The Middle East is quite popular today. Most of the reasons for that popularity are lamentable. In this course we will go beyond the lament to explore politics in one of the most important and fascinating regions of the world. Political discussion in the Middle East is the life of everyman. Waiting in line, people talk politics. Eating, people talk politics. Even at weddings, people talk politics. Therefore, this course will tackle the controversial issues and dilemmas of the region, but from a sober, analytical vantage. We want to try and answer why questions about the region, not simply what and how. This is an introductory course. Part of the course will cover the political, social, and economic themes that animate debate in the field of Middle East Studies. A second goal is to gain comparative knowledge about the people of the region, their religions, cultures, and societies. The 22 countries that comprise the modern Middle East are quite diverse, therefore, we will only be able to focus on a few cases and issues. The period of analysis will be since World War Two.

Assigned Texts
For each lecture, there are assigned readings from books and articles. Three texts comprise much of the readings for each class. The texts are available in the bookstore:

Karl Yambert, *The Contemporary Middle East*, (Abbreviated, Yambert)
Deborah Gerner and Jillian Schwedler, *Understanding the Contemporary Middle East* (Abbreviated, Gerner)
Nir Rosen, *In the Belly of the Green Bird*

Grades and responsibilities
Students are responsible for the material covered in the lectures as well as assigned readings. Grading is comprised of four components:

mid-term examination 20%
map quiz 10%
literature review 10%
final paper 20%
final examination 40%

Grade Scale (rounded up):
A 90-100
B 80-89
C 70-79
D 60-69
F 59-
LECTURES AND READINGS

All readings aside from the required Gerner, Yambert, and Rosen texts are available through the library’s on-line reserve system. Some noted readings are available outside the library and the web addresses are given.

8/29  Introduction
Gerner, Introduction, pp.1-4

8/31  No Class-Study for Map Quiz
Gerner, Chapter 2, pp. 5-31

9/05  Social and Ethnic Diversity--MAP QUIZ
Gerner, Chapter 10, pp. 299-334

9/07  Studying the Middle East: Power, Tribes, and Orientalism
Gerner, chapter 4, pp. 79-92
Also, Ibn Khaldun, selection from *Muqaddimah*, p.3-6.

9/12  The Islamic Conquests
Albert Hourani “Prologue,” and “The Ottoman Empire.”
Gerner, Chapter 3, pp. 333-47

9/14  The emergence of Middle Eastern states: colonialism and decolonization
Gerner, Chapter 3, pp. 47-66

9/19  The Lebanese Saga: wonderful cuisine, tragic politics
Walid Khalidi, Conflict and Violence in Lebanon, pp.93-101.

9/21  MOVIE: West Beirut

9/26  MOVIE: West Beirut

9/28  Nationalism
Yambert, Chapter 3
Also, Sati Al-Husri, “Muslim Unity and Arab Unity”

10/03  The Revolutionary States: Egypt
Yambert, Chapter 17

10/05  Egypt: The Muslim Brotherhood
10/10  Religious monarchies and conservative strategies of state formation

10/12  Economic Development I: colonial legacies and state-led economic development
Gerner, Chapter 7

10/17  Economic Development II: oil states and the resource curse
Gerner, Chapter 8

10/19  ***MID-TERM EXAM***

10/24  FALL BREAK

10/26  The Gulf States
Yambert, Chapters 14 & 15

10/31  Islam and Politics I
Gerner, Chapter 12

11/02  Islam and Politics II: The Iranian Revolution
Yambert, Chapters 11 & 12

11/07  Israel
Theodor Herzl, “The Jewish State”

11/09  The US and Israel Debate
John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, “The Israel Lobby,”
London Review of Books web link to article
http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n06/print/mear01_.html
Also:
Yambert, Chapter 6

11/14  Palestine
Yambert, Chapter 5

11/16  Conflict and the Failed Peace Process
Gerner, Chapter 6
Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, “Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors”
Ron Pundak, “From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?”pp.31-45.

11/21  Iraq
Yambert, Chapter 10 & 13
Nir Rosen, In the Belly of the Green Bird, chapters 1-3

11/23  Thanksgiving Holiday

11/28  The Iraq War
Nir Rosen, In the Belly of the Green Bird, chapters 4-5

12/05  The Iraq War
Nir Rosen, In the Belly of the Green Bird, chapters 6-7.

12/07  Final Review