

Advanced Topics in Middle East Politics
United Nations and the Middle East

Spring- 2016
Course # 01:685:496:01

Instructor: Hamid Abdeljaber
Thurs.: 6:40-9:30
Room: Tillett 209
Office Hours: Thursday 5:00-6:00 p.m. or by appointment
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Attendance is obligatory. Attendance is strictly checked every class. Repeated absence will affect your grade. One absence is permitted per semester. Every other absence, for health and other emergencies, must be reported by you to me.

Excessive unjustified absences could lead to failing the course.

Course Description

This course is designed to get students of Middle Eastern studies and political science gets acquainted with the heavy involvement of the United Nations in the Middle East since its inception. It will be held as a seminar for graduate and junior and senior undergraduate students. Students will be divided into study groups and each group will focus on one of the major Middle East issues that were examined by the United Nations throughout its history. The group will develop a position paper regarding the subject matter and deliver it in the form of an end of term presentation and research paper.

The course includes a trip to the UN Headquarters to meet with UN experts and diplomats who deal with the topics in question.

The seminar will cover the following issues:

1. UN- Goals , organs, developments, crises and challenges
2. UN and in the 21st Century and the mechanism for conflict resolution
3. The Arab Israeli conflict: The oldest item on the UN Agenda

The starting point of the debate will be the “Partition Plan” in 1947 and the first Arab-Israeli war. It will then move through the major stages of the this conflict such as: the Suez Crisis of 1956, the 1967 War and the debate that led to the adoption of SC Resolution 242 and the 1973 War and the adoption of SC Resolution 338.

The debate will then advance to cover the Camp David Accords, the Palestinian *intifada* all the way to the adoption in 2003 of the “Two-State Resolution” 1515. Jordan Syria and Egypt will be covered in the discussion.

4. Lebanon and Israel: 1978, 1982 and 2006 incursion and wars

As a separate issue from the Arab-Israeli conflict, yet interlinked with it, Lebanon scored high on the UN agenda. Resolution 425 (1978) called on Israel to withdraw from South Lebanon, Resolution 1559 (2004) called on foreign forces to leave Lebanon, Resolution 1595 (2005) called for the investigation of the assassination of former Lebanese PM Rafic Al Hariri and many other political and opinion leaders. Resolution 1701 (2006) was adopted to end hostilities between Israeli forces and the militias of Hezbollah following 34 days of attacks and counterattacks in the summer of 2006.

5. Iraq: an Open Conflict

The debate will commence with the Iran-Iraq War (1981-1988). It will cover the 1990 Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The discussion will cover the role of the SC in the mobilization toward the war after the adoption of Resolution 678 (29 November 1990) which authorized the use of force. It will shed light on two important resolutions: The disarmament Resolution 687 of April 3rd 1991, and Resolution 688 of April 6, 1991 which authorized the intervention in Northern Iraq. The Discussion will cover the sanction years, the debate leading to the 2003 War and the failure of the SC to take a united position regarding the war. The post 2003 Iraq will be briefly covered

5. Sudan: From One Civil War to Another – Establishing a new state in the South

The discussion will cover UN involvement in Sudan’s long civil war in the South which ended in signing the 2003 “Comprehensive Peace Agreement” which ended in the creation of a separate state in southern Sudan in July 2011. The Darfur conflict will be thoroughly discussed as well as the crisis between Sudan and the ICC.

6. Libya and the Lockerbie Affairs: Success of the Smart Sanctions

In 1992 Libya was put under partial sanction that lasted until Libya submitted to the international will and delivered in 1999 the two suspects accused of being involved in the mid-air explosion of PAN AM flight 103 on December 21, 1988 over the Scottish town of Lockerbie.

7. Western Sahara: Independence or Annexation?

Although Morocco declared Western Sahara in 1975 an integral part of the Kingdom, UN did not recognize this annexation. From 1991 till today, the UN continues to

monitor a ceasefire while searching for a peaceful settlement between Frente POLISAO, the indigenous group seeking independence, and the de facto power that annexed the region, Morocco

8. UN and the Arab Spring: from direct intervention to mild “calling for restrain” statements

Students will debate how the UN dealt with the popular uprising in the Arab World. Why in the case of Libya the UN was united in imposing sanctions and authorizing the use of force but when it came to the uprising in Bahrain it shied away? In the case of Syria the SC was paralysed by double veto by Russia and China casted three times so far. In the case of Yemen UN played a secondary role in the shadow of the initiative pioneered by the GCC.

