

INTL 4370: MIDDLE EASTERN POLITICS

Fall 2021

Instructor: Neil S. Williams	Time: T TR 12:45 – 2:00 p.m. (CRN: 46139)
Email: snpwill@uga.edu	Place: MLC, Room 147

Course Pages:

1. <http://www.neilswilliams.com/teaching.html>
2. <https://uga.view.usg.edu>

Student Hours: 1:00-3:00pm Wednesday over Zoom, or by appointment.

Required Texts:

- None

Objectives: In this course, we will begin by gaining familiarity with the history of the modern Middle East and with the varieties of non-democratic political systems that have characterized most countries in the region in the last decades. We will then examine the causes and effects of authoritarianism in the Middle East, considering cultural, social, economic, political (domestic, regional, and international) and other factors that have both shaped, and were shaped by, non-democratic regimes. Alongside reviewing the traditional scholarship on the region we will also explore the challenges to these regimes that have over the years laid the foundations for the unfolding of events since 2011. This will allow us to critically evaluate and question longstanding assumptions about authoritarian robustness and the prospects for democracy in the region. Finally, we will turn our attention to current political developments in the Middle East since the start of the uprisings and consider their causes, their divergent trajectories, and the extent to which they open new possibilities for significant political transformation.

Perusall: All readings and lecture slides will be available on [Perusall](#). Perusall is a cool e-reader which allows for collaborative annotation of readings and videos with both me and your peers. Assignment due dates and reminders are also included in Perusall to help you keep track of readings. It is free to create an account. After you have done so, our course can be accessed by entering the code **WILLIAMS-UMECL**.

Important Dates: Below are important test and due dates. Note that they, as well as everything else in the syllabus, may be changed as the semester continues. I will notify you in good time of any updates.

Midterm due Thursday October 14th, 2021
Project Proposal due ... Tuesday, October 19th,
2021
Project due Thursday, December 1st, 2021
Project memo due Tuesday, December 14th, 2021
by 11:59 P.M.

Grading

- **Participation (25%):** Attendance will not be taken and participation will be evaluated in multiple ways. Active participation implies paying attention in class, engagement with the material and with your fellow student colleagues. **There will be no preference in grading given to live participation that comes from either in-person or remote sessions.** Please come prepared to class having read and willing to discuss the assigned material. Keep in mind these points as you read:

1. What is the author's main point or argument?
2. What evidence do they use to support their argument?
3. Is there contradicting evidence?
4. How does the author's argument relate to the other readings from the course?

Participation will also be evaluated by your comments, annotations, and responses to the readings, videos, and slides on Persuall.

- **Midterm: (25%)** The midterm exam will be delivered electronically and will cover content up until this point. Although this exam will be open-note and book, I **HIGHLY** recommend studying before-hand.
- **Final project: (50%)** For the final project you are tasked with teaching non-experts about a concept or idea we've learned this semester or something else related to this course. You can use whatever medium you want, except for a standard essay or twitter threads. Otherwise, feel free to be creative. You can record a podcast, create a photo exhibit, write a magazine piece or a long-form blog post, write a set of poems, make a poster collage, write a work of fiction, a graphic novel, make a short film or documentary, a stand-up routine, play, etc. The possibilities are endless, but, regardless of the medium you choose, all projects will be graded on the following criteria:
 - **Project proposal: (10%):** 1-2 page proposal of your project idea with description of your main points and planned approach
 - **Project: (60%):** Project graded on the below criteria
 - * (30%): Demonstrates a clear understanding of the concept. While accessibility is important, represent the concept or topic accurately and faithfully.
 - * (30%) Makes clear why the concept is important for some aspects of politics (In a particular case or generally)
 - * (10%) Uses language that is accessible to a broad public
 - * (15%) Demonstrates effort commensurate with a final class project
 - * (15%) Showcases creativity and imaginative thinking
 - **Poster response/reflection: (30%)** 3-4 page memo attached explaining your project, its method, and how it relates to your project topic.

Final project adapted from project assignment conceived and developed by Hakeem Jefferson, Stanford University
Contact me in good time for deadlines on make-up work.

