**Course Syllabus POL222G**

**UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

**Contact Details for Professor**
Dr. Dario Cristiani  
Tel: +32 (0) 26148170 - Skype: med_eye  
E-mail: dario.christiani@vub.ac.be  
Classes: Fridays 8.30 pm – 11:30 pm  
Office hours: To be confirmed. Ad-hoc skype sessions can be provided should students need

*Please do not miss classes unexcused. If you need to miss classes for a valid reason, please make sure you inform me beforehand. The use of the internet for any application!*

**Course Description:** Formerly known as Understanding Contemporary Conflict in Europe and Beyond, this is a course on the history and the politics of contemporary conflicts, with a specific focus on the Mediterranean region and the impact that it dynamics have on European security. It will provide an understanding of the historical roots, conceptual foundations, and current developments characterising the conflicts of this area. The course is divided in three parts: the first part will be focused on understanding the historical developments and changes in warfare and what are the tools to analyse and manage conflicts. The second part of the course will deal specifically the most important historical developments that have created the conditions for the current conflicts in the region. The role of Europe in the formation of the contemporary Middle East will be highlighted. The third part will have a specific focus on current crises in the Middle East, dealing with four specific case studies: the Arab Israeli conflict, the Syrian civil war, sectarianism in the Middle East and the rivalry between the Islamic State (IS) and Al-Qaeda in the Jihadist camp.

**Learning Objectives:**
After this course, the student should be able to:

**In terms of knowledge:**

1. Acquire substantial background knowledge on the conceptual tools concerning conflict analysis, its historical evolution and the historical features and current developments of some major conflicts; grasp the complexity that is inherent to conflict studies;
2. develop a basic theoretical understanding of conflict dynamics of the approaches to the history of war and conflicts and how they can be applied to understand contemporary conflicts;
3. engage critically with the literature and reporting on conflicts;
4. understand the importance of history to understand current conflicts;
5. understand how economic and material interests interact with ideational and identity factors in situation of conflicts;
6. assess critically the debates and current trends on the security challenges that the transatlantic partnership needs to address;
7. present a personal analysis of what is going on in a given conflict;
8. understand the role played by Europe in the emerging of these situation of crisis and perceptions on the conflicts in its neighbouring areas.
In terms of skills:

At the end of the class, the student should be able to:

1. Carry out independent research using a wide range of sources and present a personal analysis of what is going on in a given conflict setting.
2. Apply the relevant scholarship to understand, synthesize and analyze issues in studying current global conflicts;
3. Learn how to differentiate between empirical, analytical, prescriptive and normative statements;
4. Understand how to recognize a valuable and reliable source of information;
5. Understand how to manage historical sources;
6. Develop a capacity to understand the historical roots of a number of contemporary conflicts;
7. Communicate effectively key research findings on conflict studies.

Course Assessment

The students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Percentage of the final course grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Activities</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper (20%)/Simulation (10%)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy, in line with the Flemish Educational norms, is now as stated follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Scale of 20</th>
<th>Scale of 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17.0-20.0</td>
<td>85-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>16.1-16.9</td>
<td>81-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>15.3-16.0</td>
<td>77-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>14.5-15.2</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>13.7-14.4</td>
<td>69-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>13.1-13.6</td>
<td>66-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>12.3-13.0</td>
<td>62-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>11.5-12.2</td>
<td>58-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>10.7-11.4</td>
<td>54-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>10.0-10.6</td>
<td>50-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-9.9</td>
<td>0-49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further description of assessment activities and Grading Criteria

1. Written mid-term and final exams (60%)

The mid-term and final exams are in-class exam. The midterm exam (25%) will be held in the mid of the semester (W7). The content of the exam covers all the concepts you will have learnt before that date. The final exam (35%) will be held at the end of the course. It will include essay questions on the entire programme that you will have learnt during the whole semester.

Rubrics for Exam
In the exams, you may find:

Multiple Choice Questions
Chronologies
Short/Factual Questions
Long Questions
Essay

For the breakdown, refer to the exam sheet. Following, you can find an explanation of the criteria that I will use to assess your exams.

