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Study Center in Amman, Jordan

Course name:	America and the Arabs
Course number:	POLI 3004 JORD / MEST 3002 JORD
Programs offering course:	Amman Language and Culture
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Fall 2017

Course description:

This course begins with a brief overview of the context and history of the Middle East at the turn of the 20th century, and then focuses on the policies and interventions of the U.S. from the end of WWII to the present day. After the historical overview and a brief introduction to international relations theory, we'll explore specific policies, themes, influences, and mechanisms of U.S. foreign policy in the region. You are expected to closely monitor events in the region, in addition to actively participating in class discussions, simulations, and debates.

Learning Objectives:

To improve the students' analytical skills, oral presentation skills, writing skills, and to answer the following questions:

- What caused the United States' past involvement in foreign wars and interventions?
- Were the results of U.S. policies positive or negative? For whom?
- Would other policies have better served the U.S. and/or the wider world?
- Were the beliefs that guided U.S. policy true or false? If false, what explains these misperceptions?
- Why is public opinion in the Arab and Muslim world so disapproving of the United States, and vice versa?

Course Prerequisites

N/A

Methods of Instruction

This course will include lectures, negotiation simulations, presentations, and video clips from primary sources. Readings provided come from a variety of sources, including peer reviewed journals, textbooks, media sources and will include institutional as well as alternative viewpoints.



Assessment and Final Grade:

The final grade will be calculated according to the following percentages and assignments:

1. Map Quiz 5%
2. Leading Class Discussion 20%
3. Participation 15%
4. Oral Presentation/Paper 20%
5. Midterm 20%
6. Final 20%

Course Requirements

1. **Map quiz (5%):** You will be asked to label a blank map with the appropriate country and capital names. You will also be shown a slideshow of flags and be asked to write the name of the corresponding country on your test.

2. **Leading class discussion once (20%),** which involves 10-15 minute *analytical* presentations of the major questions or issues raised by the week's readings; you should not summarize the readings or give an informational presentation. Rather, you will be asked to lead the discussion of the topic that day, demonstrating that you understand the scope of the debate and asking provocative and/or interesting questions of your colleagues.

3. **Class participation (15%):** much of undergraduate work involves reading, absorbing and critiquing bodies of literature; one of the most effective ways of struggling with and ultimately mastering this literature involves in-class discussion with your classmates of the works assigned each week; your class participation demonstrates not only that you have read the assigned material, but also that you have spent time reflecting upon it and digesting it; this type of class work also helps to prepare you for the broader academic world in which commentary and critical discussion are important parts of the profession; I consider this a major part of the work for the class. Students will be penalized for unexcused absences, tardiness, a failure to participate in class, and a failure to prepare for class discussion. Students will lose 5% from their final grade per unexcused absence. Accepted excuses include: 1) Academic opportunities—internship excursions, conference or workshop attendance, etc.— arising from activities or other experiences with which you might engage during your time in Jordan. 2) Health and other emergencies as specified in your Program Handbook. Please follow proper procedures for documenting these as they arise.

4. **An in-class 15-20 minute oral presentation (20%)** analyzing a U.S. foreign policy in Jordan to be presented on the last day of class, and a **5-page written summary of your presentation.** Depending on the number of students in the class, this may become a group exercise. The topic of the paper/presentation must be cleared with me (by submitting a one-page proposal and a preliminary bibliography) as specified in the course schedule. This date is not negotiable, and papers written on topics that have not been approved will be penalized. The paper is due by 5 pm on the day the presentation is given. No extensions will be given. For this assignment, do research on a policy that the U.S. employs in Jordan. You will be required to answer any questions asked by your colleagues and professor during or after your oral presentation. The main elements I look for include:



a. Thesis statement: This is one or two sentences summarizing your central argument (e.g., “Foreign aid to ‘x’ country harms foreign policy and should be banned from the U.S. political system.”)

b. Policy description: What is this policy? (Foreign aid is ...)