Grade Scale

>= 93.00	A	77.00 - 79.99	C+
90.00 - 92.99	A-	73.00 - 76.99	C
87.00 - 89.99	B+	70.00 - 72.99	C-
83.00 - 86.99	B	60.00 - 69.99	D
80.00 - 82.99	B-	<= 59.99	F

Academic Honesty *The University of Georgia seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and other members of the university community. A Culture of Honesty, UGA's academic honesty policy and procedures, was developed to serve these goals. All members of the academic community are responsible for knowing the policy and procedures on academic honesty.* (From [UGA Academic Honesty Website](#))

Disability Resources: If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>. Additionally, please contact me in good time and communicate any accommodations needed to participate in class and/or fulfill course requirements.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- UGA has several resources for a student seeking [mental health services](#) or [crisis support](#).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit [BeWellUGA](#) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

Technology: I permit laptops and other devices such as Kindles and iPads if they are being used for class-related purposes. If you are off-task (Facebook, Instagram, Myspace, Tik Tok, Neopets, Club Penguin, etc.) while on these devices, it will be deducted from your participation grade.

Coronavirus Information for Students**DawgCheck:**

Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck—on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: <https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>.

What do I do if I have Symptoms?:

Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?

Students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 14 days consistent with Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. If you develop symptoms, you should contact the University Health Center to make an appointment to be tested. You should continue to monitor your symptoms daily on DawgCheck.

How do I get a test?

Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162.

UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.

What do I do if I test positive?

Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is required to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

Tentative Course Outline:

Yellow indicates important information

Week 1: Introduction

Thursday, August 19th, 2021

- Introductions
- Review Syllabus

Week 2: Conceptions and Misconceptions

Tuesday, August 24th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Lewis, Bernard. “The roots of Muslim rage.” *The Atlantic Monthly* 266.3 (1990): 47-60.
 - Huntington, Samuel P. “The clash of civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* (1993): 22-49.

Thursday, August 26th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Said, Edward. “Orientalism. 1978.” New York: Vintage 1994 (1979). Introduction
 - Said, Edward. ”The Clash of Ignorance.” *The Nation* 22.10 (2001): 2001.

Week 3: Colonialism and State Formation

Tuesday, August 31st, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Choueiri, Youssef M. 2002. “Review Article: The Middle East: Colonialism, Islam and the Nation State.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 37(4): 649–663.
 - *History of the Modern Middle East: Episode 1: The Sick Man and His Medicine.*
 - **OPTIONAL:** *The Middle East*, Chapter 1: “The Making of the Modern Middle East.”

Thursday, September 2nd, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Blaydes, Lisa. 2017. “State Building in the Middle East.” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20(1): 487–504.
 - *Throughline: Outside/In: War of the Worlds.*

Disclaimer: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Week 4: Overview of Institutions and Governance***Tuesday, September 7th, 2021***• *Readings*

- Baylouny, A. M. 2020. “Chapter 7. Authority outside the state: Non-state actors and new institutions in the middle east.” In *Ungoverned Spaces*, Stanford University Press, p. 136–152.

Thursday, September 9th, 2021• *Readings*

- Lust, Ellen. ”Missing the third wave: Islam, institutions, and democracy in the middle east.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 46.2 (2011): 163-190.

Week 5: Single/Dominant Party Authoritarianism***Tuesday, September 14th, 2021***• *Readings*

- Wedeen, Lisa. 1998. “Acting ‘As If’: Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40(3): 503–523.
- *Witness History: The Syrian playwright who challenged the regime*

Thursday, September 16th, 2021• *Readings*

- Albrecht, Holger. 2005. “How can opposition support authoritarianism? Lessons from Egypt.” *Democratization* 12(3): 378–397.
- Posusney, Marsha Pripstein. ”Multi-party elections in the Arab world: Institutional engineering and oppositional strategies.” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36.4 (2002)

Week 6: Monarchy***Tuesday, September 21st, 2021***• *Readings*

- Lucas, Russell E. ”Monarchical authoritarianism: survival and political liberalization in a Middle Eastern regime type.” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36.01 (2004): 103-119.
- Herb, Michael. ”Princes and parliaments in the Arab world.” *The Middle East Journal* 58.3 (2004): 367-384.
- Update: Saudi Arabia — Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj — Netflix

Thursday, September 23rd, 2021• *Readings*

- Yom, Sean L. and F. Gregory Gause, III. "Resilient Royals: How Arab Monarchies Hang On." *Journal of Democracy* 23. 4 (2012): 74-88
- Lust, Ellen. "Competitive clientelism in the Middle East." *Journal of Democracy* 20.3 (2009): 122-135.

Week 7: Theocracy

Tuesday, September 28th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - The Middle East, Chapter 11: "Iran"
 - Iran: Life Under Sanctions in 2020 - Documentary

Thursday, September 30th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Hoodfar, Homa, and Shadi Sadr. "Islamic politics and women's quest for gender equality in Iran." *Third World Quarterly* 31.6 (2010): 885-903.
 - "How The Fear Of Islamophobia Affected An Iranian American Family"–*Code Switch*–*NPR*

Week 8: Political Islam in Opposition - The Alternative?

