

**SEMINAR ON
SOURCES OF CONFLICT & RESOLUTION:
The United States and the Middle East and Islam
SIS 510.001**

Spring 2005
Thursdays, 5:30 – 8:00 PM
SIS Room 203

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The Problem

This seminar will focus on policies and relationships between the United States and countries in the Middle East. Given the latest “War on Terror” there is an increasing tension between the US and the Middle East. In order to understand this tension, it is important to uncover the sources of conflict between these two realities, assuming that it cannot be distilled only to cultural misunderstandings. The assumption of this seminar is that in addition to cultural differences, there are policies and processes that are underway, for which there are indeed alternatives, which feed the escalating conflict between the United States and the Middle East.

In terms of policies and also of specific countries, the interaction is not simply one-way; it is not the case that the United States is conspiratorially controlling everything in these countries. Rather, the US (state, elites, businesses, etc.) and local states, elites and businesses all find mutual interest in promoting certain policies. While these are usually couched under the rubric of “security,” this class will seek to uncover a sober analysis of these policies and affinities to better understand the outcomes of these relationships.

The Challenge

The challenge to the class is to address the question of what is to be done about these policies that are promoting insecurity and instability, as well as authoritarianism, human rights abuses, environmental degradation, etc. This will be accomplished through in-depth analysis of a particular policy area in a specific country in the Middle East. The resources of Washington, DC will be at your disposal, and fieldwork may take you elsewhere in your investigation.

The Approach

To provide adequate background, the first seven weeks of the seminar will be devoted to discussions on six key policy areas that are at the heart of the conflict between the US and Middle Eastern countries. During this initial segment of the course, student groups will lead discussions and present the reading, sources of information as well as institutions and area specialists will be identified, and broader thematic questions will be addressed. Students will come to class each week prepared to discuss the weekly readings.

The class will be divided into six working teams. Each team will take on one policy area and choose a case study (country) for research. Group participation will mean ongoing meetings outside of class, research, interviews, meetings with professionals, ongoing reports and updates, class presentations and a final paper. As such each individual’s responsibility is both to the group and to the class as a whole.

This seminar takes an *Action-Research* approach, which requires active and ongoing participation by all students. Learning will be facilitated both by class lectures, student presentations and also through the research, meetings, interviews and presentations made

by each group in the class. Each group will develop a level of expertise for a given policy area and country, knowledge which will help you outside the classroom and outside your university experience.

The seminar will be a self-help community, and will be run in a more professional manner than typical university classes. As such, attendance is essential, as each individual's contribution is critical to the functioning of the class.

During your journey in this seminar, **please remember**:

***Communication** of an idea is expedited when we are in touch with the core of ourselves. When we are in touch with our core, we open ourselves to creativity. We also discover that the essence of communication is intention.

***Self-expression**: in order for the self to express itself, it must express itself as a whole. When we are presenting papers, we are not only presenting an idea, but we are presenting ourselves. The person is more important than the idea, because it is the person who through effective communication, can transfer that idea to others.

***Active listening** is a communication skill which we develop as we learn to hear not only words and ideas, but also the emotions, feelings, and experiences behind words and ideas. We try to become a clear mirror for another person, reflecting back what we have heard and understood. We use empathy as a tool of analysis.

Policy Areas for Analysis

- *Authoritarianism*
- *Weapons Industry & Sales/Security Agencies/Military*
- *Political Islam as an alternative political ideology to various-isms, such as communism/socialism/nationalism/Arabism (political contestation) & the West*
- *Human rights (policies, standards, silences)*
- *Control of and access to natural resources*
- *Women and gender issues*

Seminar Overview

Week 1 **Jan. 13** *Introductions and Research Team Registration*

Weeks 2 – 7 *Review of one policy area per week*
Student Presentations of Readings
Sources for information
Criteria for presentations and papers

Feb. 3	GROUP	DUE WEEK 3: Proposed Project Topic (1 page)
Feb. 10	STUDENT	DUE WEEK 4: Critical Review (5-7 pages)
Feb. 24	GROUP	DUE WEEK 6: Specific Workplan (2 pages)
Mar. 3	STUDENT	DUE WEEK 7: Critical Review (5-7 pages)
	GROUP	WEEKS 6-7: Consultation on Project (sign-up)

Weeks 9 – 11 *Focused reading assignments for class discussion taken from current events and issues – students are welcome to suggest readings for class*

Mar. 17	GROUP	DUE: 2 groups give short presentations (20 min.)
Mar. 24	GROUP	DUE: 2 groups give short presentations (20 min.)
Mar. 31	GROUP	DUE: 2 groups give short presentations (20 min.)

