

Class Meetings: Tuesdays & Fridays, 1:30-2:45pm (Eastern time), Denny 203

Instructor: Ed Webb ([webbe@dickinson.edu](mailto:webbe@dickinson.edu)—pronouns: he/him/his)

Library Liaison: [Ian Boucher](mailto:boucheri@dickinson.edu) (boucheri@dickinson.edu)

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-2pm, Fridays 10am-12noon or by request—Denny 202

## Objectives

The course presents an examination of key factors and events in the formation of the modern Middle East and North Africa (MENA) state system and evolving patterns of conflict and cooperation in the region. Students will apply different analytical lenses to issues such as sustainability, Iraq's wars since 1980, and the changing place of the region in global politics and economics.

*Understand the big picture and the brushstrokes*

By the end of the course participants will have a grounding in the most significant trends and events of the international politics of the region in the twentieth century and, through their research, will understand a particular topic in some depth. They will be able to place current events in the region in a critical context. They should be equipped to pursue more advanced study, such as upper-level seminars or independent research, on topics in the politics of the region.

*Be a fox and a hedgehog*

As a writing in the discipline course, the course aims to develop students' writing and critical reading skills. By the end of the course participants will: identify and demonstrate discipline-specific writing conventions; understand that writing is a recursive process; and develop an effective writing process.

*Communicate effectively*

What do *you* want to be able to do?

## Course Learning Goals

1. Students will learn to apply relevant international relations theories effectively to analyze patterns of conflict, cooperation, and other interactions between states and other trans-national actors in the Middle East and North Africa.
2. Students will understand particular aspects of the international politics of the Middle East and North Africa in some depth, through focused course segments and individual research.
3. Students will identify and demonstrate discipline-specific writing conventions. Students will understand that writing is a recursive process and develop an effective writing process.
4. Students will (further) develop critical thinking skills and substantive knowledge about how the UN's Sustainable Development Goals can improve the human condition in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as obstacles to such progress.

## Course Materials and Process

The following books are required and available via the College Bookstore:

Fawcett, Louise (ed.). 2016. *International Relations of the Middle East (4th Edition)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gause, III, F. Gregory. 2009. *The International Relations of the Persian Gulf*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Also recommended, particularly for students who have not taken History 122, is:

Cleveland, William. 2004. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Boulder, CO: Westview. (Or later editions)

All other materials, including maps and other audio-visual media, will be made available through the course Moodle site or [Diigo group](#).

*Additional topical online material may be assigned via Moodle or Diigo throughout the course, and the syllabus is subject to change. **It is students' responsibility to check Moodle frequently**. Notify the instructor of any bad links or corrupted documents immediately.*

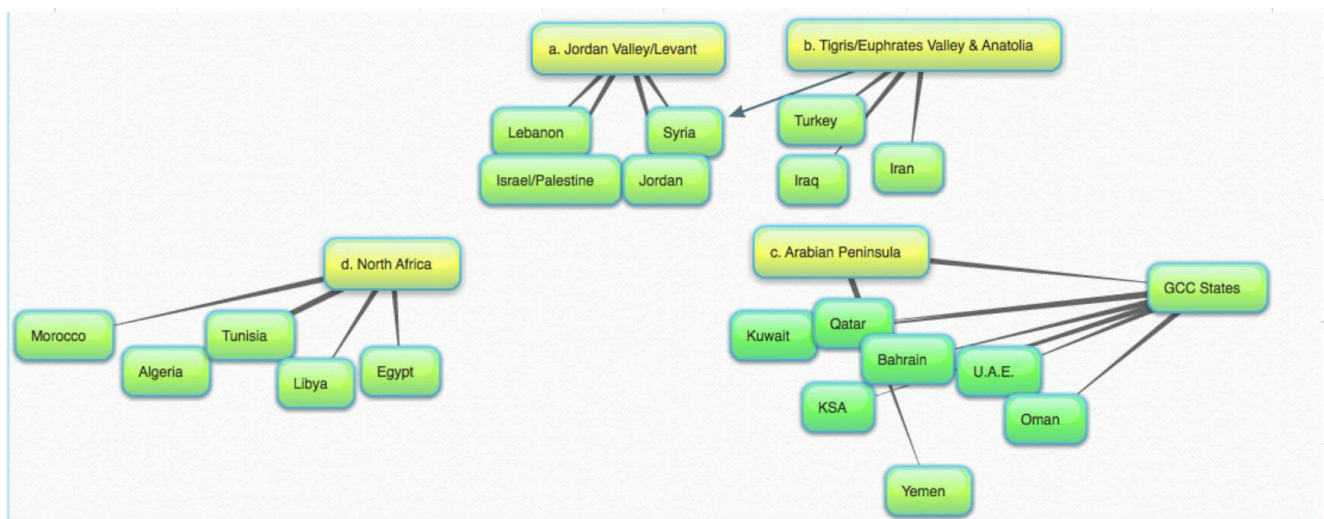
Adobe Reader and other programs permit you to add notes and highlights and save the annotated document to a local or network drive. Whether you use these electronic ways of annotating or not, you should **actively take notes on what you read, and separately note questions you have about the readings**.