Tuesday, October 5th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - El-Ghobashy, Mona. "The metamorphosis of the Egyptian Muslim brothers." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37.03 (2005): 373-395.
 - Masoud, Tarek. "Are They Democrats: Does It Matter?" *Journal of Democracy* 19.3 (2008): 19-24.

Thursday, October 7th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Schwedler, Jillian. "Can Islamists become moderates? Rethinking the inclusion-moderation hypothesis." *World Politics* 63.02 (2011): 347-376.
- *Distribute*
 - Midterm exam becomes available.

Week 9: Midterm and More***Tuesday, October 12th, 2021***

- *Readings*
 - Carey, John M. et al. 2020. “Who wants to hire a more diverse faculty? A conjoint analysis of faculty and student preferences for gender and racial/ethnic diversity.” *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 8(3): 535–553.
 - Smith, Amy Erica, Heidi Hardt, Philippe Meister, and Hannah June Kim. 2020. “Gender, Race, Age, and National Origin Predict Whether Faculty Assign Female-Authored Readings in Graduate Syllabi.” *PS: political science & politics* 53(1): 100–106.

Thursday, October 14th, 2021

- **MIDTERM EXAM DUE: NO CLASS**

Week 10: Development and Political Economy***Tuesday, October 19th, 2021***

- *Readings*
 - *The Middle East*, Chapter 7: “The Political Economy of Development in the Middle East.”
 - **Come with your project proposal to share!**

Thursday, October 21st, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Ross, Michael. “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics* 53:3 (2001)
 - “The end of the Arab world’s oil age is nigh”-*The Economist*

Week 11: Gender***Tuesday, October 26th, 2021***

- *Readings*
 - Ross, Michael L. “Oil, Islam, and women.” *American Political Science Review* 102.01 (2008): 107-123.

Thursday, October 28th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Abu-Lughod, Lila. ”Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others.” *American Anthropologist* 104.3 (2002): 783-790.
 - Ben Shitrit, Lihi. ”Women, freedom, and agency in religious political movements: Reflections from women activists in Shas and the Islamic movement in Israel.” *Journal of Middle East Women’s Studies* 9.3 (2013): 81-107.

Week 12: Electoral Behavior***Tuesday, November 2nd, 2021***

- *Readings*
 - *The Middle East*, Chapter 5: “Actors, Public Opinion, and Participation”
 - *Witness History*: “The elections that Hamas won”
 - *feMENA*: “Cracking the nut: female political participation in Lebanon”

Thursday, November 4th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - Mohamed, Ahmed Ezzeldin. 2018. “Turnout in Transitional Elections: Who votes in Iraq?” *The Journal of the Middle East and Africa* 9(2): 153–171.
 - “Iraq votes in first elections since ISIL defeat”-*Al Jazeera English*
 - **OPTIONAL**: Brownlee, Jason. 2011. “Executive elections in the Arab world: When and how do they matter?” *Comparative political studies* 44(7): 807–828.

Week 13: Interactions and Civil Society***Tuesday, November 9th, 2021***

- *Readings*
 - Salime, Zakia. ”Securing the Market, Pacifying Civil Society, Empowering Women: The Middle East Partnership Initiative.” *Sociological Forum*. Vol. 25. No. 4. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010.

Thursday, November 11th, 2021

- *Readings*

Week 14: The Arab Uprisings and Prospects for Democracy***Tuesday, November 16th, 2021***

- *Readings*
 - Gause III, F. Gregory. “Why Middle East Studies missed the Arab spring: The myth of authoritarian stability.” *Foreign Affairs*. 90 (2011).
 - Angrist, Michele Penner. “Understanding the success of mass civic protest in Tunisia.” *The Middle East Journal* 67.4 (2013): 547-564.

Thursday, November 18th, 2021

- *Readings*
 - “America’s Abandonment of Syria.” *The New Yorker*, April 2020.
 - “Syria’s War and the Descent Into Horror” *Council on Foreign Relations*

Week 15: Thanksgiving Break*Tuesday, November 22nd, 2021*

- No class. Available over email and for virtual meetings

Thursday, November 24th, 2021

- No class. THANKSGIVING.

Week 16: Israel and Palestine*Tuesday, November 30th, 2021*

- *Readings*
 - *The Middle East*, Chapter 2: “The Israeli-Palestine Conflict”
 - *Throughline*: “Palestine”

Thursday, December 1st, 2021

- *Readings*
 - *Code Switch*: “Why Is It So Hard To Talk About Israel?”
 - Final class wrap-up and reflection
 - Final project session
 - **Remember: Final project memo due Tuesday, December 14th, 2021 by 11:59 P.M.**