Core Books

There is no one book that can cover these issues. However a major source of information is the UN web page (www.un.org). Each item could be found under the proper heading either under Security Council, peacekeeping or General Assembly. The “Question of Palestine” has a special page, where numerous reports, resolutions and background information could be found. The page is located on this address: www.un.org/Depts/dpa/qpal/

However, this is a partial list of the core books that we will be referring to as needed (Books with the sign * must be acquired).

These books are available at Barnes and Noble-Rutgers

1. *Krasno, Jean, The United Nations: Confronting the Challenges of a Global Society, (Lynne Rienner, 2004)
2. Ziring, Lawrence, Robert Riggs and Jack Plano: The United Nation: International Organization and World Politics, (Thompson, Belmont, Ca. 2004- Fourth Edition)
3. Malone, David, The UN Security Council: From the Cold War to the 21st Century, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Col. 2004)
4. * Meisler, Stanley, United Nations: The First Fifty Years, (Atlantic Monthly Press, NY 1995)
5. * Mingst, Karen and Margaret Krans, The United Nations in the 21st Century, (Westview Press, 2012 Fourth Edition)
6. * Weiss, Thomas, David Forsythe and Roger Coate, The United Nations and Changing World Politics, (Westview Press, 2014- Seventh Edition)
7. Weiss, Thomas, and Sam Daws, The Oxford Handbook on the United Nations, (Oxford University Press, NY, 2007)
8. Council on Foreign Relations, The New Arab Revolt, What Happened, What It Means and What Comes Next, 2011 (www.cfr.org)
9. Saban Center at Brookings Institute: The Arab Awakening- Brooking Institue Press 2011

Further Readings on Specific Issues:

Note: On each part of the seminar there will be a number of books identified for each study group. In addition, students will be required to access all UN files on the subject matter. Here is a partial list on specific issues:

Arnove, Anthony, Iraq Under Siege: The Deadly Impact of Sanctions and War, (South End Press, Cambridge, Ma. 2000)

Boyle, Francis, Palestine, Palestinian and International Law, (Clarity Press Atlanta, 2003)

Claude, Inis L. JR., Swords Into Plow Shares: The Problems and Progress of International Organization, (Random House, NY Fourth Edition 1984)

Dobbins, James and Jone Seth, Crane, Keith, Rathmell Andrew, Steele Brett, Richard Teltschik, Anga Timilsian, The UN's Role in Nations-Building: From the Congo to Iraq, (Rand Corp. Santa Monica, 2005)

Flint, Julie and Alex de Waal, Darfur: A New History of a Long War, (Palgrave Publishers, NY 2008)

Grobman, Alex, Nations United: How the United Nations Undermines Israel and the West, (Balfour Books, 2006)

Harel, Amos and Avi Issacharoff, 34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah and the War in Lebanon, (Palgrave, NY 2008)

Hanhimaki, Jussi M. The United Nations: A very Short Introduction, (Oxford University Press, NY 2008)

Iyob, Ruth and Gilbert Khadiagala, Sudan: The Elusive Quest for Peace, (Lynne, Rienner Publishers, NY, 2006)

Jensen, Erik, Western Sahara: Anatomy of a Stalemate, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Co. 2005)

Johnson, Douglas: The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil War, Woolnough, UK, 2004

Kattan, Victor, The Palestine Question in International Law (British Institute of International Law 2008)

Khalidi, Rashid and Nubar Hovsebian, The War on Lebanon: A Reader, Olive Branch Press 2007)

Krasno, Jean, The United Nations: Confronting the Challenges of a Global Society, (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder, Co. 2004)

Marquise, Richard, Scotbom: Evidence and the Lockerbie Investigation, (Algora Publishing, 2006)

Towards A Two-State Solution: An Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue, United Nations Publication: 2003

Requirements

1. Attendance and participation 20%

Attendance and participation are required. You are expected to come to class fully prepared. Students will be asked, from time to time, to do class presentations on the assigned readings. Attendance will be checked regularly and repeated absences will affect the final grade. Simulation of Crises will be part of the class.

2. Mid-term Exam 30%

Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to do short presentations on the assigned readings and topics under discussion. An unannounced number of quizzes could be conducted to verify preparedness.

3. Position paper and presentation 50%

Students, individually or collectively will be required to develop a position paper of 15 pages based on the material and related references covered throughout the course. Topic must be approved by Instructor in the first 3-4 weeks of the course.