friedman, "Mideast Rules to Live By." *The New York Times* (December 20, 2006)
<http://select.nytimes.com/2006/12/20/opinion/20friedman.html>
 - On Orientalism - Edward Said
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MYDEj4fIU>
 - Eric Davis, "10 Conceptual Sins," *Tabsir*. <http://tabsir.net/?p=861#more-861>.
 - Karl Sharro, "Sound Like an Expert with These Phrases about Mideast Politics." <http://www.karlremarks.com/2015/04/sound-like-expert-with-these-phrases.html>

In Class Quiz: January 26

- 4. The Making of the Modern Middle East: Islamization, the Ottoman and Colonial Legacy** (January 26-28)
- Angrist, pp.8-18
 - Michael Gasper, "The Making of the Modern Middle East." (on Laulima)
 - Roger Owen, "The End of Empires: The Emergence of the Modern Middle Eastern States." (on Laulima)
 - Sara Pursley, "Lines Drawn on an Empty Map: Iraq's Borders and the Legend of Artificial State (Part I) *Jadaliyya* (June 2, 2015)
http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/21759/lines-drawn-on-an-empty-map_iraq's-borders-and-the
 - Sara Pursley, "Lines Drawn on an Empty Map: Iraq's Borders and the Legend of Artificial State (Part I) *Jadaliyya* (June 3, 2015)
http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/21780/lines-drawn-on-an-empty-map_iraq's-borders-and-the
- 5. Multiple Identities of the Middle East** (February 2-4)
- Angrist, ch.7
 - Nader Hashemi, "Toward a Political Theory of Sectarianism in the Middle East: The Salience of Authoritarianism over Theology." *Middle East*

Institute (October 27, 2015) <http://www.mei.edu/content/map/toward-political-theory-sectarianism-middle-east-salience-authoritarianism-over-theology>

- Farideh Farhi, “Crafting a National Identity Amidst Contentious Politics in Contemporary Iran.” *Iranian Studies* 38, 1 (2005) (on Laulima)

6. Political Economy of the Middle East (February 9 -11)

- Angrist, chs. 3 and 4
- Agnieszka Paczinska, “The Economies of the Middle East.” (on Laulima)
- Mary Ann Tetrault, “The Political Economy of Middle Eastern Oil.” (on Laulima)
- Adam Hanieh, “Democracy Promotion and Neo-Liberalism in the Middle East.” <http://www.stateofnature.org/?p=5438>
- Timur Kuran, “Why the Middle East Is Economically Underdeveloped: Historical Mechanisms of Institutional Stagnation.” *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18, 3 (2004) (on Laulima)

7. State Formation and Autocratic Persistence (Feb. 16)

- Angrist, pp. 18-25 and ch. 2
- Simon Bromley, “Middle East Exceptionalism – Myth or Reality?” in *Democratization* edited by Potter Goldblatt, Keloh, and Lewis ((on Laulima)
- Michael Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53, 3 (2001) (on Laulima)
- Eva Bellin, “The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective.” (on Laulima)
- Eva Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring.” *Comparative Politics* 44, 2 (2012) (on Laulima)

8. Democracies, Semi-Democracies, and Pseudo-Democracies (Feb. 18-23)

- Angrist, chs. 11, 12, 13, 16, and 19.
- Gershom Gorenberg, “Is Israel a Democracy.” *The American Prospect* (4 December 2009).
http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=is_israel_a_democracy
- Mark LeVine, “Is Turkey the Best Model for Arab Democracy.” Al-Jazeera (19 September 2011).
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/09/201191684356995273.html>
- Daniel Brumberg and Farideh Farhi, “Real Politics in Iran?” *Foreign Policy* (July 19, 2013) <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/06/25/real-politics-in-iran/>
- Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, “Elections without Democracy: the Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism.”
http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/levitsky/files/SL_elections.pdf

9. (Disintegrating?) Arab Republics (Feb.25)

- Angrist, chs. 10 and 18

10. Arab Monarchies (March 1-3)

- Angrist, chs. 14, 15, and 17
- Marina Ottaway and Marwan Muasher, “Arab Monarchies: Chance for Reform, Yet Unmet.” The Carnegie Papers (December 2011). http://carnegieendowment.org/files/arab_monarchies1.pdf. You can also watch the video which discusses this paper at <http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/11/22/arab-monarchies-confront-arab-spring/7efl>

Take-Home Midterm Exam: Handed out on Tuesday, March 1th and due on Thursday, March 10.

