

Middle East Politics
PSC 8825
Villanova University
Fall 2010

Tuesdays 5:20-7:20
Driscoll 223

Professor Catherine Warrick
SAC 257
Office hours M/W 10:30-12 and by
appointment
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Description This is a graduate-level course in the comparative politics of the Middle East. We will study the Arab states, Israel, and Iran using the framework of several major issues in the region – democracy, religion, women’s rights, and oil – as a basis for analyzing the forces at work in the various political systems.

Materials There is one required text:

Marsha Pripstein Posusney and Michele Penner Angrist, eds., *Authoritarianism in the Middle East*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005). ISBN 1-588-342-8.

A second textbook may be required later, depending on the publisher’s release date. Information will be provided in class. Additional required readings will be available on Blackboard.

Requirements This course meets once per week, so it is essential that students attend every session and participate in discussions. You are expected to have completed the readings before each session and to come to class with questions and comments for discussion. I will select students at each session to contribute a discussion point, but everyone should offer questions, comments, and disagreements in every class.

If you miss a class session, you must submit a two-page written discussion of the readings covered that day. That essay is due the following session.

Participation (20 points)

News coverage assessments (40 points) 4-5 pages. For a two-week period, analyze a set of news sources (print and broadcast) and compare their coverage. Detailed instructions will be given in class.

Op-ed (50 points) Write a short opinion piece on one of the issues raised in the course. This piece must conform to strict rules of style and length, which will be provided in class.

Research paper (90 points)

All written work will be graded on the basis of its accuracy, quality of analysis, and quality of writing. It is extremely important that your writing be of the highest standard; your ability to communicate your ideas and to explain complex subjects depends greatly on how well you write. If all else is equal, better-written papers will always receive higher grades. Poor writing or

evidence of carelessness (such as failing to proofread or spell-check your work) will be penalized. I am happy to help you with any writing difficulties you have. I also recommend that you take advantage of the services of the Writing Center.

Academic honesty is of great importance. All work must comply with the requirements of Villanova University's Academic Integrity Code. Violations of this code will result in disciplinary action. If you commit plagiarism or other academic dishonesty, you will receive a failing grade and possibly additional punishment from the university. If you have questions about these matters, please see me.

Schedule of topics and readings

Readings for each session are to be completed before coming to class. Readings from sources other than the required texts are on Blackboard. This schedule may change over the course of the semester, depending on our progress.

25 August *The 'Middle East' as a region*
Michael Hudson, "The Middle East," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 34:4 (2001), pp. 801-804. (handout)

1 September *The democracy deficit*
Elements and causes of authoritarianism
Larry Diamond, "Defining and Developing Democracies," in *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*. Johns Hopkins Univ. Press: Baltimore, 1999.
Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "The Middle East's Democracy Deficit in Comparative Perspective," Chapter 1 in Posusney and Angrist (hereafter PA).
Eva Bellin, "Coercive Institutions and Coercive Leaders," PA Chapter 2.
Jason Brownlee, "Political Crisis and Restabilization: Iraq, Libya, Syria and Tunisia," PA Chapter 3

8 September *Elements and causes of liberalization: Elections*
Marsha Pripstein Posusney, "Multiparty Elections in the Arab World: Electoral Rules and Opposition Responses," PA Chapter 5.
Alfred Stepan with Graeme B. Robertson, "An 'Arab' More than a 'Muslim' Electoral Gap," *Journal of Democracy* 14:3 (July 2003), pp. 30-44.
Michele Penner Angrist, "Party Systems and Regime Formation: Turkish Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective," PA Chapter 6.

15 September *Elements and causes of liberalization: Economic crises*
Ellen Lust-Okar, "Opposition and Economic Crises in Jordan and Morocco," PA Chapter 7.
Rex Brynen, "Economic Crisis and Post-Rentier Democratization in the Arab World: the Case of Jordan," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 25:1 (1992), pp. 69-97.

22 September *Elements and causes of liberalization: Civil society*
Augustus Richard Norton, "Introduction," in *Civil Society in the Middle East*, vol. 1. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995.
Vickie Langhor, "Too Much Civil Society, Too Little Politics? Egypt and Other Liberalizing Arab Regimes," PA Chapter 9.

