

## PO 245 PM: POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST/Spring 2010

Prof. Farbod  
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Room Z102, Zinzendorf  
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Office Hrs: W: 10-12 Noon  
OR by appointment

The students will learn to examine critically a number of issues and themes pertaining to the Middle East. Selected topics include but are not limited to: a critique of prevalent Western ethnocentric views of the Middle East; examination of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; politics of pre- and post-revolutionary Iran, pre- and post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan; examination of Middle Eastern fundamentalisms; resource politics, in particular politics of energy resources; U.S. foreign policy in the region, to include the so-called ex-“war on terror.” Throughout, we will attempt rationally to separate myth from reality, and will end with a consideration of the near- and long-term prospects for peace, democracy, prosperity and justice in the region. The students will benefit from a less detailed look at other nations of the region such as Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. The course is organized around significant regional themes coupled with a detailed look at several key countries that best demonstrate these themes. The course relies on a number of critical documentaries and films dealing with some of the more controversial aspects of life and politics in the region that are often shunned by the mainstream media.

### Required Books:

Keshavarz: *Jasmine and Stars*; Zangana: *City of Widows*; Cole: *Engaging the Muslim World*; Halper: *An Israeli in Palestine*

### Course Requirements:

- a. **Class Participation (CP):** (10%)
  - 1) Informed and consistent CP WILL make a difference in evaluation. Bring books and notebooks to each class. Keep up with the **readings** and the **news** from the region.
  - 2) **Attendance Policy:** Regular class attendance is required. Excluding the Introductory class session, each unexcused absence reduces the CP grade by 30%. Beyond this, each additional unexcused absence will reduce the overall grade by 5%. In case of emergency, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor prior to the class and if appropriate the student must provide a note from a health provider.
- b. **Critical Reflection Paper:** (10%)

Write a critical 3-page typed essay on any topic of interest encountered in class readings, viewings, and discussions. The essay can be a prelude to your research paper as well. It is due prior to the Mid-Term (Feb. 26).
- c. **Four Quizzes:** (20%)

One for each book. Make-ups are given only for missed quizzes due to excused absences.
- d. **Research Paper:** (20%)

Have a research topic in mind by **early March**. Hand in a typed intro page on **March 15** indicating 1) your topic, 2) a significant question, 3) why you think the latter is important, and 4) the sources you will consult in your research. Research requires consulting sources **outside** of class materials. You may choose a contemporary or historical topic so long as it can be shown to enhance our understanding of the present issues in the region. Write between 6-8 typed pages not including the Bibliog., Endnotes or Title pages. Due date: **Monday, April 19**.
- e. **A Mid-Term & a Final Exam:** (20% each): The Final Exam is not cumulative. Mid-Term Exam Date: **Monday, either February 22 or 29**.

<b>Evaluation* :</b>	Class Participation	10%
	Critical Ref Paper	10%
	Quizzes	20%
	Term Paper	20%
	Mid-term Exam	20%
	Final Exam	20%

**Class Readings** will be assigned on a class-by-class basis.

**Academic Honesty Policy:** In cases of cheating or plagiarizing in any way, I will follow the appropriate procedures as they appear in the College Student Handbook.

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\* It is within my purview to apply qualitative judgment in the determination of any and all grades.