c. Evidence/reasoning: This is where you make me believe your thesis statement. You can cite studies, historical examples, use statistics, or any other methods to convince your audience that you are right. (e.g., citing studies indicating the adverse and unintended consequences of foreign aid, as well as its ineffectiveness.)

d. Actions to be taken: This is where, having convinced the audience you are right, you tell them what to do. You can recommend getting rid of the policy, changing the policy, or push for a whole-hearted embrace of the policy. Perhaps you can list the dire consequences if your recommendations are not followed.

e. Presentation: Whatever method you employ (PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) the class needs to be able to see what is on your slides, so don’t make the type too small, and make sure any charts are readable. The more professional, the better. It doesn’t have to be complex to be good. Your verbal and physical delivery of the presentation will also be evaluated. Try to practice it a couple of times out loud to get a feel for what you want to say and when you want to say it. Try to avoid simply reading long paragraphs off of the slides. Instead, have a few bullet points and explain what the slide is about. If you design your presentation on a Mac, make sure it will be compatible with the PC in the classroom.

f. Paper: 5 pages, double spaced, 1-inch margins, Times New Roman font, using footnotes for citations (a current version of Chicago Press or Turabian’s style will do). The bibliography is in addition to the 5 pages. Try to use no fewer than 5 sources.

5. Midterm & Final Exams (2 x 20%): short essay. The midterm exam will be a sit-in exam that will ask the students to explain certain key concepts taught in class, in addition to analyzing certain themes and expressing opinions that are well-justified and supported by what the students have studied and learned during the course. Students will be provided with a list of topics to study prior to the exam. The format of the final exam is identical to that of the midterm; it will include the material that was covered up till the final exam date. This exam cannot be taken earlier or later than the scheduled time. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Attendance and Class Participation:

Cell phones are to be switched off or put on silent before students enter the classroom. Personal laptops or other devices that can access the internet are not allowed in class. Note-taking must be done using a pen and paper. Your grade will be penalized by unexcused absences, tardiness, sleeping, or a general lack of attention. Students are strongly encouraged to ask provocative questions in discussions, and display a deep understanding of the issues in their presentations. Come to class prepared to participate, and when other students are presenting, please give them your polite attention.

There may be viewpoints explained by the professor or expressed by others with which you may personally disagree. Provocative discussion is to be expected, and it is to the benefit of your own learning experience to have a good understanding of all points of view. We will be delving deeply into many controversial issues, but it will be done in a respectful environment. Violations of basic norms of polite conduct will be addressed.



Attendance is required. That means you are required to attend all classes, arrive on-time, and stay for the entire class period each and every time it meets. **Any unexcused absences will be noted by your instructor and will count against your attendance/participation grade.** Leaving early will count as a tardy. If half a class is missed, it will count as half an absence. If more than half is missed, it will count as a full absence.

*****More than ONE (for classes that meet once a week) unexcused absence will automatically result in a failing grade.*****

What is excused?

1. Illness documented by a physician's report
2. Family emergencies
3. Host family events
4. Rare and vital learning experiences

What is not excused?

1. Personal rest days
2. Absences due to poor choices or poor planning
3. Travel

What should you do if you are absent?

1. Regardless of why you are late or absent you must inform resident staff and your instructors. If you simply don't show up to class, we assume something serious has happened to you.
2. Submit an Absence Notification Form at least three days prior to a planned absence or three days after an unplanned absence. If your absence is excused, resident staff will place an Excused Absence Confirmation in your mailbox (usually by the next business day). You must show this Excused Absence Confirmation to the instructors of the classes that you missed.
3. Contact the instructors of all classes that you miss to notify them of the reason for your absence and to find out what you missed and what you can do to make up missed work. Note that instructors are not obligated to allow a student to make up missed assignments or exams if the student's absence is not excused.

Please refer to your handbook for more details.

