Mediterranean Politics (2016)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Title: Mediterranean Politics
Prerequisites: None
Hours: 50
Number of Credits: 5
Type of Course: POL
Term: Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer
Language: English
Instructor: Dr. Hiram José Irizarry Osorio
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Course Description

This course explores issues of development, the state, and democracy within the Mediterranean region with a special attention to Southern Europe, North Africa, Turkey, and the “Balkans” (from a comparative perspective). In this exploration we will pay attention to issues of Modernity and its significance and connection to development, the state, and democracy. The religion-politics duality is of essence throughout the semester; and the role and relevance of ontological thinking for the purpose of understanding and explaining social reality will be a common intellectual thread throughout the semester. A cultural component (films, related to Mediterranean political issues) will be part of this course.

Learning Outcomes

To familiarize students with current political realities throughout the Mediterranean Region; specially, the struggle to construct a secular state, democracy, and promote development.

Assessment Criteria

Daily class attendance, four critical essays (70%), an in-class final presentation (20%), and a critical essay assessing a classmate's work (10%).

Sessions

Session 1: Introduction to the course on the politics of development.

Session 2: Social Science: Cartesian or Quantum?

Alexander Wendt (1999), “Four sociologies of international politics” in Social Theory in International Politics, pp. 1-44 (FOCUS on pages 22-40)
Session 3: Conceptualizing Development & Mediterranean Context

  “Prologue” {pp. 13-32}

Session 4: Modernity, Religion, & The case of Israel


Session 5: Northern Africa's Revolts, Arab Democracies, & Turkey

  “Introduction,” {pp. 1-7}
  “Turkey’s Modernization and Democratization in Context,” {pp. 9-23}
  “Articulating Citizenship and Identity: The Kurdish Question,” {pp. 291-318}

Session 6: Political Islam & Why Muslims Need a Secular State?


  Ch. 1 “Introduction: Why Muslims Need a Secular State,” {pp. 1-44}

**Session 7: The Balkans, the Nation-State, & Violence**


  “Introduction: Names,” {pp. xxv-xliii}

  Ch. 4, “Building the Nation-State,” {pp. 113-143}


  “Epilogue: On violence,” {pp. 145-156}


  “Chapter 6: Allegro: Divine {pp. 151-173}

**Session 8: Spirituality, Social Justice & Violence**


  “Epilogue: Adagio,” pp. {174-183}

**Session 9: In-class film, TBA.**

**Session 10: Students’ In-class presentations.**

**Session 11: Final Assessment day and course's wrap-up**

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ASSIGN ADDITIONAL READINGS, MODIFY THE READING ASSIGNMENTS, AND/OR MODIFY GRADING ACTIVITIES.