Political Islam and U.S. Foreign Policy
DePaul University

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PSC 341, Sec 301
Spring 2019
Arts and Letters Hall Rm 408
Tues/Thurs, 9:40 pm – 11:10 pm

Course Description:

This course examines the development of the international Islamist movement, and the U.S. government’s response to it. The class will begin by reviewing the origins of the Islamist ideology, the evolution of the movement as a political force, and the changing strategies used by American foreign policy makers to alternately coopt, contain and destroy the Islamist movement. A central part of the course will be an examination of the debates over how best to deal with the challenge of Islamist militancy. The latter half of the course will be dedicated to the post-9/11 period, and will examine different aspects of the “Global War on Terror.” The class will conclude with an analysis of both the Obama and Trump Administrations’ approach to Islamist militancy, the rise and fall of ISIS, and a reflection on the nature of America’s on-going wars.

Course Requirements

Each student is expected to read the assigned material before class and to be prepared to discuss its contents each week. Class attendance and participation is mandatory, and will comprise 10 percent of your grade. There will also be a brief writing assignment due every week (2 – 3 pages, double spaced, analytical summary of a given class reading) for weeks 2 - 10. These short papers will be worth 25 percent of your grade, and must be submitted via the Desire2Learn (D2L) Dropbox. You are allowed to miss this weekly assignment twice during the term (which means that 7 short papers are required from each student).

There will also be a final exam (worth 40 percent), and an 8 - 10 page research paper (worth 25 percent) on a topic of your choosing. The topic needs to correlate with one covered in class, and should draw from the readings listed on the syllabus, though it is by no means limited to the assigned readings. More on the writing assignments (along with examples of analytical summaries) can be found on the course D2L website.

Required Reading

The texts listed below are available in the school bookstore. Asterisked readings (*) will be available electronically through the course D2L site. Books and articles listed under “Additional Material” are NOT required reading.

Books to purchase:
**Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the effort to pass someone else’s work off as one’s own. This includes turning in papers that you did not write, cutting and pasting material from the internet without proper citation, or turning in a paper that you purchased either on-line or from another source. Any paper submitted with plagiarized material will result in a failing grade for the assignment. More than one infraction will lead to your failing the course. For more on the University policy on plagiarism and academic integrity, see the DePaul University Website.

**Learning Disabilities:** For students with learning disabilities, please contact me at the beginning of the course. The school has a clear policy on this issue, and I am happy to accommodate students with legitimate needs. All conversations along these lines will remain in confidence. You should also be in touch with the CSD Program office, which is located in the Student Center (Room 370).

**Learning Objectives:** There are two sets of learning objectives in this course. The first involves understanding and mastering the course content. This course will expose you to ideas, debates and historical material that few Americans readily understand. Second, the emphasis on reading and writing is intended to improve the basic skills essential for professional success: reading, writing and analytical thinking.

**How to get the most from this course:** Reading the assigned material, and otherwise coming to class prepared, is the single most important thing one can do to be successful in this class. There is a direct correlation between the amount of work one does outside of the classroom and the final grade. In-class participation is also crucial, though this includes everything from participating in seminar discussions to simply being present. In short, be engaged, whether that is with the reading outside of class or being mentally present in the classroom. You will get out of this class exactly what you put into it.

**Technology:** The use of cell phones, tablets and laptops is prohibited in the classroom without prior permission.
Schedule and Readings

Week 1: Introduction and Origins of Islamist Thought (April 2, 4)
Class 1: Introduction

Class 2: al-Banna, Mawdudi, and early Islamist Thought
-Nazih Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World (Chapter 6, “Political Islam: Intellectual Sources”), pp. 120-134.*
-Ibrahim Abu-Rabi, Intellectual Origins of Islamic Resurgence in the Modern Arab World, Chapter 3 (pp. 62-66 and 79 – 91 only).*

Week 2: Islamist Politics in 1960’s and 70’s (April 9, 11)
Part 1: Sayyid Qutb
-Gilles Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and the Pharaoh, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), Chapter 2 (‘Signposts’)*
-Ayubi, Political Islam, Chapter 6, pp. 134-145 (only).*

Part 2: Islamist Opposition and the Question of Violence
-Euben and Zaman, Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought, pp. 321-330 (Farag reading).*
-Saad Eddin Ibrahim, “Islamic Activism and Political Opposition in Egypt,” in Ibrahim, Egypt, Islam and Democracy: Twelve Critical Essays (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002).*

