

University of California, Irvine
Department of Political Science

Middle East Democracy

Saeb El Kasm
Office hours: M 6:30-7:30/ by appt.
Social Science Lab 290

Winter 2007, Intl St 179
Monday, 3:30 – 6:20 p.m.

Course Description

In the aftermath of 9/11, international interest has focused intensely on the Middle East's urgent need for reform. For many in Washington, democratization is seen as the best weapon against terrorism. However, can democracy succeed in the region?

With a few exceptions, the Middle East has had a long history of authoritarianism as well as religious and cultural sectarianism. Amid established systems of autocracy, the key characteristics of democratic politics continue to be missing from most Middle Eastern countries: representative government, free and fair elections, separation of powers, an active civil society and a free and independent media. As a result, the path towards democratization and political liberalization has been fraught with difficulties.

This course examines the underlying causes for why most states in the Middle East continue to be considered 'holdouts' from the spread of democracy and modernity. By analyzing the dimensions of state-society relations in a number of country case studies, we will examine the challenges posed by the lack of pluralism and a vibrant civic culture. In this context, a study of the prospects for political reform, democracy and rule of law promotion efforts will give us key insights into liberalization trends in the region.

Required Reading Materials

- (1) Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in the Middle East*, (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005).
- (2) Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany, Paul Noble, *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World, Vol.1, Theoretical Perspectives*, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).
- (3) Article reader available at www.universityreaders.com or view attached pdf links on page 6 of syllabus.
- (4) News and current events (see below)

Other Suggested Reading Materials

- (5) Amin Saikal and Albrecht Shnabel, *Democratization in the Middle East: Experiences, Struggles, Challenges*, (United Nations University Press, 2003).
- (6) Ghassan Salam'e, *Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, (I.B. Tauris, 1994).
- (7) Larry Diamond, Marc Plattner, and Daniel Brumberg, *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East*, (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).

News and Current Events

A strong emphasis will be made on linking our course material to current events in the Middle East. All students are required to read carefully the "BBC News Middle East" section on a regular basis, available online. *The New York Times* is also a great resource to keep abreast of the latest developments in international affairs. I also recommend that you follow regional English language media to gain different perspectives and opinions about events. Some of the many accessible newspapers on the web include: *Ha'aretz* (Israel) www.haaretz.com, Daily Star (Lebanon) www.dailystar.com.lb, and al Ahram Weekly (Egypt) weekly.ahram.org.eg.

Course Evaluation

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|--------------------------------|-----|
| ▪ Midterm Exam | 30% |
| ▪ Case Study | 30% |
| ▪ Final Exam | 30% |
| ▪ Attendance and Participation | 10% |

Midterm and Final Exam: Exams will be essay format and will be based on the readings, lectures, and items covered in the discussions. Attendance is highly encouraged and reading the material critically is essential for doing well on the exams.

Case Study: A case study that analyzes democratization issues relating to a specific Middle Eastern country is required. In the case study, you should examine the dilemmas the country faces in making the transition to democracy, the potential solutions to those problems, and offer recommendations on how the U.S. might best promote democracy in that country. The position you take is irrelevant to your grade. Rather, the criterion for grading this paper will be the quality of your analysis and your proper use of evidence from course materials and secondary sources. The paper should be 7-10 pages double-spaced and is due on the final day of class (March 12, 2007).

Course Schedule

Week 1: January 8

- ❖ **Introduction and Overview: Middle East Democratization in Perspective**
 - Larry Diamond, “The State of Democratization at the Beginning of the 21st Century,” *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Winter 2004.
 - Carles Boix, “The Roots of Democracy,” *Policy Review* No. 135, February/March 2006.
 - *Recommended*: Michael McFaul, “Democracy Promotion as a World Value,” *Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2004/2005.

Week 2: January 15 (Martin Luther King Jr., University Holiday)

Week 3: January 22

- ❖ **The “Robustness of Authoritarianism” and the Prospects for Democratization**
 - Carothers and Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey*, pp. 3-35, 151-170
 - Brynen, Korany, Noble, pp. 3-108, 307-326
 - Bernard Lewis, “Freedom and Justice in the Modern Middle East,” *Foreign Affairs*, 83, 4, May/June 2005.
 - *Recommended*: Holger Albrecht and Oliver Shlumberger, “Waiting for Godot”: Regime Change Without Democratization in the Middle East,” *International Political Science Review*, 25:4, 2004.
 - *Recommended*: Marsha P. Posusney and Michele Angrist, *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005.

Week 4: January 29

- ❖ **Political Islam: Can Islamists be Democrats?**
 - Carothers and Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey*, pp. 37-55
 - Brynen, Korany, Noble, pp. 113-123, 167-184
 - Steven Fish, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” *World Politics*, October 2002.
 - [Video](#): Excerpts from “Islam and Democracy, Is a Clash of Civilizations Inevitable?” - Featuring Noah Feldman and Hamza Yusuf.
 - *Recommended*: Fareed Zakaria, “Islam, Democracy, and Constitutional Liberalism,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Spring 2004
 - *Recommended*: Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Islam and the Challenge of Democracy*, Princeton University Press, 2005.

Week 5: February 5

❖ **Democratization Barriers: The Resource Curse, Socio-Economic Challenges and Regional Conflict**

- Carothers and Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey*, pp. 131-148
- Brynen, Korany, Noble, pp. 211-226, 261-304
- Benjamin Smith, “The Wrong Kind of Crisis: Why Oil Booms and Busts Rarely Lead to Authoritarian Breakdown,” *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 40(4), March 2006.
- Video: Excerpts from “Blood and Oil” - Documentary directed by Marty Callaghan.
- Recommended: Michael Ross, “Does Oil Hinder Democracy?” *World Politics*, 53:3, April 2001.
- Recommended: Nancy Birdshall and Arving Subramanian, “Saving Iraq from its Oil.” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 4, July/Aug 2004.

