1) **Instructor:** Michael Bell

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Office: Room 5117 River Building  
Office Hours: Wednesday 18:00-20:00 or by prior appointment. Email and phone welcome.

2) **Course Description:**

This course constitutes an exploration of the issues which affect the Middle East today, examining conflict management and resolution, domestic and regional instability and the influence and role of outside players, emphasizing cause, effect and consequence. How these challenges affect the international community through war, terrorism, oil and the persistence of the Arab-Israeli dispute will be discussed.

Success will depend on student’s reading of relevant texts and active class participation. The instructor will provide context, background and lessons learned from his own experience.

3) **Readings:**

Readings are available online, on two-hour reserve in the library and from the bookstore:  

*State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, Roger Owen, Routledge, 2004, is recommended as a background text.

Specific readings for each class will be provided in the full syllabus.

4) **Methodology:**

The first two hours of each class will consist of one oral presentation by (a) pre-selected student(s) followed by a wide-ranging class discussion of the topic.

Emphasis will be put on the analysis and synthesis of facts and ideas.

The third hour will be devoted to discussion of current issues as they effect the implications for conflict resolution. **Outside speakers** will participate. Confirmed to date are: Michael Atallah (x2), John Bell, Roula El Rifai, Thomas Juneau, Rafi Barak, Paul Adams

Grades will be based on the ability to:

- examine critically, and successfully integrate, separate events into a larger whole, to demonstrate context, meaning and implication;  

- explain why events happen, their implications for present and future developments, and why political actors comport themselves as they do;
- assess the role of ideology, narrative, religion, legitimacy, economic and social factors and governance in determining outcomes;

- appreciate the importance of needs based analysis and perspective in problem solving.

If more than two sessions are missed without appropriate documentation, the particular student’s participation mark will be lowered by one letter grade.

5) Evaluation:

10% - weekly summaries – 2 pages double-spaced to be handed in at the beginning of each class.

20% - seminar presentation – 30 to 45 minutes with clear, convincing, lucid, well organized and compelling arguments, devoid of argot with due attention to grammar and sentence structure, with minimal reliance on power points, videos; the presenter will be required to submit a bibliography with a minimum of 9 sources, in addition to the set course readings; 7 of these readings must be academic.

20% - class participation – active participation, demonstrated knowledge, the ability to critique, synthesize, analyze, establish context, and establish perspective and relevance

20% - mid-term exam on problem solving: students will be asked to recommend conflict management and resolution options to solutions to actual situations which have actually arisen in the last to decades. The reference background text will be: Managing a Mediation Process, Amy Smith, United States Institute of Peace, Washington, 2008.

30% - research paper: topic to be addressed: The Role of Identity and its Consequences in one of the following countries: Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia.

6) Requirements for written material include:

i) Type face: New Times Roman 12
ii) Footnotes: Chicago style
iii) Pages numbered in the lower right hand corner
iv) Late assignments: A deduction of 2% per assignment per each day
v) Word count minus footnotes on all written material, save weekly summaries.

7) Grade Determination:

As per the University norm, raw scores will be converted to letter grades based on University regulations for grading in graduate classes as attached.

8) Seminar Subjects

- Introduction – 03 Sept

Readings:

a) “Middle East Realities and Western Responses,” Michael Bell, Canadian Global Affairs Institute, July 2015: http://www.cgai.ca/middle_east_realities_and_western_responses
• **Legitimacy – 10 Sept**

Readings:


(Atallah)

• **Authoritarianism – 17 Sept**

Readings:


c) “Islam and Authoritarianism”, Steven Fish, World Politics, January 2002, 55 (1), pgs. 4-37. [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/worldpolitics/v055/55.1fish.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/worldpolitics/v055/55.1fish.html)

(El Rifai)

• **Political Economy – 24 Sept**

Readings:

a) “Oil and Political Economy in the International Relations of the Middle East”, Giacomo Luciani, in International Relations in the Middle East, Louise Fawcett ed., Oxford University Press, 2009, pgs. 81-101.


• **Ethno-nationalism – 01 Oct**


  http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/the_middle_east_journal/toc/mej.64.4.html

  http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2013/04/sunni-shia-divide-abdo

• **Ideology & Political Islam – 08 Oct**

  Readings:


  http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67696/shadi-hamid/the-rise-of-the-islamists

  http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/60445/mahmood-mamdani/whither-political-islam

  http://cssaame.dukejournals.org/content/29/3/544

• **Extremism – 15 Oct**

  Readings:

  a) “The Islamic State’s Appeal,” Scott Stewart, *Stratfor*, 26 March 2015:  
  https://outlook.office365.com/owa/?realm=uwindsor.ca&cdn=1&ver=16.817.13.1742256#path=/mail


  c) “Is the Islamic State Now Evolving into a Transnational Movement?” Paul Rogers, *Oxford Research Group*, 18 May 2015:  
  http://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/publications/middle_east/islamic_state_now_evolving_transnational_movement

• **The Arab Spring - 22 Oct**

Readings:


(J. Bell, Barak)

• **Egypt: A Case Study – 05 Nov**

Readings:


• **Syria: A Case Study – 12 Nov**

Readings:


- **Iraq: A Case Study – 19 Nov**

Readings:


c) *Iraq’s Jihadi Jack-in-the Box*, International Crisis Group, 20 June 2014  


- **Iranian Foreign Policy – 26 Nov**

Readings:


*(Atallah)*

- **Tunisia: the Possible Exception and Reasons for It – 03 Dec**

Readings: *to follow*

*Remaining Speakers: (Thomas Juneau, Paul Adams and others to be selected to be slotted in.)*