

# 17.405/17.406

## Seminar on Politics and Conflicts in the Middle East

### SYLLABUS

#### INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Nazli Choucri

#### COURSE MEETING TIMES

Lectures: 1 session / week, 3 hours / session

#### REQUIREMENTS

There are two major course requirements:

First is the nature and extent of class discussion and participation (40% of final grade).

Second is a choice of:

1. Take home final exam - open books, essay questions, some choice  
or
2. One research paper - long paper. First select topic, then Instructor OK, then statement of purpose etc. (one para) then Instructor OK; then general outline: then Instructor OK - then you are on your own until first draft  
or
3. Three short review essays covering the individual parts of the course (60% of final grade) — List of topics provided by Instructor; or you can select your own topic(s) and get Instructor OK.

Decision to be made by week 3 and no later than week 4. Otherwise, the default holds. Default is the take home final.

Graduate students are expected to pursue special research topics in greater depth. Recitation for Undergraduate students required.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Andersen, Roy R., Robert F. Seibert, and Jon G. Wagner. *Politics and Change in the Middle East: Sources of Conflict and Accommodation*. 6th ed. Engelwood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2000.

Owen, Roger. *State, Power, and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2000.

Esposito, John L., and John O. Voll. *Islam and Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2001.

Smith, Charles D. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Boston: Bedford/ St. Martin's Press, 2001.

## CALENDAR

LEC #	TOPICS
<b>Context</b>	
1	Introduction: Core Concepts and Strategic Legacies
2	Interconnected Logics: Religion and Politics
3	Critical Convergence: The Case of Iraq
<b>Continuity</b>	
4	Roots, Migrations, and State-Building: Arab-Israeli Conflicts
5	Beliefs and Power Differentials: Israel and the Palestinians
6	Diversity and Complexity: Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan
7	Dangerous Disequilibria: Iran and Turkey
<b>Complexity</b>	
8	Elusive Gains and Strategic Costs: Saudi Arabia and Gulf
9	Power and Interdependence: Egypt and Sudan
10	Continuity of Conflicts and Contentions: North Africa
<b>Convergence</b>	
11	Exploring "Alternatives": Future Contentions
	Final Exam