*The role of place in this course*

**Students will familiarize themselves with the map of the region and should be ready to be tested on it after the second week of class. Pay particular attention to states, borders, and capitals and significant features such as seas, deserts, and major rivers.**

A significant challenge in understanding the politics of a particular region of the world lies in the tension between the universal and the particular. The course will seek to apply theoretical approaches developed by scholars of international relations (IR) that, in most cases, aspire to universal applicability. Discerning the extent to which these do or do not apply to regional and sub-regional systems in MENA, and why, will be an important part of our work in the course. We will be aided in this by self-consciousness about our own political, social, economic and natural environment, and how these affect our perceptions.

At each stage, we ask how IR scholars think about a particular issue, how we interact with that issue, and how it plays out in MENA. Sometimes there will be assigned tasks that support this three-way thinking; at other times the venues for working it out will be class discussion and the blogs. **Borders, ideologies, international cooperation and resource constraints are not phenomena that only affect other people. Understanding how they affect us will help us grasp the realities of processes in MENA.**



Each participant will specialize in one thematic area *and* one geographic area. This will mean they have a particular responsibility to work with others covering the same area and theme to ensure the class is kept abreast of important new developments. It will also provide the theme for the final research paper. Themes correspond broadly with some of the main concerns of different schools of IR scholarship, as follows:

- I. Borders, Nation-states, and security—geopolitics, the particular focus of Realism
- II. Identities, Cultures, and Ideologies—particular foci of Constructivism
- III. International Institutions—organizations, laws, trade, the particular foci of Liberalism
- IV. Resources & Sustainability—water, hydrocarbons, land, demographics, climate; factors that interact with all the others, the concerns of political economists, among others

The geographical division of the region for the purposes of this course is inevitably somewhat arbitrary, as is the delineation of MENA as a region itself, but it is organized around politically salient geophysical features as well as historical or cultural fault-lines.

- a) Jordan Valley/Levant—Lebanon, Syria, Israel/Palestine and Jordan.
- b) Tigris/Euphrates Valley & Anatolia—Turkey, Iraq and Iran (Syria is closely tied to this group also).
- c) Arabian Peninsula—Gulf Cooperation Council members and Yemen.
- d) North Africa—Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco (Sudan and Mauritania may also be considered part of this group, but will be less of a focus in this course)

## Expectations and Policies: Your Commitments

Apply and uphold Dickinson's [Community Standards](#).

Academic integrity will be taken very seriously in this course. Students who violate College rules on scholastic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action, which include the possible failure of the course and/or dismissal from the College. For a brief take on this complicated issue, follow these guidelines: 1) do your own work; clear any collaborations ahead of time and give full credit; use of ChatGPT and other text writing applications is prohibited; 2) cite your sources fully and explicitly; and 3) for quotations, use quotation marks and cite fully; for summary or paraphrase, cite fully and explicitly at the end of the relevant paragraph or sentence. For further details, please read carefully and be familiar with [the Community Standards on the Dickinson College website](#).