Part 3: The Iranian Revolution
-Fred Halliday, “The Iranian Revolution,” in Halliday and Alavi, State and Ideology in the Middle East and Pakistan.* (pp. 31-57)
-Ayubi, Political Islam, Chapter 6, pp. 146-155 (only).*

Additional Material:

Week 3: The Afghan War and its Consequences (April 16, 18)
Class 1: War in Afghanistan
-Jason Burke, Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam, Chapters 4 & 5.*
-Abdallah Azzam, selections from Kepel, Milelli and Ghazaleh, Al-Qaeda in its Own Words.*

Class 2: U.S. Foreign Policy Debates in the 1990’s
- Hibbard and Little, *Islamic Activism and U.S. Foreign Policy*, Introduction and Conclusion.*

**Additional Material:**

**Week 4: September 11, 2001 (April 23, 25)**

**Class 1: Bin Laden and 9/11.**
- Wiktorowicz and Kaltner, “Killing in the Name of Islam: Al-Qaeda’s Justifications for September 11,” *Middle East Policy*, Summer 2003 (pp. 76-85, and 90-91 only)*

- See 9/11 video clips on D2L site.*

**Class 2: Interpreting 9/11**
- President George Bush, Address to Joint Session of Congress, September 20, 2001.*
- George Bush, Remarks at National Cathedral, September 16, 2001.*

**Additional Material:**

**Week 5: The Bush Doctrine, the Iraq War and the War on Terror (April 30, May 1)**

**Class 1: The Bush Doctrine and Invasion of Iraq**
- Jeffrey Record, *The Bush Doctrine and War with Iraq*, *Parameters*, Spring 2003*.
- President George Bush, The Case for War, Cincinnati, Ohio, October, 2002.*
- Sifry and Cerf, *The Iraq War Reader*, selections (pp 222-240, 268-271, 295-299 and 307-308 only).*
Class 2: More Perspectives
- President Bush, “President Discusses War on Terror at the National Endowment for Democracy,” Washington, DC, October 6, 2005.*

Additional Material:
- Richard Clarke, Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror. Alternately, you can view the “60 Minutes” interview with Richard Clark. A link to the video clips (two segments) can be found on course blackboard.
- “Truth, War and Consequences,” a Frontline (PBS) documentary on the debate over the Iraq War. This can be viewed on-line at: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/truth/view/

Week 6: Freedom, Rights and Torture (May 7, 9)
Class 1 and 2: Civil Liberties, Torture and Guantanamo Bay

Additional Material:
- Jane Mayer, The Dark Side: The Inside Story of How the War on Terror Turned into a War on American Ideals (New York: Doubleday, 2008)

Week 7: The Rise of ISIS (May 14, 16)
Class 1: The Origins and Evolution of ISIS:

Class 2: Understanding the Phenomenon:
Additional Material:

**Week 8: ISIS (Part II) (May 21, 23)**
Class 1: Is ISIS Islamic?

Class 2: The Geopolitical Context

Additional Material:
- Weiss and Hassan, *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror* (Regan Arts, 2015).

**Week 9: Debating Obama’s Foreign Policy (May 28, 30)**
Class 1 & 2: Obama Foreign Policy
Part I:
- Barak Obama, Address at National Defense University, May 23, 2013.*

Part II:
- Barak Obama, Address to the Nation, December 6, 2015.*

Part III: Top Secret America
- Top Secret America – First Two stories.*
- Interview with Edward Snowden https://www.wired.com/2014/08/edward-snowden/#ch-7
Additional Material:

Week 10: The War on Terror in the Trump Era (June 4, 6)
Class 1: Trump’s War on Terror

Class 2: Looking Back, Looking Forward

Additional Material:
- Ian Lustick, *Trapped in the War on Terror* (University of Pennsylvania, 2006).

Final Exam: Thursday June, 13, 2018, 8:30 AM to 11:45 PM
Final Papers are due by on Sunday, June 16, 5:00 pm.
-Roundtable, “Are We Trapped in a War on Terror?” *Middle East Policy*, December 2006. (pp. 1 – 15 only).*
- Washington Post Series, Obama’s Wars, Article One and Two. Review other material on the Washington Website:
  http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2012/09/bush-obama-war-on-terror/
- Frontline Documentary: “Obama’s War,” available on-line at:
  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/obamaswar/

Class 1 and 2: Top Secret America
  http://projects.washingtonpost.com/top-secret-america/
- Frontline Documentary: Spying on the Home Front
  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/homefront/

Additional Material:
- Frontline Documentary: *Top Secret America*
  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/topsecretamerica/