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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 1996
Office Hours: 10-11 M-TR
LA 349

Text:

Congressional Quarterly, The Middle East (8th ed)
Reserve Materials

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 February 29 and the second on April 4. Each exam will count for 20% of the final grade. A two-hour comprehensive final exam will count for 30% of the final grade. The final exam is scheduled for May 14, 8:10-10:10. Exams will consist of combinations of identification, short answer and essay questions.

An additional requirement is a paper (minimum 10 pages) which provides a biographical sketch of a Middle Eastern leader, preferably one active since World War II. This paper should detail the family, educational and political background of the individual in question. Formal offices or positions and political methods should also be described. The final component is an assessment of the individuals impact on Middle East politics. Deadline for topic selection is February 15. The paper should follow standard manuscript style (Turabian) and is due no later than April 25. The paper will provide the basis for an oral presentation on the subject at the end of the semester. The paper and the presentation combined count for 30% 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

Reading Assignments

1. Introduction CQ, Ch. 1
 - A. Geography
 - B. Demography
2. Historical Background Perry, Ch. 2
 - A. Pre-Islam
 - B. Islamic Empire
3. Islam CQ, Ch. 6
 - A. Basic Tenets
 - B. Religion and Life
 - C. Religion and Society
4. The Islamic State Andersen, Ch. 3
 - A. Political Theory
 - B. Socio-Economic Factors
5. The Middle East and Western Imperialism Andersen, Ch. 4
 - A. Decline of the Islamic Empire
 - B. Rise of the Modern State
6. Islamic Revival Andersen, Ch. 11
 - A. Breaking Out
 - B. The Middle East After WWII
 - C. Iran
 - D. Fundamentalism
7. The Arab-Israeli Conflict CQ, Ch. 2, 3
 - A. Background
 - B. The Palestine Question
 - C. The "Peace Process"
8. The Gulf Conflict CQ, Ch. 3,4
 - A. Background
 - B. The Gulf Wars
 - C. The "New World Order"
9. The Politics of Oil CQ, Ch. 5
10. Country Profiles CQ, Part II

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