H344 The Modern Middle East and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Course Teachers: Dr Roberto Mazza
Class: Tuesday 6:30 to 9 (Morgan 306)
Office Hours 434:
Contacts: r-mazza@wiu.edu – 309-298-1655

Description:

The Arab Israeli Conflict is likely one of the most relevant in the contemporary world. This conflict has fascinated and puzzled scholars, politicians and the broader public creating the impression that everyone has an opinion about it. There is not only interest but it also seems that everyone has a recipe to find a lasting solution to this conflict: interestingly most of these solutions are conflicting if not diametrically opposed. This course will study the history of the conflict in the larger context of the modern history of the Middle East following a chronological approach though several themes will be developed throughout the course itself. We will explore and discuss the causes and consequences of the major wars and we will place them in their local and international context. Students will gain an understanding of the main ideologies that have shaped the conflict: Zionism and Arab-Palestinian Nationalism. Students will be engaged in historiographical debates as well as in the analyses of primary sources.
By the end of the course students should be able to understand what has been often defined as in intractable conflict and to separate myth from fact. Students will also be able to have a better understanding of the conflict and its public and media perceptions providing useful criticism to the representation of the conflict itself.

Teaching methods and modes of learning:

The teaching session will normally include lecturing, class discussion focussing on individual or group presentations, and discussion of primary sources. It is expected that all students participate actively in the seminar discussion which is a crucial element of the course. They should make their contribution through the critical assessment of the reading assignments, consideration of peer comments and presentations, and the discussion of ideas and arguments presented in class. Each student (either alone or in group) will make at least one oral presentations based on tutorial topics and readings. The oral presentation will be assigned in advance, and students are expected to make use of the required readings or other material such as videos, newspapers and other sources for that week. The presentation has to maintain a clear focus on the selected topic and offer a discussion of the relevant literature.

General Assessment:

You will be given grades in letter and percentage e.g. A (92%) – B (84%), so you will have a better idea where your grade stands and whether you are closer to the higher or lower mark.

Presentation. Students (in group or single) are required to present a topic and lead a discussion following the topic suggested on a weekly basis or to deliver a presentation and lead a discussion
on primary and secondary sources. Make-up presentation will be offered only if legitimate documentation will be provided.

Home Assignment. Students are required to submit by the end of the last class on week 9 an essay of 3,000 words (including footnotes) on one of the Research Topics suggested at the bottom of this syllabus or one proposed by the student and approved by myself. Late submission will be penalized 2% per each working day.

Book Review. Students are required to select a book from a list provided and to write an academic review by the end of week 14 of 1,000-1,500 words.

Final Exam. Students are required to answer 3 questions out of 14 questions covering the topics discussed throughout the course (2 hours allowed). No make-up exam finals will be allowed.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Definition of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98% - 100%</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93% - 97%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90% - 92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87% - 89%</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83% - 86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80% - 82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77% - 79%</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73% - 76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70% - 72%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67% - 69%</td>
<td>Passing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63% - 66%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60% - 62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
<td>Failing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coursework submission procedures:
Essays must be submitted to me by the end of class on Week 9. A copy MUST be submitted by email.

Late submission of essays will be penalised by the loss of 2 percentage marks per working day.

Attendance Regulations: Students are strongly advised to attend all lectures and tutorials or seminars for the course. Attendance is required for at least 50% . Attendance registers will be maintained.

Reminder on the University Policy on Academic Integrity
The University is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students are expected to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students should familiarize themselves with these policies (http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php) and avoid any behavior that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts, and participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in a mark of zero for an assignment or a grade of F for the entire course. Students must read the Official University Policy Manual for definitions of academic dishonesty (http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php).
**Plagiarism:** No student shall intentionally or knowingly submit the work of another as one’s own. To avoid plagiarism, students should not use another person’s words, ideas, images, or data without proper acknowledgement.

**Cheating:** No student shall intentionally use or attempt to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, solution manuals, or other devices in any academic exercise, test, or quiz.

