POLI 340
Developing Areas: Middle East

INSTRUCTOR: Prof. Rex Brynen
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CLASS HOURS: Mondays and Wednesdays, 16h05 – 17h25 (Stewart Biology S1/4)
OFFICE HOURS: Mondays 10h30-11h00, Wednesdays 14h00 – 15h30, or by appointment.

Course Description

This course will examine the political dynamics of selected Middle Eastern regimes and offer a comparative examination of key political trends and themes. Particular attention will be devoted to the dramatic series of protests, uprisings, repression, and conflicts that have affected the region since 2011.

The prerequisite for POLI 340 is a previous course in comparative politics, or a previous course on the region. Please note that Middle East international relations/foreign policy and Israeli politics will not be covered in this course, since they are addressed in POLI 341 and POLI 437 respectively.

This course involves a substantial amount of reading. Students are urged to keep on top of this, and to read all assigned readings before each lecture for maximum benefit.

Text

The texts for this course are:

Rex Brynen, Pete Moore, Bassel Salloukh, and Marie-Joelle Zahar, *Beyond the Arab Spring: Authoritarianism and Democratization in the Arab World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2012). My author royalties from the sale of this book are donated to UN humanitarian agencies.


Readings for the course are drawn from the course text or have been placed online via myCourses (http://www.mcgill.ca/mycourses). They may also be available on reserve in the library. Because of this, there is no coursepack. Additional required readings will be placed on myCourses during the term, so please check it regularly.

In addition, students are encouraged to follow regional events via some of the following websites:
• BBC News (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world/middle_east)
• Foreign Policy/Middle East Channel (http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com)
• al-Jazeera English (http://english.aljazeera.net)
• Jadaliyya (http://www.jadaliyya.com)
• al-Monitor (http://www.al-monitor.com)

Please note that anything we discuss in class is potential material for the exams, including discussions of recent developments in the region.

There are no conferences for this course.

Course Requirements and Grading
• quizzes (October 9, November 6)
  - best quiz 20%
  - second best quiz 10%
• research paper (4-5,000 words, due in class on November 18) 30%
• final examination (university-scheduled) 40%

The quizzes will be in multiple-choice format (40 questions/60 minutes), held in class. It will test all material covered in the course up to the day of the exam. Your best quiz result will count for 20% of your course grade, and your second-best quiz result will count for 10%. If you miss a quiz you will require a documented medical (or similar) justification.

The requirements of the research paper will be detailed in a special handout distributed in mid-September. Late papers will only be accepted in class on November 25 (at a penalty of 3.0 marks out of 30). Only documented medical excuses (or equivalent) justify the unpenalized late submission of a paper. Submission of an un plagiarized research paper is a required part of the course.

The final exam will consist of longer essay questions, and will cover all course material, emphasizing the major themes developed in the course.

Plagiarism: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

If parts of someone else’s work are used directly (paraphrased or quoted) without acknowledgement, this constitutes plagiarism. If you are unsure of what plagiarism is or how to identify your sources, ask the course instructor or consult a style manual. Plagiarism is cheating, to the detriment of both the university and fellow students. Research papers that contain plagiarized material will receive a grade of 0/30, and the student will be assigned an incomplete J (F) grade for the course overall. In addition, they will be reported to the Faculty with a recommendation for the strongest possible disciplinary action.

Supplemental exams: As outlined in the Faculty of Arts calendar, students receiving a final grade of D or F for the course may write a supplemental exam, which will replace their original final exam grade. If so, they may also submit a supplemental research paper at this time (which will replace their original research paper grade). UNLESS the failing grade was the result of plagiarism.

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.
COURSE OUTLINE
(dates are approximate)

September 4 (video lecture—no class)
Introduction to POLI 340

September 9
The ‘Arab Spring’: A Region Transformed?
- “New Horizons in Arab Politics,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 1.

September 11, 16
Historical Context: Islamic, Ottoman and Colonial Legacies

September 18, 23, 25
North Africa
- Jacob Mundy, “Libya,” in Lust, ed, The Middle East, chapter 17.

September 30, October 2
Egypt

October 7
Ideas, Attitudes, Ideologies, and Participation (video lecture—no class)
- “Political Culture Revisited,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 5.
- “The New Arab Media,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 11.

October 9
Quiz 1 (covers all course material up to the day of the exam)

October 14
No Class (Thanksgiving)

October 16, 21
Levant I: Jordan and Palestine
• Alaa Tartir and Benoît Challand, “Palestine,” in Lust, ed, The Middle East, chapter 20.

October 23, 28
Levant II: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq


October 30, November 4
The Arabian Peninsula: I: The GCC


November 6
Quiz 2 (covers all course material up to the day of exam)

November 11
The Arabian Peninsula II: Yemen


November 13, 18
Political Economy

• “Rentierism and Resource Politics,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 9.
• “Economic Liberalization,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 10.

November 20
Islamist Movements and Politics

• “Islamist Movements and Democratic Politics,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 6.

November 25
Electoral Politics and the Politics of Transition

• “Electoral Politics,” in Brynen, Moore, Salloukh, and Zahar, Beyond the Arab Spring, chapter 7.
November 27
**Middle East Monarchies**


December 2
**Middle East Militaries**

- Aaron Stein, “Inside a Failed Coup and Turkey’s Fragmented Military,” *War on the Rocks*, 20 July 2016. [myCourses]

December 3 (counts as Monday)
**The Regional and International Environment**