**Multiple Choice questions**
*Right/wrong format. See allocation of grades in the exam sheet.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronology</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy and Completeness</strong></td>
<td>The answer pertinently and succinctly addresses the question.</td>
<td>Overall, the answer accurately addresses the question. Some minor omissions or imprecisions.</td>
<td>The answer sufficiently addresses the question. It meets the basic requirements for this assignment. Some imprecisions.</td>
<td>The answer is incomplete and fails to address the question. Major flaws and imprecisions.</td>
<td>The answer is left in blank or fails dramatically to address the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expression</strong></td>
<td>Language is correct; advanced mastering of expression.</td>
<td>Overall, language is correct. Some minor mistakes.</td>
<td>Barely adequate level; some mistakes in the text.</td>
<td>Language is poor; several mistakes in the text; hard to read or to understand.</td>
<td>Language is very poor; the text is extremely hard to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence of reading</strong></td>
<td>The answer shows a good understanding of the readings.</td>
<td>Some flaws in the understanding of the course material.</td>
<td>The answer meets the basic requirements for this assignment.</td>
<td>Knowledge below the level required for the course.</td>
<td>The answer reveals no engagement with the course material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Short question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy and Completeness</strong></td>
<td>The answer pertinently and succinctly addresses the question</td>
<td>Overall, the answer accurately addresses the question. Some minor omissions or imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer sufficiently addresses the question. It meets the basic requirements for this assignment. Some imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer is incomplete and fails to address the question. Major flaws and imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer is left in blank or fails dramatically to address the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expression</strong></td>
<td>Language is correct; advanced mastering of expression.</td>
<td>Overall, language is correct. Some minor mistakes.</td>
<td>Barely adequate level; some mistakes in the text.</td>
<td>Language is poor; several mistakes in the text; hard to read or to understand.</td>
<td>Language is very poor; the text is extremely hard to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The answer is well structured and allows the author to address the question in a pertinent and succinct manner.</td>
<td>The answer is overall well structured. Some minor flaws in the structure hinder the coherence of the answer.</td>
<td>The structure is loose and imprecise, but allows the author to address the question.</td>
<td>The structure is loose and imprecise and does not allow the author to address the question.</td>
<td>The answer is loosely structured and fails to provide most relevant information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence of reading</strong></td>
<td>The answer shows a good understanding of the readings.</td>
<td>Some flaws in the understanding of the course material.</td>
<td>The answer meets the basic requirements for this assignment.</td>
<td>Knowledge below the level required for the course.</td>
<td>The answer reveals no engagement with the course material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Long Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accuracy and Completeness</strong></td>
<td>The answer pertinently and succinctly addresses the question</td>
<td>Overall, the answer accurately addresses the question. Some minor omissions or imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer sufficiently addresses the question. It meets the basic requirements for this assignment. Some imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer is incomplete and fails to address the question. Major flaws and imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer is left in blank or fails dramatically to address the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expression</strong></td>
<td>Language is correct; advanced mastering of expression.</td>
<td>Overall, language is correct. Some minor mistakes.</td>
<td>Barely adequate level; some mistakes in the text.</td>
<td>Language is poor; several mistakes in the text; hard to read or to understand.</td>
<td>Language is very poor; the text is extremely hard to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The answer is well structured and allows the author to address the question in a pertinent and succinct manner.</td>
<td>The answer is overall well structured. Some minor flaws in the structure hinder the coherence of the answer.</td>
<td>The structure is loose and imprecise, but allows the author to address the question.</td>
<td>The structure is loose and imprecise and does not allow the author to address the question.</td>
<td>The answer is loosely structured and fails to provide most relevant information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence of reading</strong></td>
<td>The answer shows a good understanding of the readings.</td>
<td>Some flaws in the understanding of the course material.</td>
<td>The answer meets the basic requirements for this assignment.</td>
<td>Knowledge below the level required for the course.</td>
<td>The answer reveals no engagement with the course material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D/F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure of the answer and expression</strong></td>
<td>The answer addresses the question in a structured, succinct and analytical manner. Excellent capacity to express and discuss complex concepts.</td>
<td>Overall, the essay is well structured and accurately addresses the question. Some minor omissions or imprecisions</td>
<td>The answer gives most relevant information, but it is loosely structured. Overall good capacity to express complex concepts and correct language.</td>
<td>The answer is loosely structured and fails to provide most relevant information. Expression is poor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evidence of reading</strong></td>
<td>The answer is well embedded in the literature and shows evidence of further readings.</td>
<td>Overall, the answer shows a consistent engagement with the reading material required for the course.</td>
<td>Sufficient attempt to engage with the course material</td>
<td>Weak engagement with the course material.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding/use of theories and definitions</strong></td>
<td>All theories/concepts reviewed are presented clearly in their full complexity.</td>
<td>Sufficient engagement. Some flaws and oversimplification in the understanding of the concepts/theories at hands.</td>
<td>Some attempt to engage with theoretical frameworks and definitions</td>
<td>Theories or concepts are simply mentioned.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical thinking</strong></td>
<td>The answer reveals a critical understanding of concepts and theories at hand.</td>
<td>The answer reveals a fairly good critical understanding of the topic at hand and a good critical attitude. Some minor imprecisions and/or mistakes.</td>
<td>Overall, the answer shows good comprehension of reviewed concepts/theories but a scanty critical attitude towards politics.</td>
<td>The answer shows some major pitfalls in the comprehension of the concepts/theories at hand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ability to relate to a concrete political case</strong></td>
<td>Excellent ability to elaborate on theories and apply them to concrete cases. Good knowledge of factual background</td>
<td>Overall, the examinee manages to relate the concept to concrete cases. However, some minor imprecisions and mistakes occur.</td>
<td>The examinee attempts to relate selected topic to an empirical case, but there are major imprecisions and the examples are under-explained</td>
<td>The examinee fails to apply conceptual or theoretical framework to empirical cases.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2. Class activities 10%

