

Course title: Crossroad in the Arab countries: authoritarianism, spring and Islamic State

Language of instruction: English

Professor: Albert Garrido.

Professor's contact and office hours: albert.garrido1@upf.edu

Course contact hours: 45

Recommended credit: 3 US credits-6 ECTS credits

Course prerequisites: Elementary knowledge of geopolitics in the Middle East.

Language requirements: None

Course focus and approach: Analyzes the developments that led to the Arab-Muslim world to the current situation.

Course description: The Islamic State or ISIS or Daesh is now the main threat in the Arab world and in the Western security system. After 9-11, five events determines the evolution in the political landscape: the war in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, the aftermath of the Arab Spring, the blockage in the Israeli-Palestinian crisis, and the consolidation of the Islamic State like a political and military reality. For the West, especially in Europe, the main consequences are the terrorism (security crisis) and the refugees (humanitarian crisis). Other questions are the relations between Western and the Arab and Islamic governments, the management of the war in Syria from the West, and the crisis inside the Arab world (Sunnism vs. Shia, fundamentalism vs. liberalism, the status of woman, etc.). In this situation, the Russia's intervention in Syria and the agreement with Iran promoted for the president Obama complete the field of the global crisis.

The fronts of discussion and analysis will be:

The link between authority and religion in the Arab-Muslim world.

The social and political status for the women.

The division in the Muslim world.

Arab states in the period 1990-2015.

The development of the Arab Spring.

Global terrorism (Al Qaeda) and the Islamic State (Daesh, the caliphate).

The influence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The struggle for regional hegemony: the competition between Iran (Shiite) and Saudi Arabia (Sunni).

Western crisis management.

Learning objectives

At the end of this course the students will be able to:

- make a general description about the situation in the Arab-Muslim world.
- link politics with historical evolution of Islam.
- distinguish between political Islamism, Salafism and Jihadism.
- explain the specific situation in four regions or political areas: Syria-Iraq, Libya, Gulf and Israel-Palestina.

Course workload

Students will do:

An oral presentation in class (the calendar will be set during the first day of class).

A critical review (600 words) of a book to be chosen from a list that will be provided the first day of the course.

An essay on a current topic (600 words).

Teaching methodology:

The course will be structured in master class, monographic classes linked to the presentation of students and a session dedicated to Orientalism and the Edward W. Said’s criticism.

Many of the topics will be introduced with a general explanatory video.

Assessment criteria:

Presentation: 30%

Critical review: 30%

Essay: 30%

Class participation: 10%

Absence policy

After the add/drop, all registrations are considered final and **HESP Absence Policy** begins to apply. For the academic year 2011-2012, such policy is as follows:

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. Missing classes will impact on the student’s final grade as follows:

Absences	Penalization
<i>Up to two (2) absences</i>	<i>No penalization</i>
<i>Three (3) absences</i>	<i>1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)</i>
<i>Four (4) absences</i>	<i>2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale)</i>
<i>Five (5) absences or more</i>	<i>The student receives an INCOMPLETE (“NO PRESENTAT”) for the course</i>

The PEHE/HESP attendance policy does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences. The student is deemed responsible to manage his/her absences.

Emergency situations (hospitalization, family emergency...) will be analyzed on a case by case basis by the Academic Director of the HESP.

Classroom norms:

- No food or drink is permitted in class
- Students will have a ten-minute break after one one- hour session

Weekly schedule

WEEK 1 (January 9 and 11)

Description of course.

Program, evaluation and readings.

Presentation of course, requirements and assessment method.

Who are the Arabs? The Arabs in the history.

Description of Islam.

Origin, characteristics and division of Islam.

Differences between Sunnis and Shiites.

Islamism, politic islamism, salafism and jihadism.

Religion, authority and power.

Spontaneous culture and hegemonic culture in the Arab world.

WEEK 2 (January 16 and 18)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

Political structure of the Arab world c. 2010.

Contemporary states.

Consequences of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Monarchies, autocracies and alliance system.

The weight of Al Qaeda before and after 9/11.