**Students may not share, send, post, publish, make public, or duplicate any recordings without the written authorization of those recorded. Failure to abide by these rules is a breach of privacy and a violation of copyright laws. It is furthermore considered a serious violation of Dickinson College Community Standards and subject to disciplinary action. Unless informed otherwise, students are to destroy any recordings shared by their professors at the end of the semester. Thank you for your compliance.**

*This class will require you to post to public platforms. Your posting will be publicly available on the open internet. **Use caution when posting personal information about yourself or your classmates.** You may choose to identify yourself or you can protect your identity with an alias. **You should not identify classmates without their permission, to comply with federal and other laws.** You should also not share class materials outside the class, to avoid violating copyright and other laws.*

**1. Do the reading.**

- 1) It is essential that students complete the assigned readings before the relevant class meeting, for two reasons:
  - a) lectures and class discussions will rely on participants having read actively, i.e., read, absorbed, and interrogated the assigned texts—there will be time to explain and discuss the material covered in the readings, but not to repeat it; a substantial portion of the final grade for the course will be based on active participation in class;
  - b) if students drop behind significantly in the readings, it will be difficult or impossible to catch up, due to the cumulative nature of the concepts and substance in the course.

**2. Attend class and participate.** Showing up and being actively engaged are essential for successful learning. Less importantly, they will also affect your grade.

- a. Active engagement will require you to complete readings and view presentations before coming to class. Class discussion will be based on the assigned readings and presentation. It follows that your participation will be much less effective without that preparation. The participation element of your grade will take this into account.
- b. Class meetings may be recorded for those who cannot attend a session due to illness or other unavoidable barrier. But please do your utmost to attend: your active participation will make a significant difference to your learning. If you cannot attend, *please [email me](#)* so I understand your circumstances.
- c. Other important ways to contribute to the class include posting questions or comments on the forum on Moodle and posting to your blog regularly.

**3. Follow the regional news.**

- a. Take a few minutes a few times a week to follow the news stories on the region through a variety of credible sources. Supplement your preferred general news source with some competing sources,

including some from outside North America. U.S. media are, in general, excessively focused on local (i.e., U.S.) news. Check out a podcast. Diversify! For recommendations of generally relevant news sources, podcasts, etc., or if you want to follow specific countries or topics, ask the instructor or librarian.

- b. Use [the course Diigo group](#) (see explanation on Moodle) to share and comment on noteworthy articles, blog posts etc., and read items shared by the instructor and others. Activity on Diigo is optional, but it will improve your participation grade. The Diigo group for the course already contains many years of relevant articles, searchable by keyword(s).

#### 4. Write well.

- a. The main writing requirement, on which **40% of the final grade** will depend, is a research paper.
  - i. Paper topics must be agreed with the instructor and will reflect students' assignments to geographical and thematic groups.
  - ii. The target length of the paper is 10-12 typed pages, double spaced, 12-point font, including references in **Chicago Author-Date (in-text) Citation Style**. Variations from that target in either direction might be necessary, depending on the particular question: discuss with the instructor.
  - iii. Students must agree the topic with the instructor by the end of week 4 and can then begin research in depth.
  - iv. Students are required to consult with the Information Literacy Librarian, Ian Boucher, for assistance in identifying reliable sources.
  - v. Students will submit an annotated bibliography in week 6 and a thesis statement and paper outline in week 10. The final paper is due by **12 noon on Monday, 15 May**, as set by the Registrar.



- vi. Students should circulate a first draft for feedback from their geographic group no later than the first class meeting of week 13 for peer review and feedback.
  - vii. Each student will discuss the feedback in a one-on-one conversation with the instructor before making revisions, which must reflect that discussion. Discussions may be in office hours or at another time by appointment. **Students must also consult the Writing Center** at some point in the process and can be a valuable resource to assist with revisions: see The Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center below.
  - viii. This process is designed to help you produce a paper of the expected standard: failure to adhere to the process will result in a lower grade.
- b. All students will maintain a blog.
- i. Whether or not there is a specific prompt, the expectation is a minimum total of 5 posts by the last week of classes. Detailed instructions will be available on Moodle and we will discuss in class.
  - ii. As well as writing regularly about issues raised in the course and current events in the international politics of the Middle East and North Africa, students will read and comment on each other's blogs. The expectation is that reading critically and commenting will be a regular habit. *It will not be possible to earn the highest grades for blogging without having commented on others' blogs.* You will find more detailed instructions on blogging, commenting, and assessment on Moodle.
  - iii. **The point is to write regularly: DO NOT put off writing blog posts in the hope of making up the deficit later.**
- c. **Citations throughout the course should be in Chicago in-text (Author/Date) format—guidance can be found on the library website and in the Chicago Manual of Style, particularly Chapter 15.**