We will do a number of class activities, that will account for the 10% of your total grade. The class is based on both lectures and seminars. **Students may be required to attend the EPSS lectures/other activities organised by the university that are consistent with the topics covered in this class.** Class evaluation will consist in: active engagement during the classes, active participation during the debates, capacity of thinking out of the box, performance in the historical and geographical quizzes and **guess who game**, questions after the frontal lectures, questions during class and EPSS lectures. For the group presentations, each student should talk for 2-3 minutes. The single presentation instead will be represented by the performance of the student during the simulation. For the group presentation (only), one person of the group may send a PPT document via email to the course convenor one day before the presentation. It is advisable but not compulsory. Reading and getting prepared for both lectures and seminars is, therefore, a **fundamental requirement** of the course and one for which you will be evaluated.
3. Research Paper/Simulation (30%)

3.2 Research Paper (20%)

➢ Please pick one of the case studies among the four presented in the module you are interested in and prepare a 2500-word analysis to present to European Leaders (Either a leader of the organisation or a single country leader). In your briefing, you should:

a) Concisely outline the security issue / extent of the threat / extent of the problem and why it is important that the European leaders tackles it, using all the conceptual and historical tools learned during the class (key actors, sources of conflict, what are the historical developments that a leader should know to grasp the complexity of that conflict);

b) Providing an informed analysis of the current state of the conflict (I want to see reliable news sources used here);

c) Outline the different conflict resolution options (realistic options, beware) available to tackle the issue.

➢ You need to consult at least seven academic references (such as books and academic journals), online sources are vital to the crafting of your Paper.

➢ You should communicate by week 6 the issue you would like to pick and the leader you would like to advice.

HAND IN: to be confirmed

You have to submit your paper using Turnitin http://www.turnitin.com/ by the deadline stated above.