*****Everything done in class and assigned as reading is potential exam material. If you miss a critical class component such as a presentation, you will not be allowed to make it up.*****



Weekly Schedule & Assignments

This schedule may be subject to change, depending on circumstances. Readings must be completed before coming to class, as the first part of every class will be a discussion of the reading material.

Week 1

Orientation Week

Introduction to class

Overview of the Middle East & USFP

Theoretical grounding – IR theory, foreign policy analysis (FPA)

Readings due: Little, “Gideon’s Band in the Holy Land.” Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories, Ghandour, “Farewell Syria?”

Map quiz next class.

Week 2

Context of the Middle East

Systems of Colonialism; Impact on State Systems; Doctrines

Readings due: Little, “A Tale of Four Doctrines,” Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine.”

Recommended readings on the impact of colonialism in the Middle East: Cleveland & Bunton, Chapters 5 & 6 (system of colonialism), Chapters 9, 11 & 12 for the creation of modern nation-states in this context.

Map quiz today.

Week 3

Revolutionary Nationalism & Modernization

U.S. approaches toward containing & directing nationalism in the Middle East; modernization as policy and remedy; effects on developing systems.

Readings due: Little, “Sympathy for the Devil?” and “Modernizing the Middle East.” *Recommended readings on the impact of Nasserism in the Middle East: Cleveland & Bunton, Chapters 15 & 16.*

Week 4

Diplomacy & Alliances

In-class negotiation simulation based on the framework by Joseph K. Young, in “Simulating Two-Level Negotiations.” Theories of alliances, structures of alliance relationships between the U.S. and its allies in the Middle East.

Readings due: Little, “Opportunities Lost and Found,” Walt, *Origins of Alliances* (Ch. 1 & 2), and introduction from *Unilateralism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Malone & Khong (Eds.).

Week 5

Foreign Aid & Sanctions

Brief overview of U.S. foreign aid structures, policies & programs; the efficacy of economic sanctions, impacts upon civilian populations, connections with terrorism and non-state actors, and case study of Iraq.

Readings due: Reports from the Congressional Research Service (Sharp; Tarnoff & Lawson, Sharp & Humud), Abbas, “Iraq: economic sanctions and consequences 1990 – 2000,” Collins, “The Efficacy of Economic Sanctions...”

Midterm Review.

Week 6

Humanitarian Intervention & Military Intervention

U.S. military interventions in the Middle East taken under the auspices of humanitarian motives; evaluation of the interventions through the lens of international law. General overview of global U.S. military interventions, contextualizing those in the Middle East. Chronology of main interventions through the framework of U.S. foreign policy doctrines.

Readings due: Goodman, “Humanitarian Intervention and Pretexts for War,” CFR Backgrounder, “The Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention,” and Hurlburt, “Can Humanitarian Intervention be Saved from its Friends?” Little, “Kicking the Vietnam Syndrome,” Johnsen, “60 Words and a War Without End,” and Zenko, “The Mythology of Intervention.”

Week 7

International Institutions

Structure and functions of relevant international organizations (IOs) including a brief introduction to international humanitarian law and its development.

Readings due: Koremenos, “The Rational Design of International Institutions,” Simmons & Martin, “International Organizations and Institutions.”

Week 8

Midterm Exam

Week 9

Lobbies & Industry

Introduction to the structure and function of lobbying groups; current statistics for relevant groups; effects on elections and policymaking. Case studies on the Israel lobby, oil companies, and the defense industry.

Readings due: Gilens and Page, “Testing Theories...” Mearsheimer and Walt, “The War over Israel’s Influence,” Jacobs and Page, “Who Influences U.S. Foreign Policy?” Mohr, “Understanding American Christian Zionism,” Little, “Opening the Door,” and Beaumont, “The \$18bn arms race helping to fuel Middle East conflict.”

Week 10

Media and Foreign Policy

The role of the media in creating and influencing policy. The role of journalists in relation to the conflicts they cover. Stereotypes of Muslims and Arabs in popular media; relationship to military interventions.

