

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
Department of Political Science
Islamic politics
Political Science 407O

Fall, 2006
TR: 8:30-9:45 a.m.
CBC C 128

Professor Mehran Tamadonfar
Office: WRI 225
Office Hours: M, W:
8:00-11:30 a.m.
T,R:
10:00-11:30 a.m. and
by appointment
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PURPOSE AND SCOPE: This area study course in Comparative Politics is designed to:

- Survey the classical and contemporary Islamic political thought.
- Assess the impact of Islam as a political force on the contemporary social, economic and political institutions and practices in Muslim societies.
- Analyze the role of Islam in the contemporary global politics

In this course, Islam is treated as a comprehensive and integrated cultural component in Muslim societies and as an ideological force that governs all facets of Muslims' lives. While this course does not focus on the theological dimensions of Islam, it is imperative to examine the theological underpinnings of Islamic politics, laws, and economics.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Karen Armstrong, *Islam, a Short History*, New York: Modern Library Chronicles; 2002.
- Juan Cole, *Sacred Space and Holy War, The Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam*, New York: I.B. Tauris; 2005.
- Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam, Holy War and Unholy Terror*, New York: Random House; 2004.
- Edward Said, *Covering Islam*, New York: Vintage Books; 1997.
- Therese Saliba, et.al. (ed.), *Gender, Politics, and Islam*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 2002.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

- Mehran Tamadonfar, *The Islamic Polity and Political Leadership: Fundamentalism, Sectarianism, and Pragmatism*, Boulder: Westview Press; 1989.

- Mehran Tamadonfar, “Islam, Law and Political Control in Contemporary Iran,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2001.pp. 205-220.
- Mehran Tamadonfar, “ Islamism in Contemporary Arab Politics: Lessons in Authoritarianism and Democratization,” in Jelen and Wilcox (ed.), *Religion and Politics in Comparative Perspective*, Cambridge: pp. 141-165.
- Ali Shari’ati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies, An Islamic Critique*, Mizan Press; 1980

COURSE CONDUCT AND EVALUATION POLICY:

All students are required to attend class lectures regularly and participate in discussions effectively. To be an effective participant, you must read your assignments before each class session. Tardiness and unexcused absences adversely impact your grades. The instructor reserves the right to administratively drop a student in cases of chronic tardiness and/or abstention. Under no circumstance, tape recording of lectures is allowed. Course grades will be determined as follows:

- Attendance and participation in class discussions 10 points
- Mid-term examination on Sept. 26 30 points
- Research paper due on Nov. 16.....30 points
- Final examination on Dec. 14(8 a.m.)30 points

Failure to take the exams on the scheduled dates or submit the research paper on the due date will result in failing grades for the missed assignments. Those who miss the mid-term exam for **legitimate and compelling excuses** will be allowed to take oral make-up exams. No make up exams for the missed final exams. Those who do not finalize their research topics by September 14 automatically forfeit their right to this assignment and will be given a failing grade for this assignment.

COURSE OUTLINE:

August 29

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

September 5,7 &12

ISLAM AND POLITICS

- **Secularism**
- **Universalism**
- **Centrality**

Required Reading:

- Lewis, Introduction and Chapter I

Suggested Reading:

- **Tamadonfar, *The Polity*, Chapter 2**

September 14, 19 & 21

THE ISLAMIC POLITY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE:

- **Islam and Secular ideologies (Marxism, Democratic Capitalism and Pluralism, and Socialism)**

Suggested Reading:

Shari'ati, pp. 7-122

- **Islam and Nationalism**

Required Reading:

- Cole, Chapters 2, 6, 9 & 10

- **Islamic Feminism**

Required Reading:

- Cole, Chapter 8

- Saliba, PP. 15-94

Sept. 26

MID-TERM EXAMINATION

Sept. 28 & Oct. 3-24

THE ISLAMIC STATE:

- **Historical context**

Required Reading:

- Armstrong: Chapters 1-4

- Cole, Chapter 3

- **Socio-cultural and economic contexts**

Required Reading:

- Lewis, Chapter II

- Saliba, PP. 1-14, 95-160

- **Sectarianism and Factionalism**

Required Reading:

- Cole, Chapters 1 & 4

Suggested Reading:

- Tamadonfar, *The Polity*, Chapter 3

- **Political authority (monarchism, republicanism, and populism)**

Required Reading:

- Armstrong: Chapter 5

- Lewis, Chapter III

Suggested Reading:

- Tamadonfar, "Islamism", pp. 141-165
- Tamadonfar, *The Polity*, Chapter 4

Oct. 26, 31 & Nov. 2

**WETERNISM, MODERNISM, AND
DEVELOPMENT:**

- **The politics of modernization in the Muslim world**

Required Reading:

- Lewis, Chapter VII
- Cole, Chapter 11
- Saliba, 235- 336

Suggested Reading:

- Tamadonfar, "Islam, Law," pp. 205-219

- **Westoxication and social Polarism**
- **Revolution and Reaction**

Required Reading:

- Said, Chapter two

Nov. 7, 9, 14 &16

ISALM IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE:

- **The Politics of Oil**
- **The West and its dilemmas**

Required Reading:

- Lewis, Chapters IV and V
- Said, Chapters one and three

- **Arabs, Persians, Palestinians and Jews**

Required Reading:

- Lewis, Chapter VI

- **The rise of Islamism and the West**

Required Reading:

- Said, Introduction
- Cole, Chapter 7
- Lewis, Chapter VIII

- **Terrorism: a never-ending war**

Required Reading:

- Lewis, Chapter IX

Nov. 16

RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Nov. 21, 23 & 28

**THE US AND ISLAM:
REAPPROACHMENT OR CONFRONTATION**

Dec. 5

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Dec. 7

REVIEW SESSION

Dec. 14 (8 a.m.)

FINAL EXAMINATION

Normally, I do hold extended office hours. If my regular hours are not convenient for you, please feel free to call or e-mail me for an appointment. Your questions, comments, and criticisms are always appreciated. I do enforce any and all university and system rules and regulations including rules pertaining to religious observances, disabilities, privacy, and academic dishonesty. Please familiarize yourself with these rules by consulting student handbooks.

“If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact the Learning Enhancement Center (LEC) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The LEC is located in the Reynolds Student Services complex in RM 137. The phone number is 895-0866 (TDD 895-0652) and www.Drcssc@unlv.nevada.edu”.