Written Assignment – Grading Criteria

The following criteria will be applied in assessing your written work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-1 point</th>
<th>2-3 point</th>
<th>4-5 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to summarize a complex factual background</td>
<td>Some factual information is missing or the topic is not clearly identified</td>
<td>Most relevant information is presented but the core analytical elements are not clearly identified</td>
<td>Key facts are presented in an original, succinct, and analytical manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of a country/institution’s stake</td>
<td>The paper loosely interprets the national/institutional position on the issue. It contains factual imprecisions and shows poor understanding of a given country/institution’s stake</td>
<td>The paper presents, in a realistic way, the priorities and needs of a given country/institution. Yet, there are some factual imprecisions and the policy suggestions are unrealistic.</td>
<td>The paper shows a sound understanding of a country/institution stake, priorities and needs. It elaborates clearly on the possible options and advances convincing proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>Flat and imprecise paper; flows in the analysis, no critical understanding of the topic</td>
<td>Good use of sources, but no critical understanding of the topic analyzed.</td>
<td>The paper reveals a personal and critical understanding of the analyzed topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure, writing, bibliography and referencing</td>
<td>The argument is not developed in a coherent way; Language is poor. References are incomplete and the quoting system is not coherent. Less than 3 good references.</td>
<td>Some important conceptual and analytical pitfalls in the development of the argument; the writing is hard to read. At least 4 good references.</td>
<td>The argument is developed in a coherent and appropriate way; Language is overall correct; At least 7 good references covering factual background and theories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 20 points
3.1 Simulation (10%)

Students will participate in the simulation (30%) of a political talk show centred around conflicts in the Middle East. This exercise aims at improving students’ capacity to present their perspectives on a specific topic and make their arguments in a clear, concise and convincing way under pressure. The idea is to help them to boost their capacities to speak in public and respond to criticisms and objections.

The simulation revolves around the organisation of a political talk show, in which every students will play the part of an expert in conflict resolution and they will be talking about what they have suggested to European Union leaders to handle conflicts in the Middle East. They will have to use the conceptual tools learned in the first part of the class, and the historical knowledge about the role that Europe has played in the Middle East over the past centuries, to suggest realistic ways for the EU to manage the situation of crisis at its borders. Students will pick up one of the case studies and building their paper around it.

For the simulation, you should cannot use a PPT, nor can you read from a written paper. The idea is to assess your capacity of arguing and to test your knowledge on the topic without any visual support. The oral performance will be evaluated according to the following criteria: Clear outline of your main argument, the conceptual tools concerning conflicts that you will use, examples (comparisons between different cases, historical references associated with the case studies you have chosen). A very important element that I will evaluate is to make references to the literature also in your speech and provide evidence that students have used other material than the one provided in the syllabus (I do not want to see this only on paper). Coherence of argument and capacity to explain your point succinctly and effectively. Moreover, I will also evaluate some more technical aspect of your performance: clarity and volume of voice, speed of delivery (I want to see some pace and capacity to keep your audience attention high, but I do not want you to rush), your time management capacity. Moreover, last but not least, you should not read from a paper but you have to speak reading notes. This would help to make your speech more enjoyable and smooth.

The actual simulation will take place ON WEEK 12 and 13. Two to four sessions per class, depending on the number of students. They will present their perspectives during the simulation and, they will elaborate their arguments depending on the debate that will emerge in the different sessions.

NOTE: you will receive the grade for your paper only after the simulation. So, don’t ask me to handle you the paper and the grade before.

Grading criteria for performance in the simulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability to stick to your argument</th>
<th>0-1 point</th>
<th>2-3 point</th>
<th>4-5 point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inability to explain and defend her/his own argument</td>
<td>Overall good capacity of identifying and defending one own negotiating red lines.</td>
<td>Excellent capacity to proactively convince others about the relevance of one own red lines in the negotiation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to adapt and react to an unforeseen scenario</td>
<td>Scarce capacity to react consistently to unforeseen circumstances, like difficult questions or a very well-spoken adversary</td>
<td>Good capacity to react consistently to unforeseen circumstances and ability to manage criticisms in an effective way</td>
<td>Terrific capacity to react consistently and capacity to push those contesting you in changing their minds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and projection of oral interventions</td>
<td>The structure of one’s contribution is loose and fails (or struggles) to gain audience’s attention. Weakly structured arguments.</td>
<td>Good oral performance. Overall successful attempt to convince others and to gain their attention.</td>
<td>Excellent ability to trigger audience engagement. Outstanding ability to convince others of the validity of one’s position</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 20 points
System of bibliographic referencing

There are many systems for the citation of references. For this course, I expect you to use the Harvard style of referencing. In the Harvard system, the author’s surname and year of publication are cited in the text. The full details of the book are included in a reference list at the end of the assignment. Students can find a detailed Harvard Guide at the following website: http://libweb.anglia.ac.uk/referencing/referencing.htm. To learn how to acknowledge, quote and paraphrase consulted material, please, also consult the following short guide for “Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources”: writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Acknowledging_Sources.pdf.

