

The Politics of Expertise in the Arab Uprisings

POLS 393-02
T/R 12:45-2:00
Location: McGannon Hall 121
Spring 2014
#SLU393

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Course Description and Objectives:

This course has two objectives. The first is to examine the events of the Arab Spring and subsequent uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East, focusing on the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Libya. The second course objective is to explore the politics of expertise. Who is considered an expert? What qualifications are seen as evidence of expertise? What organizations and institutions confer authority? How do experts embody authority over knowledge? By the end of this course you should be able to speak comfortably about the events of the Arab Uprisings and critically examine contemporary news coverage of the wider Middle East.

In order to assess student progress in achieving these objectives, there are three major assignments. The first is your participation, measured in (1) daily attendance, (2) thoughtful remarks about current events and required readings and finally, (3) contribution to the course's conversation on Twitter. The second assignment is an oral midterm examination on significant people, dates and places involved in the Arab Uprisings discussed in class. The final project for the course is a ten-page paper and ten-minute presentation assessing one expert and their contributions to analysis of the Arab Uprisings.

Course Requirements:

Successful completion of this course (read: a good grade) requires attendance at all class sessions, regular, consistent, meaningful participation in class discussions, completion of all reading and writing assignments as well as the class's online forums, and strong performance on the oral midterm. Failure to follow current events will negatively impact your grade.

Please note that erratic attendance, off-topic or simplistic comments in class, sitting in the back row and not speaking, coming to class without having done required readings and then making unrelated remarks in an effort to "participate", not engaging your classmates or instructor on the course Twitter feed, inability to discuss the Arab Spring intelligently with your professor during the oral midterm and other office hour visits are all excellent ways to waste my (and your colleagues'!) time and lower your grade.

Attendance Policy/Participation Grade:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in discussions in order to gain full participation credit. The professor will provide guidance on what types of comments in class discussions are acceptable and beneficial for fulfillment of the participation grade. Three unexcused absences are permitted before the student's grade is impacted. Completion of online evaluation at the end of the course is a part of classroom participation and is expected from all students.

Reading Assignments:

Students are expected to complete ALL reading assignments. Student progress toward this goal will be evaluated through class discussions. It is expected that students already possess the ability to read and understand scholarly-level publications. Those who are new to reading scholarly writing should consult with the instructor for further resources. I reserve the right to modify readings according to the needs of the class. The reading assignments on the syllabus are relatively light in order to allow you considerable daily time to following current events. Please account for this time commitment when making your schedule for the semester.

Current Events:

Meaningful participation requires a concern for current events in the region of interest. In addition to monitoring the news, students are expected to read stories posted by the professor and their colleagues through the course’s Twitter feed. Each week students should read these stories by Thursday’s class. To facilitate reading these articles, I suggest that students use Flipboard, a service that allows you to customize your own magazine. By connecting Flipboard to your Twitter account, the stories posted by your colleagues will be available in the magazine, which you can then read on your computer or your mobile device.

Written Assignments:

Upper-level undergraduate students need to be developing strong analytical writing skills, particularly if they have intentions of applying for graduate school. Students who successfully complete the written assignments for this course will progress toward meeting this goal in an accelerated manner. There is one written assignment in this course: a ten-page paper assessing one person referred to by the media (or who presents himself or herself) as an expert on the Arab Uprisings.

This assignment will progress in several stages. Students should be attentive to the need to select an expert during the first phase of the course and regularly read news coverage of contemporary events in order to develop an understanding of who the main experts (academics, journalists, policymakers, pundits, etc.) are in the production of knowledge about the Middle East. Students must select an expert to assess by **18 March**. You may find the POMEPS bibliography of Arab Spring writings useful in identifying experts. Find it at: <http://pomeps.org/category/academic-works/arabuprisings/>

The first draft of the final paper is due **1 April** and your second draft is due **8 April**. Students will receive comments from peers on their first draft, and comments from their professor on their second draft. Please note that if you are uncomfortable giving and receiving feedback on your colleagues’ papers, or other forms of collaboration, this is not an appropriate course for you. The final draft of the paper is due **22 April**. Students will present their papers to their peers during the final course sessions. In your presentation, identify and describe your expert and analyze their expertise. Provide examples to defend your assertions. Pre-empt your critics. Plan to answer questions from your colleagues. Anticipate six minutes for the presentation and four minutes for questions. When you are not presenting, ask questions of your colleagues that demonstrate you were engaged to receive your participation credit.

In this course, written assignments will have one-inch margins and be formatted in 11 or 12 point Times New Roman font and double-spaced. Do not use title pages. Do not double-space headings. Do not underline titles, use italics. Use page numbers. If you go by a nickname in class, include it on the assignment along with your formal name. Since many sources will be news articles, use footnotes in place of parenthetical citations. Submit all written assignments through the course’s Blackboard site. Do not submit your paper five minutes before the deadline. Technical failure should be anticipated, not treated like a life or death crisis. Turn your paper in early so you have time to address technical issues. Call the IT desk with your questions prior to emailing your instructor about any technical difficulties. For assistance with written work contact the Student Success Center at 977-3484 or <http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml>.