Week 6: February 12

❖ **Midterm Examination**

Week 7: February 19 (President’s Day, University Holiday)

Week 8: February 26

❖ **A Survey: Case Studies in Middle East Democratization**

- Brynen, Korany, Noble, pp. 229-254
- Nathan Brown, “Living with Palestinian Democracy,” *Carnegie Endowment*, Policy Brief No. 46, May 2006.
- Alan Dowty, “Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the Ethnic Democracy Debate,” *Israel Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, Summer 2002.
- Michelle Dunne, “Time to Pursue Democracy in Egypt,” *Carnegie Endowment*, Policy Outlook No. 30, January 2007.
- Recommended: Saikal and Schnabel, *Democratization in the Middle East*, pp. 127-199
- Recommended: Salam'e, *Democracy Without Democrats?*, pp. 84-110, 183-269, 282-298
- Recommended: Michael C. Hudson, *Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy*, Yale University Press, 1997.

Week 9: March 5

❖ **Civil Society, the Press, and Human Rights**

- Carothers and Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey*, pp. 81-128
- Brynen, Korany, Noble, pp. 131-162, 187-205
- Deborah L. Wheeler, “Empowering Publics: Information Technology and Democratization in the Arab World – Lessons from Internet Cafés and Beyond,” *Oxford Internet Institute*, Research Report No. 11, July 2006.
- Recommended: Azadeh Kian, “Women and Politics in Post-Islamist Iran: The Gender Conscious Drive to Change,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 24:1, 1997.
- Recommended: Shanthi Kalathil, *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule*, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003.
- Recommended: Fred Halliday, “Relativism and Universalism in Human Rights: The Case of the Islamic Middle East,” *Political Studies*, Vol. 43, 1995.

Week 10: March 12

❖ **Policy Choices: American Engagement, the Iraqi Experience and the Outlook for Democracy Promotion Efforts**

- Carothers and Ottaway, *Uncharted Journey*, pp. 173-227
- Daniel Neep, “Dilemmas of Democratization in the Middle East: The “Forward Strategy of Freedom”,” *Middle East Policy* 11:3, Fall 2004.
- Larry Diamond, “Building Democracy after Conflict: Lessons from Iraq,” *Journal of Democracy*, January 2005.
- Recommended: Nathan Brown, “Is Political Consensus Possible in Iraq?” *Carnegie Endowment, Policy Outlook No. 23*, November 2005.
- Recommended: Thomas Carothers, “Is Gradualism Possible? Choosing a Strategy for Promoting Democracy in the Middle East,” *Carnegie Endowment*, Paper No. 39, June 2003.

Week 11:

- ❖ **Final Examination** (Cumulative, with emphasis on weeks 8-10).

PDF Links – Required Reader Articles (11)

- Larry Diamond, “The State of Democratization at the Beginning of the 21st Century,” *The Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations*, Winter 2004, 1-6.
✓ http://diplomacy.shu.edu/journal/new/pdf/VolVINo1/04_Diamond.pdf
- Carles Boix, “The Roots of Democracy,” *Policy Review* No. 135, February/March 2006.
✓ http://www.realclearpolitics.com/Commentary/com-2_24_06_CB_pf.html
- Bernard Lewis, “Freedom and Justice in the Modern Middle East,” *Foreign Affairs*, 83, 4, May/June 2005.
✓ <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050501faessay84305/bernard-lewis/freedom-and-justice-in-the-modern-middle-east.html?mode=print>
- Steven Fish, “Islam and Authoritarianism,” *World Politics*, October 2002.
✓ http://www.polisci.berkeley.edu/Faculty/bio/permanent/Fish,M/Islam_and_Authoritarianism.pdf
- Benjamin Smith, “The Wrong Kind of Crisis: Why Oil Booms and Busts Rarely Lead to Authoritarian Breakdown,” *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 40(4), March 2006.
✓ <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/bbsmith/SCIDJan2006.pdf>
- Nathan Brown, “Living with Palestinian Democracy,” *Carnegie Endowment*, Policy Brief No. 46, May 2006.
✓ http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/pb46_Brown_final.pdf
- Alan Dowty, “Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the Ethnic Democracy Debate,” *Israel Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2, Summer 2002.
✓ <http://iupjournals.org/israel/iss4-2.html>
- Michelle Dunne, “Time to Pursue Democracy in Egypt,” *Carnegie Endowment*, Policy Outlook No. 30, January 2007.
✓ http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/Dunne_Egypt_FINAL2.pdf
- Daniel Neep, “Dilemmas of Democratization in the Middle East: The “Forward Strategy of Freedom”,” *Middle East Policy* 11:3, Fall 2004, 73-84.
✓ http://www.mepc.org/journal_vol11/neep.pdf
- Deborah L. Wheeler, “Empowering Publics: Information Technology and Democratization in the Arab World – Lessons from Internet Cafés and Beyond,” *Oxford Internet Institute*, Research Report No. 11, July 2006.
✓ www.oii.ox.ac.uk/research/publications/RR11.pdf
- Larry Diamond, “Building Democracy after Conflict: Lessons from Iraq,” *Journal of Democracy*, January 2005, 1-15.
✓ <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/gratis/Diamond-16-1.pdf>