Harvard style of referencing - Examples:

In-text citation:
The first environment creates the conditions for an ‘offensive’ was and the second enables a ‘defensive war by a declining hegemon (Waltz 1979)

Thirteen of fifteen Arab state constitutions defined the nation as the Arab Nation (Ayubi 1995:146)

In your reference list:

How to quote books:

How to quote articles in edited books:

How to quote articles:

How to quote electronic sources:
**Additional Course Policies**

Late papers will not be accepted unless there are serious legitimate reasons. If you have any problem and you want to discuss that with me, get in touch as soon as you can and we will find a solution. Provision of a signed medical note is required, and notice must be given prior to the deadline. Providing a signed medical note in the week of either the mid-term or the final exam do not exempt you from performing the exam and it will be taken in different forms as soon as possible.

The College considers late submissions as disruptive and disrespectful practices and strongly recommends students to work on their time management. Late papers will be assessed as follow:

- **1 out of 20 point will be subtracted for each day delay.**
- **Works submitted after seven days delay are graded with an F (0).**
- **Unless an incomplete is granted, no submission is possible after two weeks delay.**

In the event of exceptional circumstances which impede the delivery of assignments within the due date, a student may request prior to the assigned due date an extension without penalty. Students must accompany this request with a medical certificate or other proof of the extreme circumstance that impeded the fulfillment of the task. Professors will examine the request and decide whether an extreme circumstance exists or does not exist. ‘Extreme circumstances’ must be significant, unpredictable and serious. As follows, these include medical treatment or distress for a family crisis or loss. These do not include time management problems, technical problems with the computer, inability to find sources, attending a wedding.

**Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty is **NOT** tolerated in this course. Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity. Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action. If you refer to someone else’s work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

TOTAL 100%
# Course schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic of the Week</th>
<th>Focus &amp; Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conflict Analysis: History, Tools, Resolution</strong>&lt;br&gt;W1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course. Conflict Analysis: the Discipline, its Evolution and Conceptual Tools</td>
<td>Students’ introduction. Test to assess the general level of knowledge of the students. Lecture on the conceptual tools of conflict analysis and the literature. Geographical quiz on conflicts around the worlds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W2</strong></td>
<td>Sources of conflicts, Resolution of Conflicts</td>
<td>Lecture on sources and resolution of conflicts. <strong>Guess Who Quiz</strong> (quiz on historical and contemporary political leaders, focus Middle East/Europe ). 1st Grate Debate on Luttwak’s Paper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## The Roots of Current Conflicts in the Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic of the Week</th>
<th>Focus &amp; Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>W3</strong></td>
<td>Europe, WWI and the Middle East</td>
<td>Non-graded reading test. Lecture on the historical relations between Europe and the Middle East and the creation of contemporary Middle East following WWI. Group Presentations on conflict studies (1st Part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W4</strong></td>
<td>From 1919 to 1991</td>
<td>Lecture on the developments in the Middle East and its relations with Europe from 1919 to 1991. 2st Great Debate on Huntington’s article. Group Presentations on conflict studies (2nd Part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W5</strong></td>
<td>From the end of Cold War to the Arab Spring</td>
<td>Lecture on the Middle East after the Cold War. Review of the first part of the module. Debate on the simulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W6</strong></td>
<td>Reading week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W7</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mid-term Exam</strong></td>
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</table>