- updates on progress, latest meetings, sharing information and consultations with other groups

Weeks 12 – 14 *Final presentations by each group*

Apr. 7	GROUP	DUE: 2 groups give Full Presentations (45 min.)
Apr. 14	GROUP	DUE: 2 groups give Full Presentations (45 min.)
Apr. 21	GROUP	DUE: 2 groups give Full Presentations (45 min.)

Week 15 **April 28** **GROUP** **DUE: Final Paper**

Grading

– Class Participation/Attendance	15%
– Critical Review (2 papers @ 10% each)	20%
– Short Presentations (Weeks 8-11)/ 2 Pg. Outline	10%
– Long Presentations (Weeks 12-14)	15%
--Students also evaluate each other for part of grade	
– Final Paper (50 pages)	40%

* **Class Participation** will be assessed by the reflection of your knowledge of the assigned material through your active participation in class. **Attendance** is mandatory for all classes, and if you are to miss a class, you must inform Professor Said in writing before the day of the class. If you are to miss a class when your group is to participate, then you must inform your group as well.

* **Critical Reviews** – each student will turn in a 5-7 page critical review in Week 4 and Week 7. These reviews should address the assigned readings for one of the weeks (with the exception of Week 1) prior to the due date (i.e. students can submit a review of the readings for the Authoritarianism section in Week 4 and the Human Rights section in Week 7). These assignments are designed to refine your ability to abstract arguments and to evaluate them in light of your experience, other reading and ongoing research. A critical review is not a summary; rather it is an engagement with the key arguments of authors around a common theme and a debate/dialogue/critique/discussion with them.

* **Short Presentations** – each group will make one short presentation (20 minutes) that will give the class an opportunity to learn about your group's research project. It is also a time to bring forth questions, problems and issues that you have uncovered by virtue of the work your group has done up to that time. This is a time for your fellow students to act as consultants for your group's project.

* **Long Presentations** – each group will make one long presentation (45 minutes) of its research project. Multimedia presentations are encouraged. Students in the class will also evaluate the presentation and will offer feedback on the style and content of the presentation. These notes will be made available for each group and will be available in the office by the day after the presentation.

* **Final Paper** – each group will submit one final paper (60 pages). These papers should not be compilations of individual parts, but should be edited to read as one comprehensive and coherent report.

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 13 Introduction

This session will be devoted to meeting one another, reviewing the syllabus, and establishing the pedagogical process and class requirements. Additionally teams will start forming based on interest and time considerations (for out-of-class meetings).

Required Readings:

Nathan C. Funk and Abdul Aziz Said, "Islam and the West: Narratives of Conflict and Conflict Transformation," in International Journal of Peace Studies, forthcoming.

In-Class: Introductions
 Review Syllabus

January 20 – Inauguration Day (no classes)

Week 2: January 27 Authoritarianism

Required Readings:

Ayubi, Nazih. Over-stating the Arab State. London: IB Tauris Publishers, 1995. *Ch. 3,4 & 6*.

Crystal, Jill. "Authoritarianism and its Adversaries in the Arab World," in World Politics 46 (January 1994), *pp. 262-89*.

Eickelman, Dale F. and James Piscatori. Muslim Politics. NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996. *Chapter 6*.

Linz, Juan J. Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner, 2000. *Forward, Introduction & Chapter 4*.

Recommended Readings:

Aburish, Said. A Brutal Friendship: The West and the Arab Elite. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.

In Class: Student Presentations
 In-class meetings to finalize project teams

Week 3: February 3 Weapons Industry & Sales/Security Agencies/Military

Required Readings:

Abi-Aad, Naji and Michael Grenon. Instability and Conflict in the Middle East: People, Petroleum, and Security Threats. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. *Chapter 3*.

Al-Sayyid, Mustapha Kamel. "Legitimacy and Security in Arab Countries, 1989-1996," in Martin, Lenore G. (ed.), New Frontiers in Middle East Security. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, *pp. 47-77*.

Aly, Abdel Monem Said. "The Middle East and the Persian Gulf: The Arab Perspective," in Pierre, Andrew (ed.), Cascade of Arms: Managing Conventional Weapons Proliferation, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1997, *pp. 253-283*.

Honey, Martha and Tom Barry, eds. Global Focus : U.S. Foreign Policy at the Turn of the Millennium. New York, St. Martin's Press, 2000. *Ch. 2 & 10*.

Richards, Alan and John Waterbury. "The Military and the State," in A Political Economy of the Middle East. Boulder: Westview Press, 1996, *pp. 329-45*.

Zunes, Stephen. Tinderbox: US Foreign Policy and the Roots of Terrorism. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 2003. *Chapter 2*.

