Course Overview

This course offers a thematic approach to the study of Middle Eastern politics. We will cover the major areas of political science research on the region while simultaneously building empirical knowledge about the politics of individual countries. There are two primary learning goals for students in this class:

1. To identify broad trends in the political, social, and economic development of the Middle East and critically evaluate existing explanations for those trends.

2. To develop strategies for testing theoretically-driven hypotheses related to the region using the advanced analytic tools of the modern social sciences.

Evaluation

50 percent: Assignments (10 percent x 5)
20 percent: Class participation
30 percent: Final examination

Agenda of Topics and Readings

The following books will be made available for purchase:


The rest of the readings will be available on Canvas. The agenda of topics and readings is as follows:

*Office Phone: (650)723-0649; blaydes@stanford.edu
September 24: Introduction

September 26: Early Economic and Political Institutions


October 1: The Ottoman State

Gelvin, James. 2015. Chapters 2 and 3.

October 3: European Economic and Political Interventions

Gelvin, James. 2015. Chapters 4 and 5.

October 8: Sectarianism


October 10: Nationalism and Anti-Colonial Protest


October 15: State Building


October 17: Oil

October 22: Autocracy


October 24: The Arab Uprisings

Bellin, Eva. 2012. “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring,” Comparative Politics. 44.


October 29: Micro-dynamics of Mobilization

Lawrence, Adria. 2016. “Repression and Activism among the Arab Spring’s First Movers: Evidence from Morocco’s February 20th Movement,” British Journal of Political Science. 47.


October 31: Economic Development Trajectories


November 5: Islam and Identity


November 7: Islamist Mobilization


November 12: Islam and Gender


November 14: Radicalization


November 19: Terrorism and Political Behavior


November 21: Attitudes toward the US


December 3 (End-Quarter Period): Class Discussion — The Looming Tower


December 5 (End-Quarter Period): Final Examination Review

Final Examination

*Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) located within the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). SDRC staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the SDRC as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk, (650) 723-1066.*