## The Current Conflicts in the Mediterranean and the Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic of the Week</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>W8</strong></td>
<td>The Arab-Israeli conflict</td>
<td>Review of the Exam. Lecture on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Q&amp;A session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W9</strong></td>
<td>Geopolitical rivalries or sectarian strains</td>
<td>Lecture on Sectarianism in the Middle East. Quiz on Islamic Geographies. Great Debate on Cagaptay’s paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W11</strong></td>
<td>The End of Syria?</td>
<td>Lecture on the evolution of the Arab Spring, and Civil War, in Syria. Final preparation for the simulation. Conclusions, Reviews of the class and debate on the module.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W12</strong></td>
<td>Simulation: talking about war. Session 1</td>
<td>The VeCo Political Talk Show.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W13</strong></td>
<td>Simulation: talking about war. Session 2. Conclusion</td>
<td>The VeCo Political Talk Show</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>W14</strong></td>
<td>Reading week</td>
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<td><strong>W15</strong></td>
<td><strong>Final Exam</strong></td>
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Core Topics & Course Materials

The Course Material ranges from chapters of core textbooks, journal articles by key International Relations, and International Security Studies and History scholars and excerpts from original monographs. These materials will be collated in form of an Online-Reader, which you can access free of charge on a Dropbox folder and Pointcarré platform. An email will be sent out in Week 2 at the latest.

Textbook:

The textbook for this module is:

Louise Fawcett (ed.) (2016), *International Relations of the Middle East*, (Oxford: OUP)

The Great Debates

These papers will not be part of the mid-term/final exams, but I want you to read them and discuss them during our classes as they represent key articles that covers specific aspects of what we will be covering during this module. In addition, it will also give you a hint of the wider debate, and the most important historical articles, in the areas of conflict studies and Europe-Middle Eastern relations.


Specifics

W1 - Introduction to the course – Conflict Analysis: the Discipline, its Evolution and Conceptual Tools


Main readings:

Ho-Won Jeong (2008), *Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis*, London:SAGE, pp.3-40


Suggested Readings (Non Compulsory)


Questions:

What are the main instruments to analyse and conceptualise conflicts?

What is the state of the discipline?

What are the main school of thoughts concerning conflict studies?

Can you explain the differences between social, biological, psychological and structural explanations for conflicts?

**W2 – Sources of conflicts, Resolution of Conflicts**

**Main readings:**

Ho-Won Jeong (2008), Understanding Conflict and Conflict Analysis, London:SAGE, 43-63, 225-244


What are the main sources of conflict?

Can you describe the main conditions for war and peace?

What are the main differences between old and new wars?

What are the main options to terminate a conflict?

**W3 – Europe, WWI and the Middle East**

**Main readings:**


Erik Goldstein (2013), The First World War Peace Settlements, 1919-1925, (Oxon, Routledge), 57-68

**Suggested Readings (Non Compulsory)**


Questions:

What were the major features of the Middle East after the WWI?
What is the historical role played by Europe in the region before WWI?
What role did Europe play in the WWII developments in the region?
To what extent did the developments occurred at that time lay the foundations for current crises?
What was the reactions of local elites and populations to WWII developments and European actions in the region?

W4 – From 1919 to 1991

Main readings:
Giacomo Luciani (2016) “Oil and Political Economy in the International Relations of the Middle East”, Louise Fawcett (ed.), \textit{International Relations of the Middle East}, (Oxford: OUP), 103-126
Suggested Readings (Non Compulsory)

Questions:

What were the major features of the Middle East after the WWI?
What did the Cold War mean for Europe and the Middle East?
Were there any significant developments in these decades that would have an impact in the Middle East after the Cold War?

W5 – From the end of Cold War to the Arab Spring

Main readings:
Bahgat Korany (2016), "The Middle East since the Cold War: Torn between Geopolitics and Geoeconomics", in Louise Fawcett (ed.), \textit{International Relations of the Middle East}, (Oxford: OUP), pp. 77-102
Suggested Readings (Non Compulsory)


Raymond Hinnebusch (2003), The International Politics of the Middle East (Manchester: MUP), Chp. 8.

Questions:

What were the main features of the Middle East after the Cold War?

Can you describe the path that led to the Arab Spring?

Were they real democratic revolutions? How can you explain the empirically observable resilience of authoritarianism in the region?

To what extent are the current crises in the region associated with WWI events?

Did Europe have any influence on these events?

