

POLI 319 – ISSUES IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS
PROTEST AND CHANGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Instructor: Michael J. Carpenter, PhD

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1:30 – 2:20 pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, September 4 – December 4
Cornett Building, room A221

Course outline subject to change before Sept. 4

COURSE OVERVIEW

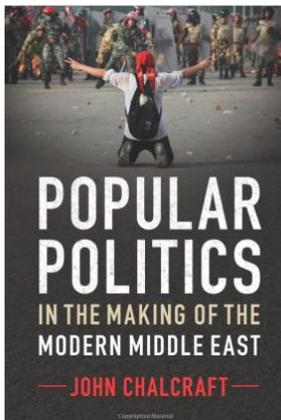
The purpose of this course is to examine popular protest as a force for change in the Middle East. Protest movements (variously understood as civil resistance, social movements, contentious politics, civic activism, popular struggle, people power, and more) have long played a leading role in shaping the Middle East, despite Western stereotypes of a region defined by top-down politics and armed conflict. Readings and lectures cover several case studies, including the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, the first Palestinian Intifada of 1987-1991, the Arab Spring of 2010-2012, among others. Readings and lectures also provide a basic background into the politics of the Middle East, plus an introduction to theories of change, with an emphasis on civil resistance theory.

The course is structured around the following primary questions:

- How have protest movements changed the Middle East?
- How do social scientists understand the dynamics of protest and change?

Secondary questions include: What are the major political fault lines in the Middle East? How is the Middle East understood and portrayed in the West? What is the legacy of colonialism? What is the relationship between protest and violence? What is the role of Islam in popular politics? What do the readings, case studies, and theories suggest about the limits of protest and change?

By the end of the course, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of change through popular struggle, with reference to Middle East cases and political theory, as well as familiarity with the readings and a basic grasp of the political landscape of the Middle East. Prior exposure to Middle East issues, politics, history, or culture is an asset for this course, but not a prerequisite.



REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

John Chalcraft

Popular Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East

Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016

Available at UVic Bookstore approximately \$30

Additional required texts will be provided.