12. Religion and Politics (March 8 – 10)

- Angrist, ch. 6
- International Crisis Group, *Understanding Islamism*. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/Understanding%20Islamism.pdf>
- Charles Kurzman and Ijlal Nagvi, “Who Are the Islamists?” in *Rethinking Islamic Studies: From Orientalism to Cosmopolitanism* edited by Carl W. Ernst and Richard C. Martin (2010) (on Laulima)

13. Gender and Politics (March 15 - 17)

- Angrist, ch. 8
- Ziba Mir-Hosseini, “Muslim Women’s Quest for Equality: Between Islamic Law and Feminism.” (on Laulima)
- Farideh Farhi, “She Is Not Captured.” (on Laulima)

Spring Recess: March 23-27

14. Politics of Resistance, Reform, Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt and Iran (March 29-31)

- Angrist, ch. 5
- Adam Shatz, “Whose Egypt?” *London Review of Books* (December 20, 2011) <http://www.lrb.co.uk/2011/12/20/adam-shatz/whose-egypt>
- Lisa Anderson, “Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.” *Foreign Affairs* 90, 3 (2011) (on Laulima)
- Hugh Roberts, “The Revolution that Wasn’t.” *London Review of Books* (September 2, 2013). <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v35/n17/hugh-roberts/the-revolution-that-wasnt>
- Kevan Harris, “An ‘Electoral Uprising’ in Iran.” *MERIP* (July 19, 2013) <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero071913>. For background on the 2009

election you can also read the piece by Ehsani, Keshavarzian, and Moruzzi in MERIP. <http://www.merip.org/mero/mero062809>

15. Politics of War in Iraq and Syria: Liberation, Protection, Occupation or Chaos? (April 5-7).

- William R. Pope, “Understanding Syria: From Pre-Civil War to Post-Assad.” *The Atlantic Monthly* (December 10, 2013). <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/12/understanding-syria-from-pre-civil-war-to-post-assad/281989>
- Joost Hiltermann, “Iraq: What Remains.” *Middle East Research and Information Project* (Spring 2013). <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer266/iraq-what-remains>
- Also read “From the Editors” in the same issue of MERIP. <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer266/editors>

16. Politics of Jihadism and Anti-Jihadism

- Editors, “On ISIS.” Middle East Research and Information Project (Fall 2015). <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer276/isis>
- Darryl Li, “A Jihadism Anti-Primer.” MERIP (Fall 2015) <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer276/jihadism-anti-primer>
- Adam Shatz, “Magical Thinking about ISIS.” *London Review of Books* (December 2015). <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n23/adam-shatz/magical-thinking-about-isis>
- ISIL Videos Imitate Hollywood and Video Games to Win Converts <http://qz.com/578052/this-is-how-isis-inspires-its-followers>
- Roxanne L. Euben, “ISIL and the armchair Islamist: How execution videos sell a fantasy of masculinity,” *Quartz*, August 13, 2015. <http://qz.com/477063/isil-and-the-armchair-islamist-how-execution-videos-sell-a-fantasy-of-masculinity>

17. Politics of War and Occupation: Israel and Palestine (April 26 – May 3)

- The Middle East Research and Information Project, *Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. http://www.merip.org/palestine-israel_primer/toc-pal-isr-primer.html
- Tony Judt, “Israel: the Alternative,” *New York Review of Books*, October 23, 2003. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2003/oct/23/israel-the-alternative>. Also read the exchange over this article: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2003/dec/04/an-alternative-future-an-exchange>
- Ian S. Lustick, “Two-State Illusion.” *The New York Times* (September 14, 2013). <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/opinion/sunday/two-state-illusion.html?pagewanted=all>

Second Assignment Due: Tuesday May 3.

Final Exam: Thursday, May 12, 9:45 – 11:45 A.M.