**W7 – Mid-term exam**

**Second part**

**The Current Crises in the Middle East**

As this part deals specifically with a number of current developments, the list of reading assignments may be likely integrated with a number of recent policy and newspapers articles of interest for some of the topics covered.

**W8 – The Arab-Israeli conflict: From Al-Aqsa to Protective Edge**

**Main readings:**


Aluf Benn (2016), “The End of the Old Israel. How Netanyahu Has Transformed the Nation”, Foreign Affairs, 95:4,

Suggested Readings (Non Compulsory)

James Gelvin (2014), The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War (Cambridge:CUP)

The Struggle for Israel, Foreign Affairs, 95:4, July/August 2016


International Crisis Group, The Arab-Israeli Conflict: To Reach A Lasting Peace, Middle East Report N°58 – 5 October 2006


Questions:

Can you describe analytically the key, recent developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict?

Is Hamas only a terrorist organisation or is it a more complex political actor?

What has been the role played by external actors in the dispute?

What impact has the Arab Spring had on this conflict?

W9 Geopolitical rivalries or sectarian strains?

Main Readings:


Raymond Hinnebusch (2016), The Politics of Identity in Middle East International Relations, Louise Fawcett (ed.), International Relations of the Middle East, (Oxford: OUP)


Suggested Readings (Non-Compulsory)


F. Gregory Gause III (2014), Beyond Sectarianism: the New Middle East Cold War

Mehran Kamrava, “The Arab Spring and the Saudi-Led Counterrevolution”, Orbis,

Questions:

What does Sectarianism mean?

Can you describe analytically the developments of the Shia-Sunni confrontation?

Can you see any similarity with other conflicts in history?

Do you think is it an ideological or a material conflict?
W10 – Islamic State, Al-Qaeda and the radicalisation of discontent in the Middle East

Main Readings:


Suggested Readings (Non-Compulsory)


John Turner (2015) “Strategic differences: Al Qaeda’s Split with the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham”, *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 26:2, 208-225

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross & Tara Vassefi (2012): “Perceptions of the “Arab Spring” Within the Salafi-Jihadi Movement”, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 35:12, 831-848


Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, “Zealots and Assassins”, in Gérard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin (eds), *The History of Terrorism From Antiquity To Al Qaeda* Berkeley, University Of California Press.


Questions:

*Can you describe analytically the key, recent developments in the dynamics of radical Jihadist terrorism?*

*What do the concept of “jihad” and “caliphate” mean?*

*What has been the evolution of Al-Qaeda over the past ten years?*

*Is IS the heir of Al-Qaeda or is it different?*

*What are IS relations with Al Qaeda?*

*Can you define the ideological features of IS?*
W11 – The End of Syria?

Main readings:

Raymond Hinnebusch (2012), “Syria: from ‘authoritarian upgrading’ to revolution?”, International Affairs, 88:1, 95-113


Moshe Ma'oz (2014) The Arab Spring in Syria: Domestic and regional developments”, Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict, 7:1, 49-57

Suggested Readings (Non-Compulsory)


Questions:

Can you describe analytically the key, recent developments in the Syrian civil war?

Did the sectarian divisions within Syria caused the conflict? Or should we consider material and economic interests to be the most important causes underlying this conflict?

How do you think Syria may look like in a five-year time?

What has been the role played by external actors in the conflict?

W12 – Talking about War: The VeCo Political Talk Show Part 1

W13 – Talking about War: The VeCo Political Talk Show Part 2

W14 – Reading Week

Time to study for the final exam. A further reviewing session is offered if you wish.

W15 – Final Exam
Active Learning

Learning should be an active experience. Students who passively listen to lectures, copy someone else’s notes, and limit their readings to required articles are unlikely to develop their critical thinking and expand their personal knowledge system. At the exam, these students often fail to demonstrate a critical approach on European peace and security.

Students are strongly recommended to have an updated understanding of current international events. Active learning will turn out to be enriching to the overall course and class discussions. Students are invited to deepen their understanding of both theoretical and current issues from a variety of sources. Find below a (concise!) list of suggestions.

Current affairs
For current conflict affairs awareness, you are required to keep yourself up-to-date through a number of media sources: the Economist, Financial Times, the Guardian and many other sources. For a more in-depth coverage, access the electronic version of Foreign Affairs through your electronic account.