Readings due: Mange, “Thinking about Arabs and Muslims...” Shaheen, “Media Coverage of the Middle East,” and Herman, “The Media’s Role in U.S. Foreign Policy.”

Week 11

Terrorism & Narratives

Competing definitions of terrorism, typology, context, controversies, and applications. Narratives of al-Qaeda and alt-right commentators concerning the West and Muslims. The ‘Clash of Civilization’ and its critics.



Readings due: Nance, "ISIS Forces that Now Control Ramadi..." Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," and Hunt, "In the Wake of September 11..."

Presentation topic due.

Week 12

Case Studies: Iraq/Israel/Palestine

The History of Iraq, British imperialism, U.S.-Iraq relations, Iran-Iraq War, First Gulf War and relationship to the first Intifada, sanctions, Dual Containment, Second Gulf War, U.S. occupation, state fragmentation, civil war, non-state actors.

Readings due: Mearsheimer and Walt, "An Unnecessary War," Duelfer and Dyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict." *Recommended readings for the history of Iraq and background of U.S.-Iraq relations are Cleveland & Bunton, chapters 11, 16, 21, 22, and 25.*

History of U.S. – Israel relationship; evaluation of the 'special relationship;' effect on the Israeli-Arab conflict; relationship to regional instability; unlikely alliances.

Readings due: Little, "The Making of a Special Relationship," and Miller, "Evangelicals, Israel, and U.S. Foreign Policy." *Recommended readings on the formation of the state of Israel and the resulting regional conflicts are Cleveland and Bunton, chapters 13, 17, 22 and 23.*

Week 13

Current Issues in U.S. Foreign Policy

Political and military conflict simulation through matrix game, "Isis Crisis," to develop analytical skills and evaluate students' understanding of current issues.

Readings due: Little, "Fool's Errand or Kodak Moment?" CRS reports (Blanchard, Humud, and Nikitin; Blanchard & Humud), and Cordesman, et.al. "The Arab Uprisings and U.S. Policy: What is the American National Interest?" *Recommended reading on the events of the 'Arab Spring' is Cleveland & Bunton, chapter 26.*

Week 14

Student Presentations.

Week 15

Final Exam (presentation papers due).

Bibliography of Required Readings



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- Cordesman, Anthony H., et al. "The Arab Uprisings and U.S. Policy: What is the American National Interest?" *Middle East Policy*, vol. 18, no. 2, Summer 2011.
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- Ghandour, Amal. "Farewell Syria?" *Thinking Fits*. 22 January 2013. www.thinkingfits.com/2013/01/farewell-syria.html Accessed 28 August 2016.
- Gilens, Martin and Benjamin I. Page. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 12, iss. 3, September 2014, pp. 564-581.
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- Hudson, Michael C. "To Play the Hegemon: Fifty Years of US Policy toward the Middle East." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 50, no. 3, Summer, 1996, pp. 329-343.



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Johnsen, Gregory D. "60 Words and a War without End: The Untold Story of the Most Dangerous Sentence in U.S. History." *Buzzfeed*, 17 January 2014. www.buzzfeed.com/gregorydjohnsen/60-words-and-a-war-without-end-the-untold-story-of-the-most Accessed 28 August 2016.

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Hunt, Michael H. "In the Wake of September 11: The Clash of What?" *The Journal of American History, September 11: A Special Issue*, vol. 89, no. 2, Sept. 2002, pp. 416-425.

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Course materials:

All course readings are available on Dropbox.com. As soon as I receive your email address, I will send you the link.



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Sources:

You will not likely have access to a comprehensive library during your stay in Jordan. Therefore, you will be expected to make the most of online sources. Do not use Wikipedia. Do not take anything you read on it at face value, and certainly do not cite it or copy from it in your work. You may use reputable news sources, policy papers from think-tanks, the National Security Archive (<http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/>), the Congressional Research Service, and academic articles from JSTOR, etc. (if you have access through your home university).