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PSC 320H.01: Politics of the Middle East

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Political Science 320
Politics of the Middle East

Spring 1995
Office Hours: 10-11 MWF
LA 349

Texts:

Lewis, The Shaping of the Modern Middle East
Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World
Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict (2nd ed)

Requirements:

The purpose of this course is to identify and describe the major influences shaping the character of politics in the contemporary middle east. It is not a country by country survey nor will much attention be directed at formal structures of governments. The objective is to develop an understanding of the underlying reasons why middle east politics takes the form it does.

There will be two one-hour exams: the first will be on March 1 and the second on April 5. Each exam will count for 20% of the final grade. A two-hour comprehensive final exam will count for 40% of the final grade. The final exam is scheduled for May 9, 10:10-12:10. Exams will consist of combinations of identification, short answer and essay questions.

An additional requirement is a 15 page analytical paper on some aspect of contemporary Middle Eastern politics or public policy (contemporary being defined as Post-World War II). Deadline for topic selection is February 17. The paper should adhere to conventional manuscript style (Turabian) and is due no later than April 28. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. This paper counts for 20% of the final grade.

In order to make the experience of this course as pleasant and rewarding as possible for all concerned, you are asked to observe the following rules. Do not come to class late or depart early. Do not use class time to read the Kaimin, write letters, chat with your neighbors or engage in other activities not related to the course.

Topic Outline

1. Introduction
 - A. Geography
 - B. Demography
2. Historical Background
 - A. Pre-Islam
 - B. Islamic Empire
 - C. Encounter with the West

Reading Assignment
Smith, Ch. 1-3
Lewis, Ch. 1
Lewis, Ch. 2
3. Islam
 - A. Basic Tenets
 - B. Religion and Life
 - C. Religion and Society

Reading Assignment
Ayubi, Ch. 2
Ayubi, Ch. 3
4. The Islamic State
 - A. Political Theory
 - B. Socio-Economic Factors

Reading Assignment
Ayubi, Ch. 1,6
Ayubi, Ch. 7
5. Islam and Politics in the 20th Century
 - A. Imperialism
 - B. Nationalism

Reading Assignment
Lewis, Ch. 3
Lewis, Ch. 4
6. Islamization
 - A. Islamic Practice
 - B. Liberals and Conservatives

Reading Assignment
Ayubi, Ch. 8
Ayubi, Ch. 9
7. Revolutionary Islam
 - A. Breaking Out
 - B. The Middle East After WWII
 - C. Iran
 - D. Fundamentalism

Reading Assignment
Lewis, Ch. 5
Lewis, Ch. 6
Ayubi, Ch. 10
8. The Arab-Israeli Conflict
 - A. Background
 - B. The Palestine Question
 - C. The "Peace Process"

Reading Assignment
Smith, Ch. 4-9
9. The Gulf Conflict
 - A. Background
 - B. The Gulf Wars
 - C. The "New World Order"

Reading Assignment
Smith, Ch. 10

Note: February 16 is the last day to drop classes or change grading option.