Periodical References (Academic journals)

Material Online:
Princeton: Finding Data: Data on Conflicts, Wars, Terrorism
http://dss.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/dataresources/newdataresources.cgi?term=47
IISS Armed Conflict Database:
https://acd.iiss.org/
Uppsala Conflict Data Program:
www.ucdp.uu.se/database
UCDP:PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset:
https://www.prio.org/Data/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/
ETH - GROWup
http://www.icr.ethz.ch/data
Archive of European Integration, University of Pittsburgh:
http://aei.pitt.edu/

Follow Conflict affairs on twitter!
Twitter allows you to follow first hand news on world politics. Create your own portfolio of contacts, drawing upon your major interest, e.g. in terms of geographical area; issue areas; topics. Build up a network which includes high-level politicians, analysts, journalists and journal correspondents. You can use twitter to prepare the weekly news corner.
➢ IISS News: https://twitter.com/IISS_org
➢ SIPRI: https://twitter.com/SIPRIorg
➢ The Journal of Strategic Studies: https://twitter.com/jststs
➢ EUISS: https://twitter.com/EU_ISS
➢ NATO ACT: https://twitter.com/NATO_ACT
➢ The Guardian: https://twitter.com/guardian
➢ The Economist: https://twitter.com/TheEconomist
Online sources of information include think tanks, such as:
- Carnegie Europe: http://www.carnegieeurope.eu/
- Center for Applied Policy Research: http://www.cap-lmu.de/
- Centre for European Reform: http://www.cer.org.uk/
- Centre for European Policy Studies: http://www.ceps.be/
- Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS): http://csis.org/
- Centre for the New Europe: http://www.cne.org/
- Centro de Información y Documentación Internacionales: http://www.cidob.org/
- Chatham House (Royal Institute of International Affairs): http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk
- European Institute for Asian Studies: http://www.eias.org/
- European Institute of Public Administration: http://www.eipa.nl/
- European Policy Centre: http://www.epc.eu/
- European Policy Forum: http://www.epfltd.org/
- European Stability Initiative: http://www.esiweb.org/
- Friends of Europe: http://www.friendsofeurope.org/
- German Council on Foreign Relations: http://www.dgap.org/
- German Development Institute: http://www.die-gdi.de
- German Institute for International and Security Affairs: http://www.swp-berlin.org/
- Global Governance Institute: http://www.globalgovernance.eu/
- Hague Centre for Strategic Studies: http://www.hcss.nl/
- Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy: http://www.eliamep.gr/
- Human Rights Watch: http://www.hrw.org/
- Istituto Affari Internazionali: http://www.iai.it/
- Istituto per gli studi di Politica Internazionale: http://www.ispionline.it/
- Institut français des relations internationales: http://www.ifri.org/
Institute for Strategic Dialogue: http://www.strategicdialogue.org/
International Centre for Black Sea Studies: http://icbss.org/
International Peace Institute: http://www.ipinst.org/
Istanbul Policy Center: http://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/eng/
International Security Information Service Europe: http://www.isis-europe.org/
Madariaga – College of Europe Foundation: http://www.madariaga.org/
Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael': http://www.clingendael.nl/
Overseas Development Institute: http://www.odi.org.uk/
Oxford Council on Good Governance: http://www.oxfordgovernance.org/
Policy Network: http://www.policy-network.net/
Polish Institute of International Affairs: http://www.pism.pl/home
RAND Corporation: http://www.rand.org/
Real Instituto Elcano: http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/
Stratfor – Global Intelligence: http://www.stratfor.com/
The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies: http://www.iue.it/RSCAS/
The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation: http://www.tesev.org.tr/
Further resources

Conflict Studies


European Foreign Policy


Sven Biscop, Rosa Balfour and Michael Emerson, *An Arab Springboard for EU Foreign Policy?* Brussels: CEPS Paperbacks, 2012


**Middle East and Mediterranean: Politics, history and conflicts**


Raymond Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East*, Manchester: Manchester Press University, 2003

Raymond Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (eds.) *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002

Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean*