In Class: Student Presentations
 DUE: Proposed Project Topic (one paragraph)

Week 4: February 10 Political Islam and the West

Required Readings:

Ayubi, Nazih. Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World. London: Routledge, 1994. *Chapter 10*.

Beinin, Joel and Joe Stork. "On Modernity, Historical Specificity, and International Context of Political Islam," in Political Islam: Essays from the Middle East Report, eds. Joel Beinin and Joe Stork. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997, *pp. 3-25*.

Esposito, John, Robert Satloff, and Shibley Telhami. "Foreign Policy Debate: Propaganda, the Satans, and Other Misunderstandings" in SAIS Review, Vol. 21, No. 2 (Summer-Fall 2001), *pp. 139-154*.

Euben, Roxanne. "Comparative Political Theory: An Islamic Fundamentalist Critique of Rationalism," in The Journal of Politics, Vol. 59, No. 1 (February 1997), *pp. 28-55*.

Murden, Simon W. Islam, the Middle East and the New Global Hegemony. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., 2003.

Tibi, Bassam. The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002. *Ch. 1 & 6*.

Zunes, Stephen. "U.S. Policy Toward Political Islam," in Foreign Policy in Focus, Vol. 6, No. 24, June 2001.

Recommended Readings:

Gerges, Fawaz A. America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?. NY: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Hafez, Mohammed M. Why Muslims Rebel?: Repression and Resistance in the Islamic World. Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers Inc., 2003.

Hunter, Shireen T. The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence? Washington, DC: CSIS Publications, 1998.

In Class: Student Presentations
Return Proposed Project Topic

Week 5: February 17 *Human Rights: Between Universal Human Rights and Cultural Tradition*

Required Readings:

Mayer, Ann Elizabeth. Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991. *Chapters 2, 4, 10*.

An-Na'im, Abdullahi. "Toward an Islamic Hermeneutics for Human Rights," in Abdullahi An-Na'im, Jerald D. Gort, Henry Jansen, and Hendrik M. Vroom, eds. Human Rights and Religious Values: An Uneasy Relationship. Grand Rapids, MI: Willaim B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

Said, Abdul Aziz. "Human Rights in Islamic Perspectives," in Pollis, Adamantia and Peter Schwab, eds. Human Rights in Cultural and Ideological Perspectives. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980, pp. 86-100.

Zunes, Stephen. Tinderbox: US Foreign Policy and the Roots of Terrorism. Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 2003. *Chapter 1*.

In Class: Student Presentations

Week 6: February 24 Control of and Access to Natural Resources

Required Readings:

Abi-Aad, Naji and Michael Grenon. Instability and Conflict in the Middle East: People, Petroleum, and Security Threats. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. *Ch. 8, 9 & 12.*

Klare, Michael T. Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict. NY: Henry Holt and Co., 2001. *Ch. 1, 2, 3, 7, & 9.*

Ross, Michael Lewin. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" in World Politics, Vol. 53, No. 3 (April 2001) *pp. 325-361.*

Shuval, Hillel. "Water and Security in the Middle East: The Israeli-Syrian Water Confrontations as a Case Study," in Martin, Lenore G. (ed.), New Frontiers in Middle East Security. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, *pp. 183-216.*

In Class: Student Presentations
DUE: Two-page specific workplan from each group
 - detailed assignments for each team member
 - timeline for assignments
 - likely contacts, interviews, initial bibliography
Sign-up for Consultation Session

Week 7: March 3 Women and Gender Issues

Required Readings:

Abou El Fadl, Khaled. Speaking in God's Name: Islamic Law, Authority, and Women
Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001. *Chapter 7.*

Afkhami, Mahnaz, ed. Faith and Freedom: Women's Human Rights in the Muslim World.
Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995. *Entire.*

Karam, Azza ."Feminisms and Islamisms in Egypt," in Marchand, Marianne and Anne Runyan, eds. *Gender and Global Restructuring*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Recommended Readings:

Kandiyoti, Deniz, ed. Women, Islam, and the State. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1991.

Saliba, Theresa, Carolyn Allen, and Judith A. Howard, eds. Gender, Politics, and Islam.
Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

In Class: Student Presentations
 Short presentation of project ideas from each group

March 10 *Spring Break—No Class*

Week 9:	March 17	Short Presentations, Readings TBA
Week 10:	March 24	Short Presentations, Readings TBA
Week 11:	March 31	Short Presentations, Readings TBA
Week 12:	April 7	Final Presentations
Week 13:	April 14	Final Presentations
Week 14:	April 21	Final Presentations
Week 15	April 28	DUE: FINAL PAPER