WEEK 3 (January 23 and 25)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

The social structure in the Arab world.

Analysis by segments of population.

Social duality.

The weight of tradition.

The situation of women.

The situation of young people.

WEEK 4 (January 30 and February 1)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

The Arab women and the feminism.

The Western feminism.

The muslim feminism?

Colonialism and feminism: 'The second sex' have a place in muslim world?

The relationship between feminism and secularism.

Identity, clothing and symbols.

Some reference authors (women).

WEEK 5 (February 6 and 8)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

Genesis, development and consequences of the Arab Spring.

The Tunisian case and the Egyptian case.

Tunisia's secular tradition.

Egyptian militarist tradition.

The Muslim Brotherhood.

WEEK 6 (February 13 and 15)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

West and the Arab Spring.

Libya, Syria.

State crisis.

Libya: a missing State.

Syria: an aggressive autocracy.

Russia and Iran in the Syrian war.

WEEK 7 (February 20 and 22)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

The emergence of the Islamic State or ISIS or Daesh.

Effects of the emergence of the Islamic State.

Western involvement in the conflict.

The involvement of the Arab states in the conflict.

The involvement of Russia and Iran in the conflict.

Yemeni crisis: war in the backyard of Saudi Arabia.

The role of Qatar.

Libya and the Islamic State.

WEEK 8 (February 27 and March 1)

Recension book delivery (February 27).

The Islamic State and Europe.

Muslim communities in Europe.

Mujahideen uptake.

The changes in the European security system.

The effect on migration flows.

The refugees' crisis.

The rise of rightist populism.

WEEK 9 (March 6 and 8)

The energy market and the Arab Spring.

Oil monarchies and petrodollars after spring.

The political influence of OPEC.

Effects of falling oil prices.

The US-Saudi Arabia relations.

The Saudi Arabia-Egypt relations.

WEEK 10 (March 13 and 15)

Students presentation.

Debate from the subject of presentation.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the changes in the Arab world.

The failure of the peace process.

The Palestinian Authority and Fatah-Hamas axis.

The Israel-Egypt axis.

The Palestinian problem and the Arab street.

Debate from the article 'The Six-Day War at 50'

(<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/six-day-war-at-50-by-richard-n-haass-2017-05-by-richard-n--haass-2017-05>)

WEEK 11 (March 20 and 22)

Essay delivery (March 22).

The origin of Orientalism.

The construction of Orientalist imagery.

Bernard Lewis's thesis.

Fact and fiction in the Arab world.

The classical heritage and cultural miscegenation ('One Thousand and One Nights' or 'Arabian Nights').

Arabs seen by the Arabs: Naguib Mahfouz, Alaa al Aswani, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Tariq Ramadan and Al Jazeera phenomena.

Last revision: June 2017

Required readings:

Armstrong, Karen: 'Islam'. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000.

Ben Ami, Shlomo: 'Russia's Middle East Success'.

(<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/russia-syria-intervention-success-by-shlomo-ben-ami-2016-04>)

Cockburn, Patrick: 'Syria and Iraq: Why US policy is fraught with danger'.

(<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/syria-and-iraq-us-policy-is-fraught-with-danger-9722276.html>)

Napoleoni, Loretta: 'The Islamist Phoenix. The Islamic State and the redrawing of the Middle East'. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2014.

Lister, Charles R.: 'The Islamic State. A Brief Introduction'. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2015.

Pollack, Kenneth M.: 'Fight or flight: America's choice in the Middle East'.
(<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2016/02/16-americas-choice-in-middle-east-pollack>)

Recommended bibliography:

Brownlee, Jason and Masoud, Tarek: 'The Arab Spring: Pathways of Repression and Reform'.
Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Gerges, Fawaz A.: 'A History. ISIS'. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

Kepel, Gilles: 'Jihad. The Trial of Political Islam'. London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2006.

Hourari, Albert: 'A history of the arab peoples'. New York: Warner Books Edition, 1991.

Said, Edward W.: 'Orientalism'. New York: Random House, 1979 (vintage edition).