

## **West Asian Politics**

- a. Credit Hours 3-0
- b. Course Code:SS-822
- c. Course Title

### **West Asian Politics**

- d. **Course Description**

This course is planned to introduce the students to critical themes related to the politics of West Asia. This course intends to elucidate the complex contemporary politics of West Asia. It aims to equip students with in-depth knowledge relating to the politics of West Asia so that they can easily comprehend the causes and consequences of the contemporary security issues taking place in West Asia. This course aims to discuss the origin of the term “West Asia” and elucidate the specific characteristics and properties of the region known as West Asia. Moreover, this course also plans to discuss the impact of the demise of the Ottoman Empire and the formation of new states in this very region, the Saudi-Iran rivalry, the Security Dilemma persisting between different states in West Asia, the ideology of ISIS, the Iranian Revolution, causes and consequences of Arab Spring, Arab-Israel war, Rentier state theory, and regional security complex. This course also aims to critically evaluate the causes and consequences of several imperative contemporary phenomena, conflicts, and rivalries in this region. However, the foremost aim of this course is to enable the students to specifically comprehend the politics of West Asia and understand the security problems emerging in this region.

- e. **Course Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Comprehend the Politics of West Asia
- Apply these concepts and theories to the complex security issues in West Asian politics.
- Critically address the specific security problems and deploy advanced research skills.

f. **Course Objectives**

The course is designed with several goals in mind:

- To develop critical engagement with the theories of international relations and foreign policy analysis relevant to themes in West Asia regional and international politics;
- To familiarize students with history of the region since its emergence as a modern state system at the turn of the last century;
- To develop familiarity with relevant theoretical debates and empirical cases pertaining to West Asia's contemporary regional and international political issues.

g. **Course Contents**

**Week 1:** Introduction to the Course

**Week 2:** What is West Asia?

**Week 3:** West Asian Politics in Comparative Perspective: The Persistence of Authoritarianism

**Week 4:** Ideology of ISIS

**Week 5:** Demise of Ottoman Empire and State Formation

**Week 6:** Iranian Revolution and Politics in Iran

**Week 7:** Shia Crescent

**Week 8:** The Social and Economic Context of Contemporary Politics

**Week 9:** *Midterm Exam*

**Week 10:** The Consolidation of State Power and Authoritarian Rule

**Week 11:** The Arab-Israeli Conflict and Its Consequences

**Week 12:** Causes and Consequences of Arab Spring

**Week 13:** Political Islam and Its Impact

**Week 14:** Rentier State Theory

**Week 15:** Politics in Iraq & Syria

**Week 16:** *Final Exam*

h. **Recommended Readings:**

- Sharnoff, M. (2024). Visualizing Palestine in Arab postage stamps: 1948-1967. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2024.2314523>
- Global State of Democracy Initiative, The State of Democracy in Western Asia, August 2023, <https://www.idea.int/gsod/2023/chapters/western-asia/>
- Tal, D. (2023). Kissinger's wrath: the reassessment of the US-Israel relationship (March 1975). *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2023.2270430>
- Boyar, E., & Fleet, K. (2023). The League of Nations and Turkish political refugees in Greece in the early 1930s. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00263206.2023.2255139>
- Milton-Edwards, Beverley. Contemporary Politics in the Middle East. 2018.
- Crooke, Alastair. "You Can't Understand ISIS If You Don't Know the History of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia." HuffPost. Last modified March 30, 2017. [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/alastair-crooke/isis-wahhabism-saudi-arabia\\_b\\_5717157.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/alastair-crooke/isis-wahhabism-saudi-arabia_b_5717157.html).
- Chalcraft, J. Popular Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East, Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Fawcett, Louise L'Estrange. International Relations of the Middle East. 2016.
- Fawcett, L. International Relations of the Middle East, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016
- Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza. The Shia Revival: How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape the Future. 2016.
- Davidson, Christopher M. After the Sheikhs: The Coming Collapse of the Gulf Monarchies. 2015.
- Hinnebusch, R. The International Politics of the Middle East, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014.
- Hinnebusch, R. and A. Ehteshami eds., The Foreign Policies of Middle East States, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2014.
- Cleveland, W. and M. Bunton. A History of the Modern Middle East, 5th edition. Boulder: Westview Press, 2012.

- Kamrava, Mehran. *The Modern Middle East: A Political History Since the First World War*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.
- Eyal Zisser, "Bashar Al-Assad: In or Out of the New World Order?" in Alexander T.J. Lennon (ed), *The Epicenter of Crisis: The New Middle East* (Boston: M.I.T. Press, 2007), 61-80.
- Elliott Hen-Tov, "Understanding Iran's New Authoritarianism," in Alexander T.J. Lennon (ed), *The Epicenter of Crisis: The New Middle East* (Boston: M.I.T. Press, 2007), 221-240.
- Halliday, F. *Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics, and Ideology*, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Ross, Michael L. "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics* 53, no. 03 (2001), 325-361. doi:10.1353/wp.2001.0011.
- William L. Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East* Second Edition (Boulder: Westview, 2000), 146-167.
- Milton-Edwards, *Contemporary Politics in the Middle East*, 68-92 and 173-194.
- Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 32-53.
- Milton-Edwards, *Contemporary Politics in the Middle East*, 121-144.
- F. Gregory Gause III, "Regional Influences on Experiments in Political Liberalization in the Arab World, in Korany, Brynen & Noble (eds.), Vol. 1 *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World*, 283-306.