- 29 September** *Islam and the secular authoritarian state*
 Jillian Schwedler, "Islamic Identity: Myth, Menace or Mobilizer?" *SAIS Review* 21:2 (2001), pp. 1-17.
 Constitutions of Arab states
 Nathan Brown and Adel Omar Sherif, "Inscribing the Islamic Shari'a in Arab Constitutional Law," in Haddad and Stowasser, eds., *Islamic Law and the Challenges of Modernity*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004.
 L. Carl Brown, *Religion and State: the Muslim Approach to Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. (selection)
- 6 October** *"Islamic states" – Iran, Saudi Arabia*
 pp. 70-77 in Arang Keshavarzian, "Contestation Without Democracy: Elite Fragmentation in Iran," PA Chapter 4 (entire chapter recommended).
 Gwenn Okruhlik, "Understanding Political Dissent in Saudi Arabia," *Middle East Report Online*, 24 October 2001.
 Additional readings TBA
- 20 October** *Israel: Judaism, the state and society*
 Jonathan Cook, "Israeli Constitutional Committee Faces Double Bind," *Middle East Report*, No. 231. (Summer, 2004), pp. 16-21.
 Herbert C. Kelman, "Israel in Transition from Zionism to Post-Zionism," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 555, Israel in Transition. (Jan., 1998), pp. 46-61.
 Yoav Peled, "Ethnic Democracy and the Legal Construction of Citizenship: Arab Citizens of the Jewish State," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 86, No. 2. (Jun., 1992), pp. 432-443.
- 27 October** *Religious minorities in the Middle East*
 Karim al-Ghawhary, "Copts in the "Egyptian Fabric," *Middle East Report*, No. 200, Minorities in the Middle East: Power and the Politics of Difference. (Jul. - Sep., 1996), pp. 21-22.
 Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, "Egypt: International Religious Freedom Report 2007." US Department of State.
 "Freedom for Egyptian Copt jailed for religion mix-up," Agence France Presse, 13 January 2008
- The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, part 1: history and events*
 Simona Sharoni and Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," in Gerner and Schwedler, eds., *Understanding the Contemporary Middle East*. 3rd edition. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2008.
 Ewan W. Anderson and Liam D. Anderson, "The Israeli-Palestinian Question," *An Atlas of Middle Eastern Affairs*. New York: Routledge, 2010.
- 3 November** *The Arab-Israeli conflict, part 2: policies and solutions*
 Gershom Gorenberg, "Barack the Zionist: Why President Obama's approach to settlements is better for Israel than Benjamin Netanyahu's is." *Slate*, 17 June 2009.
 Jonathan Freedland, "The Israeli Right has a New Vision – Jews and Arabs Sharing One Country." *Guardian* (UK), 27 July 2010.
 Additional readings TBA
- 10 November** *Gender and feminism in the Middle East*
 Ellen L. Fleischmann, "The Other 'Awakening:' the Emergence of Women's Movements in the Modern Middle East, 1900-1940," in Meriwether and Tucker,

eds., *A Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East*.
Boulder: Westview Press, 1999.

Mervat Hatem, "Gender and Islamism in the 1990s," *Middle East Report*, No. 222.
(Spring, 2002), pp. 44-47.

Linda Herrera, "Downveiling: Gender and the Contest over Culture in Cairo," *Middle
East Report*, No. 219. (Summer, 2001), pp. 16-19.

Additional readings TBA

17 November *Oil as a blessing and a curse*

"Middle Eastern Oil and Gas," *The Middle East* (10th ed.). Washington:
CQ Press, 2005.

Gwenn Okruhlik, "Rentier Wealth, Unruly Law, and the Rise of Opposition: The
Political Economy of Oil States," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 31, No. 3. (Apr.,
1999), pp. 295-315.

1 December *Drawing conclusions*

Michele Penner Angrist, "The Outlook for Authoritarians," PA Chapter 10.

King Abdullah II, "The Road to Reform," *Foreign Policy* No. 145 (2004), pp. 72-73.

8 December *Presentation and discussion of papers*