- d. See the **rubric** below on how I will assess your writing.
- e. *You must read and heed George Orwell’s short essay, “Politics and the English Language” (follow the link on Moodle), before you undertake any writing for this course. **Apply his six rules.***

	<b>Exceeds Standard (grade range A to B+)</b>	<b>Meets Standard (grade range B to C)</b>	<b>Fails to Meet Standard (grade range C- to F)</b>
<b>Substance (50%)</b>	Builds and sustains a substantial argument, fully supported by compelling evidence	Presents a reasonable if possibly unoriginal argument, somewhat supported by relevant evidence	Makes a trivial or weak argument backed with little relevant evidence
<b>Organization (20%)</b>	Structure makes reader's task easy, renders argument transparent	Structure conveys argument without too great an effort on reader's part	Weak structure undermines clarity
<b>Style (10%)</b>	Authorial voice suits task and disciplinary audience, is engaging and persuasive	Style communicates clearly, even if not ideally suited to task and disciplinary audience	Tone inappropriate for task or audience, undermines argument
<b>Mechanics: Prose (10%)</b>	Correct prose	Mostly correct prose	Widespread errors
<b>Citations (10%)</b>	Proper citations in required Chicago author/date format	A few citation errors	Significant citation errors

How to get help with the course

COMMUNICATE!

If you have difficulty understanding any aspect of the course—the readings, concepts discussed in class, assignments, what is expected of you—please contact me *as soon as possible*. A meeting will be most successful. Emails sent during normal working hours (9:00-17:00 Eastern Time) will get a rapid response. Other resources include the librarians and your fellow students.

Office hours meetings can be helpful at any time: please don't be cautious about making use of them. At certain times you will be *required* to meet with me during office hours or at another mutually convenient time, including to discuss your plan to implement peer feedback on your paper. The classroom and my office are both on the second floor of Denny Hall, which has **an elevator to enter the building at the north end and a second elevator to access all floors from the middle of the basement level**. If you require the use of an elevator to access the first or second floors, please let me know. If there is ever a malfunction with either elevator, we will be notified by email, and I can discuss with ADS our options to make the seminar meeting accessible or we can arrange to meet somewhere else that day if we have an office hours appointment.

Students can find a wealth of strategic academic success tools (like weekly planners, semester calendars, and much more) by going online to [www.dickinson.edu/SOAR](http://www.dickinson.edu/SOAR) or to Old West's Lower Level (aka "the OWLL"). SOAR stands for **S**trategies, **O**rganization, & **A**chievement **R**esources, and there you'll find apps, tips, and other resources related to organization, study skills, memory strategies, note-taking, test-taking, and more. You'll find strategies for managing your time and well-being, as well as a schedule of academic success workshops offered throughout the semester. If you'd like to attend a workshop or request one-on-one assistance with developing a strategy for a manageable and academically successful semester, email [SOAR@dickinson.edu](mailto:SOAR@dickinson.edu).

#### Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical condition– that would hinder your access to

learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to [www.dickinson.edu/ADS](http://www.dickinson.edu/ADS), email [access@dickinson.edu](mailto:access@dickinson.edu), call (717)245-1734, or go to the ADS office in Room 005 of Old West, Lower Level (aka "the OWLL").

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please follow the guidance at [www.dickinson.edu/AccessPlan](http://www.dickinson.edu/AccessPlan) for disclosing the accommodations for which you are eligible and scheduling a meeting with me as soon as possible so that we can discuss your accommodations and finalize your Access Plan. If you will be using any test-taking accommodations in this class, be sure to enter all test dates into your Access Plan in advance of our meeting.

### [The Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center](#)

The MWC consists of both English and foreign language writing tutoring services. The English writing tutors work with native and nonnative speakers of English, and the foreign language writing tutors work with writers of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Writers of all levels and abilities need feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson's trained peer writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, figure out your professor's preferred documentation style, understand and respond to professor feedback, edit your writing – among other things. **Reminder: because this is a WiD course you must consult the MWC at least once in your paper-writing process. Failing to do this will negatively affect the paper grade.**

### [Assessment](#)

The final grade will be calculated as follows: participation—10%; blogging and commenting on blogs—15%; midterm exam—20%; group presentation—15%; research paper—40%.

