

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

Political Systems of the Middle East and North Africa

Professor Mehran Tamadonfar
Office: WRI 225 and 212
Office Hours: MW 8-12 a.m.
TR 10-12 a.m.
and by appointment

Fall , 2007
TR: 8:30-9:45 a.m.
WRI, C-237

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 students with an in-depth analysis of the contexts and characteristics 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 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. Shireen Hunter and Huma Malik (eds.), 2005, *Modernization, Democracy, and Islam*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.

2. Michael Roskin and James Coyle, 2008 , second ed., *Politics of the Middle East, Cultures and Conflicts*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
3. Edward Said, 1978, *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books.
4. Edward Said, 2001, *Power, Politics, and Culture*, New York: Vintage Books.
5. Stephen Schwartz, 2003, *The Two Faces of Islam*, New York: Anchor Books.

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. Furthermore, please turn off your cell phones in class. Talking on and any other use of cell phone in class is strictly prohibited.

Students' course grades will be determined as follows:

1. Class participation10% of the total grade
2. First written mid-term exam on Sept. 2730% of the total grade
3. Second mid-term exam on Oct. 30.30% of the total grade
4. A non-comprehensive final exam on May 15th (8: 00am)..... 30% of the total grade

Failure to take the exams on the scheduled dates will result in failing grades. No written make-up exam will be given. Those who fail to take their midterm exams on the scheduled dates will be given an oral exam only if they have a legitimate and compelling excuse.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Note: The following topics and times are subject to minor changes, if necessary, to accommodate your interests and needs. Some sessions will be allocated to the study of current events. Therefore, students are required to follow these events by watching news programs, reading newspapers, etc.

August 28 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

PART ONE: COMPARATIVE POLITICS AND THE STUDY OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Sept. 4 THE FIELD AND ITS DEVELOPMENTS: TRADITIONALISM, BEHAVIORALISM AND POST-BEHAVIORALISM

Suggested reading: A. Bill, *The Quest*, Chapters III & VII.

Sept. 6 & 11 COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE MUSLIM MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA: ORIENTALISM AND BEYOND

- A Contextual framework; the orthodoxy and radical paradigms
- State and society: T. Parsons, G. Almond and S. Verba
- Culture, political development and modernity
- Systems and Culture Theories (participation, communication and socialization)

Required Reading: Roskin, Chapter 1
Said, *Orientalism*, Chapters 1-3
Said, *Powers and Politics*, Chapters 1-13
Hunter, Chapter 2

PART TWO: THE CONTEXTS OF POLITICS AND POLITICAL PROCESS IN THE

Arabs and Jews, Arabs and Arabs
-Islam and the West: Wars and Terrorism

Required reading other assignments:

Roskin, Chapters 12,13, 14, 16, and 17

Said, *Power and Politics*, Chapters 20, 21, 23-27, and 29

- Film: Arabs and Jews: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land,
parts I & II.

-Film: Mohammed Reza Pahlavi: Politics of Oil.

THE MIDDLE EAST IN TRANSITION: WHAT NOT TO EXPECT.

Nov. 20, 27 & 29, 30 - Development and Democratization
-Islamist Reassertion

Required reading:

Hunter, Chapters 3, 4, 10-12, and 17-19

Roskin, Chapter 15

Dec. 4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dec. 6 REVIEW SESSION

Dec. 13 Final Examination (8 a.m.)

NOTE: I do follow the university rules, regulations and guidelines as spelled out in the System Code and UNLV Bylaws, and as stipulated by the Faculty Senate and by the Executive Vice President and Provost. Please note the following information and rules:

Academic Misconduct –

“Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV’s function as an educational institution.”

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism: “Using the words or ideas of another, 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>>).

Copyright –

The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves and

to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, you are encouraged to visit the following website: <<http://www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright/>>.

Disability Resource Center (DRC) –

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the official office to review and house disability documentation for students, and to provide them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. Faculty should not provide students accommodations without being in receipt of this plan.

UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, offering reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: VOICE (702) 895-0866, TTY (702) 895-0652, FAX (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: <<http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/>>.

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/>