**Special Needs**  
Students who require accommodation in this course due to a disability are advised to discuss their needs with the Disability Support Services, 117 Seal Hall, 298-2512 (phone) or 298-1856 (TTY), and to advise the instructor accordingly.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Please familiarise with**

- maps and atlases of the region
- the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. This is an invaluable source of consultation, particularly the 2nd edition. Entries are arranged according to Middle Eastern terms, i.e. you will find the Ottoman reforms under “Tanzimat” and not under “reforms”, Islamic reform under “islah”, party under “hizb” etc. If in doubt you can always ask
- journals and reviews dealing with the modern history of the Near and Middle East. The most important ones are: *International Journals of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES), *Middle Eastern Studies* (MES) and *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (BJMES), all available on JSTOR. It is quite useful to consult them regularly as much of current scholarly debates take place in journals
- News from BBC, NYT, The Guardian, the Independent, Haaretz (English Version), Al Jazeera (English)
- Jerusalem Quarterly and Journal of Palestine Studies

**Books recommended for purchase:**

- William Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, (*3rd* edition or latest one)

**Books suggested**


**Westernonline**

You will have a WesternOnline companion site available for this course and **you must check it regularly** (at least twice a week). I will post announcements, lecture notes, calendar, grades, class materials, readings, external links and other useful materials. I also recommend using this tool to communicate with the other students of the course. Take advantage of WesternOnline as it will be your main companion for this course.

**Programme**

**1 The Middle East an Introduction**  
Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 1-56

**2 The Modern Middle East**  
Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 57-148  
Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, Ch. 5  
R. Ovendale, *The Middle East Since 1914* (very useful for chronology, definitions and biographies)

**3 Palestine under the Ottomans**  
Smith, *Palestine*, 12-52  
Mansour & Fawaz Ed. *Transformed Landscapes* (American University in Cairo: Cairo, 2009), Ch. 6  
Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, Ch. 3-4  
R. Mazza, *Jerusalem from the Ottomans to the British*, Ch. 1  

**4 World War One, the Balfour Declaration and the Peace Settlements**  
Smith, *Palestine*, 53-105  
D. Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace* (any edition), Ch. 22-25 and Ch. 32-34  

*Seminar: The Balfour Declaration and the invention of the Mandate*  
Renton, *The Zionist Masquerade*, p. 58-72

5 Competing Nationalism: Zionism and Arab Nationalism
Smith, *Palestine*, 106-118
Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, Prologue

6 The British Mandate
Cleveland, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Ch. 13
Smith, *Palestine*, 118-164
Tom Segev, *One Palestine Complete* (Holt, 2001), Ch. 14-16.

7 1948 The War for Palestine
Smith, *Palestine*, 165-221

*Seminar: Nakba or Independence?*

8 Palestinian Refugees and the Status of Jerusalem
Smith, *Palestine*, 222-235 (Document 5.1)
Rogan and Shlaim ed. *The War for Palestine*, Ch. 2.
B. Wasserstein, *Divided Jerusalem* (Profile Books, 2002), Ch. 4-5.
T. Mayer, ‘Jerusalem in and out of focus’ in *Jerusalem Idea and Reality*, 224-244.
9 Suez Canal Crisis: the Cold War, Nasser and the Conflict
Smith, *Palestine*, 235-258
Cleveland, *A History*, Ch. 15.
Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, Ch. 4-5.
Mansfield, *Nasser’s Egypt* (1965)

(HOME ASSIGNMENT DUE)

10 Road to 1967: war of attrition
Smith, *Palestine*, 259-299.

11 The paradox of Peace: the October War 1973: Camp David, the Cold War and Oil concerns
Smith, *Palestine*, 300-344 / 350-355

*The Syrian Bride* (Movie)

12 Lebanon Civil War and the wider region
Smith, *Palestine*, 261-266 / 345-393
Cleveland, *A History*, Ch 16 (part on Lebanon) Ch 18 (part on Lebanon)

*Waltz With Bashir* (Movie)

13 Israeli policies and the First Intifada
Smith, *Palestine*, 394-419.
Cleveland, *A History*, Ch. 17
Efram Inbar, “Israeli National Security 1973-1996” (Western on-line)

14 Creating a ‘Peace Process’: from Madrid to Oslo
Smith, *Palestine*, 419-479

*Paradise Now* (Movie)
(Book Review Due)

15 **Camp David II and the Second Intifada**
Smith, *Palestine*, Ch. 11 and Epilogue.
Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, Ch. 15 and Epilogue.
H. Aga & R. Malley “Camp David: the Tragedy of Errors” (Western on-line)
J. Pressman “From Oslo to Taba: What Went Wrong?” (Western on-line)
G. Usher “The State-Building project: What Went Wrong? (Western on-line)

Research Topics:

- What was the significance of the Balfour Declaration?
- To what extent were the Palestinians responsible for the civil war in Lebanon?
- To what extent should Hizbollah or Hamas be regarded as ‘terrorist’ organizations?
- Did the British fulfill their obligations during the Mandate period?
- Why did Camp David II fail?
- What was the role of the United States in the 1956 Suez crisis?
- What was the impact of the 1948 war?
- How would you characterize Jordan’s relationship with Israel?
- Was Ottoman Palestine ‘a land without a people’?