You will get midterm feedback after Spring Break and may ask for feedback at any time on your performance in any area.

## International Politics of MENA: Spring 2023

### Schedule

#### Week 1

Tuesday, 24 January ~ Introduction to the course, the syllabus, the materials

Friday, 27 January ~ Orientation

*Students should study the maps included in the Moodle site*

Fawcett Chapter 1

\*Goldstein, Joshua S. & Jon C. Pevehouse. 2009. "Fundamentals of IR Theory" in *Principles of International Relations*. Pearson.

#### Week 2

Tuesday, 31 January ~ *Defensive Modernization, Colonialism & the State System*

Fawcett Chapter 2

President Wilson's Speech "The Fourteen Points" (via Moodle)

Friday, 3 February

Instructor away: Research Resources and Strategies (Ian Boucher: Library Classroom 2)

#### Week 3

Tuesday, 7 February ~ *The MENA System in the post-WWII world*

Fawcett Chapters 3 & 4

Friday, 10 February ~ *Us and Them: US & European interactions with MENA*

Said, Edward. 2000. "Arabs, Islam and the Dogmas of the West" in Alexander Lyon Macfie, ed., *Orientalism: A Reader* NYU: 104-5

Dallmayr, Fred. 2000. "Exit from Orientalism" in *ibid.*, 365-8

Fawcett Chapters 16 & 17

**First Blog Post due: "Where I live: where they live"**

#### Week 4

Tuesday, 14 February ~ *Thinking Systematically About Conflict and Cooperation in the Middle East; the problem of exceptionalism*

Fawcett Chapters 7 & 10

\* Gause, F. Gregory III. 1999. "Systemic Approaches to Middle East International Relations" *International Studies Review* 1 (1): 11-31.

\* Sørli, Mirjam E, Nils Petter Gleditsch & Håvard Strand. 2005. "Why Is There So Much Conflict in the Middle East?" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49 (1): 141-165

\* Walt, Stephen M. 1988. "Testing Theories of Alliance Formation: The Case of Southwest Asia" *International Organization*, 42 (2): 275-316

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Friday, 17 February ~ 'Global War on Terror'

Huntington, Samuel P. 1993. "The Clash of Civilizations?" *Foreign Affairs* 72 (3).

Sen, Amartya. 2006. "What Clash of Civilizations?" *Slate*, March 29.

Byman, Daniel. 2007. "US Counter-terrorism Options: A Taxonomy" *Survival* 49 (3): 121-150.

\*Cole, Teju. 2015. "Unmournable Bodies" *The New Yorker* January 9.

\**Executive Summary of the 9/11 Report*

**Second Blog post due: the 'others' in our communities**

**Agree research paper topic with Instructor by this date**

Week 5

Tuesday, 21 February ~ *Islam, the Umma and Muslim identities*

Fawcett chapter 8

Ayoob, Mohammed. 2007. "Challenging Hegemony: Political Islam and the North-South Divide" *International Studies Review*, 9: 629-643

Friday, 24 February ~ *Regional Integration*

Fawcett chapter 9

Lustick, Ian S. 1997. "The Absence of Middle Eastern Great Powers: Political "Backwardness" in Historical Perspective" *International Organization*, 51 (4): 653-683

Henwood, Doug. 1993. "Global Economic Integration: The Missing Middle East" *Middle East Report*, 184: 7-8+31

\* Humphrey, Michael. 1993 "Migrants, Workers and Refugees: The Political Economy of Population Movements in the Middle East" *Middle East Report*, 181: 2-7.

\* Carapico, Sheila. 2001. "Euro-Med: European Ambitions in the Mediterranean" *Middle East Report*, 220: 24-28

Week 6

Tuesday, 28 February ~ *Israel/Palestine in regional context*

Fawcett chapter 12

Friday, 3 March

Fawcett chapter 13

**Submit research paper annotated bibliography via email**

Week 7

Tuesday, 7 March ~ *Proliferation in the Middle East*

Stork, Joe. 1995. "The Middle East Arms Bazaar after the Gulf War" *Middle East Report*, 197: 14-17+19

- \* Schneider, Barry R. 1994. "Nuclear Proliferation and Counter-Proliferation: Policy Issues and Debates" *Mershon International Studies Review*, 38 (2): 209-234  
**Selected news & opinion articles on Iran's nuclear program will be posted via Diigo**

Friday, 10 March ~ Midterm Examination

—Spring Break—

The second half of the semester will largely be devoted to two issues: sustainable development in the context of climate change and other environmental challenges, with a focus on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and the wars in the Gulf sub-region, centered on Iraq. **Groups will be present on selected UN SDGs as they affect their chosen groups of states in Week 11: detailed instructions and rubric will be supplied via Moodle.** Throughout, we will seek to apply analytical concepts and knowledge acquired in the first half of the semester.

