Political Economy of the Middle East

Dr. Yakub Halabi

Course Number: 702.2790
Class Time: TBA
E-Mail: yhalabi@gmail.com
Room: TBA

Course Description:

The modern Middle East, with its wars, its wealthy few and impoverished millions, its stagnant economies and authoritarian/monarchic regimes embody the general features of a Third World underdeveloped region. The purposes of this course are to: 1) explore the social-class structure and analyze states-society relations within these nations; 2) seek an understanding of the issues and problems facing the societies, economies and states of the region, such as the link between demographic growth and food security, or between rentier economies and the absence of democratization; 3) assess the successes and failures of the public-sector policy aimed at dealing with those concerns and difficulties; 4) the link between the transformation into free-market economies during the late 1990s and globalization on the one hand and the Arab-Spring revolutions, on the other. While the course focuses primarily on processes within in the MENA states, rather than on the Middle East’s place in the international political order and the world economy, it is not possible to think coherently about subjects such as oil and political Islam without reference to the region’s complex interactions with the developed world.

Required Textbook:

Magazine: Middle East Economic Digest (MEED).
Requirements

1) Class participation (attendance and active participation) (20%): This course will be conducted in a seminar format. All students should be prepared to contribute to each class discussion by raising questions about the readings.

2) Four assignments (20%) (2-3 pages double-spaced): each student should submit four assignments. In the assignment you are expected to analyze the main ideas of the author and provide a critique of the reading. The assignments are evaluated based on the student’s critical analysis of the reading and the contribution of this analysis to the class discussion.

3) Presentation (10%): Each student should present one reading from the syllabus (8-10 minutes). You should make the presentation on a reading other than those picked up by you for the assignments. Each presentation will be followed by Q&A. It is highly recommended that you present a reading that relates to your research topic.

4) Final Paper (50%): The final paper should be on a course-related topic of your choice. The paper should be between 3000-3200 words in length, excluding bibliography and footnotes. You are encouraged to consult with me about your topic. You are required to pose a research question and collect evidence that enables you to answer your research question. Submission of the paper is divided into two deadlines. You must submit the paper-topic and research question by Week 8. The final paper is due two weeks from the last day of the semester. Please submit the paper to me electronically and a hard-copy in my mailbox.

I. History of the Political Economy of the Middle East-A Brief Review
* Bayat, (2013). Life as politics: How ordinary people change the Middle East. Chap. 1

II. Social Classes: Is there an Arab Bourgeoisie?

III. Solidarity, Civil Society and Political Organization:
* Richards, et al. .2015. A political economy of the Middle East, Chap. 11. (Solidarism and its enemies).


**IV. Authoritarian Regimes and Central Planning Policy:**


**V. The Public Sector and the Bureaucracy:**


**VI. Demographic Growth Food Security and Development :**

* “Women and Economic Development in Middle East and North Africa” 2013, [http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=sppp](http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1003&context=sppp)

**VII. Islam, Modernity and Revolution:**


**VIII. Rentier Economies, Taxation and Authoritarianism in the Oil Sheikdoms:**

**IX. Oil Market, Dependency and the 1973/74 Oil Embargo:**

**X. Economic Liberalization in the Middle East:**

**XI. Globalization and the Middle East:**

**XII. Political Economy of the Arab Spring:**