Week 8

Tuesday, 21 March ~ *Introduction to the UN SDGS*

Explore the site <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> Gain broad familiarity and particularly study goals 6, 7, and 16, which will be among the more important in your group presentations

Friday, 24 March ~ *Water*

Barnes, Jessica. 2020. *Water in the Middle East: a primer*. MERIP

Dolatyar, Mostafa & Tim S. Gray. 2000. "The Politics of Water Scarcity in the Middle East" *Environmental Politics* 9 (3): 65-88

Morrisette, Jason J & Douglas A. Borer. 2004. "Where Oil and Water Do Mix: Environmental Scarcity and Future Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa" *Parameters* (Winter): 86-101

Selby, Jan. 2005. "The Geopolitics of Water in the Middle East: fantasies and realities" *Third World Quarterly* 26, (2): 329-349.

\* Fisher, Franklin M. & Annette Huber-Lee. 2006. "Economics, Water Management, and Conflict Resolution in the Middle East and Beyond" *Environment* 48 (3): 26-41

**Blog task: water diary**

Week 9

Tuesday, 28 ~ *Energy Politics of the Middle East*

Fawcett chapter 5

Ross, Michael Lewin. 2001 "Does Oil Hinder Democracy?" *World Politics*, 53, (3): 325-361.

\* Munif, Abdelrahman. 1987. *Cities of Salt*. NYC: Random House: 18-46

Friday, 31 March ~ *The SDGs in MENA*

Al Taweel, Adel, Ugursal, V. Ismet, and Boodlal, Donnie. 2015. "Sustainable Management of Climate Change: The Case of the Middle East and North Africa Region" *Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development* 1(1).

Saidin, Mohd Irwan Syazli, and Jodie O'Neill. 2022. "Climate Change and the Diversification of Green Social Capital in the International Political Economy of the Middle East and North Africa: A Review Article" *Sustainability* 14 (7): 3756.

\*Gerged, Ali M., Christopher J. Cowton, and Eshani S. Beddewela. 2017. "Towards Sustainable Development in the Arab Middle East and North Africa Region: A Longitudinal Analysis of Environmental Disclosure in Corporate Annual Reports." *Business Strategy and the Environment* 27: 572-587

Week 10

Tuesday, 4 April ~ *SDGs in MENA: Discussion and Synthesis*

Brief, timely readings may be assigned to stimulate discussion

***Submit Thesis Statement and paper outline***

Friday, 7 April ~ Group Work Session

Each group will work together in class on the presentation for next week. Instructor will be on hand for consultation

Week 11

Tuesday, 11 April

Two group presentations, with discussion and questions.

Friday, 14 April

Two group presentations, with discussion and questions.

Week 12

Tuesday, 18 April ~ *The Gulf (sub-)Regional System*

Gause chapters 1-2

Friday, 21 April ~ *Iran and Iraq from Revolution to Inter-state War*

Gause chapter 3



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Week 13

Tuesday, 25 April ~ *1990 to 2003: Iraq against the World*

Gause chapters 4-5

***Circulate first draft of research paper to geographic peer group, copied to instructor***

Friday, 28 April ~ *The United States and the Gulf: Where Next?*

Gause chapters 6-7

Fawcett chapter 14

\* Kristol, William and Robert Kagan. 1996. "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August.

**Blog task: Gulf futures**

Week 14

Tuesday, 2 May ~ Coming Flashpoints: Strategic Sea-lanes: Bosphorous, Red Sea and Gulf  
Selected, timely materials will be posted nearer the date

Friday, 5 May ~ Review and Conclusions

Final papers due NO LATER THAN 12 noon on Monday, 15 May—inflexible, set by Registrar