Grade Scale:

A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D	60-69
B-	80-82	F	Below 60

Grading Detail:

40%	Participation
20%	Oral Midterm
40%	Final Paper

Required Text:

Lynch, Marc. 2013. *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East*. New York: Public Affairs.

Williams, Joseph M., and Joseph Bizup. 2013. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. Pearson Higher Ed.

Academic Honesty:

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in *an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment* and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

Student Learning and Disability Statement:

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [314-977-8885](tel:314-977-8885) or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Extra Credit

This course has one extra-credit opportunity. Watch the presentation “Carleton College, Semiotics of Rebellion from Morocco to Egypt: Media Myths and the Arab Spring” by Amanda Rogers, PhD available at: <http://vimeo.com/52468172>. Then write a two-page (double-spaced) response explaining how this presentation addresses themes discussed in the course. The extra credit is due by **1 April 2014**. Satisfactory responses demonstrating real reflection will yield two extra credit points on your final grade.

Reading Schedule (30 classes)

Unit 1: The Revolutions

- Week One: Introduction 14 and 16 January
- Lynch, Introduction and Ch. 1 “The Arab Uprisings”
 - Khouri “Drop the Orientalist term ‘Arab Spring’”
 - “The Next Greatest Generation?” Ted Radio Hour
<http://www.npr.org/programs/ted-radio-hour/?showDate=2014-01-10>
- Week Two: Historical Context 21 and 23 January
- Lynch, Ch. 2 “The Arab Cold War”
 - Lynch, Ch. 3 “Building Toward Revolution”
- Week Three: Contemporary Context/Green Movement 28 and 30 January
- Lynch, Ch. 4 “A New Hope”
 - The Arab Spring: The End of Postcoloniality, *Introduction*
 - IJMES volume 44
- Week Four: Tunisia 4 and 6 February
- Lynch, Ch. 5 “The Tidal Wave”
 - Fida Adely. 2012. “The Emergence of a New Labor Movement in Jordan | Middle East Research and Information Project.” *Middle East Report* 264.
 - Stepan, Alfred. 2012. “Tunisia’s Transition and the Twin Tolerations.” *Journal of Democracy* 23(2): 89–103.
- Week Five: Egypt 11 and 13 February
- Lynch, Ch. 6 “The Empire Strikes Back: The Counterrevolution”
 - Alsharif, Asma, and Yasmine Saleh. 2013. “Special Report: The Real Force behind Egypt’s ‘Revolution of the State.’” *Reuters*.
 - Cooper, Helene, and Robert F. Worth. 2012. “Arab Spring Proves a Harsh Test for Obama’s Diplomatic Skill.” *The New York Times*.
 - Rogers, Amanda. “Muftah » An Algerian Apocalypse for Egypt? Not Quite.”
<http://muftah.org/an-algerian-apocalypse-for-egypt-not-quite/> (July 17, 2012).
- Week Six: Libya and Syria 18 and 20 February
- Lynch, Ch. 7 “Intervention and Civil War”
 - “LITERATURE | Genres of the ‘Arab Spring’: Narrating Revolutions : Kifah Libya.”
<http://www.kifahlibya.com/2012/05/04/literature-genres-of-the-arab-spring-narrating-revolutions/>
 - In-class Activity: Excerpts from Tripoli Witness, BBC
- Week Seven: The Gulf States 25 and 27 February
- In class film: Bahrain burning
 - POMEPS Bahrain briefing
 - Gengler, Justin. 2013. “Collective Frustration, But No Collective Action, in Qatar.” *Middle East Research and Information Project*.
 - “Trial of UAE Bloggers Set to Resume - Middle East - Al Jazeera English.”
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/07/2011717213325459958.html> (July 19, 2012).
 - Polgreen, Lydia. 2012. “Arab Spring Reveals International Court Flaws.” *The New York Times*.

Week Eight	4 and 6 March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS/ORAL MIDTERMS • Williams and Bizup, all 	
Week Nine	Spring Break
Unit 2: Evaluating the Experts	
Week Ten: Preparing for final papers	18 and 20 March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline to select Expert • Covering Islam, Said 	
Week Eleven: Contemporary Orientalism	25 and 27 March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Arab Spring: The End of Postcoloniality, Ch. 1 • Davis, Muriam Haleh. 20 March 2012. The Invention of the Savage: Colonial Exhibitions and the Staging of the Arab Spring • “Kirkpatrick and the Myth of Egypt’s ‘Liberals.’” <i>Nervana</i>. http://nervana1.org/2013/07/17/kirkpatrick-and-the-myth-of-egypts-liberals/ (July 17, 2013). • “Can Non-Europeans Think?” http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/01/2013114142638797542.html 	
Week Twelve:	1 and 3 April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft One of Papers Due/ Extra Credit Due • Peer Edit 	
Week Thirteen: Academic experts, non-area specialists	8 and 10 April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Two of Papers Due • Berman, Sheri. 2013. “The Promise of the Arab Spring.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 92(1): 64. • Berman, Sheri. 2013. “The Continuing Promise of the Arab Spring.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i>. • Weyland, Kurt. 2012. “The Arab Spring: Why the Surprising Similarities with the Revolutionary Wave of 1848?” <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 10(04): 917–34. 	
Week Fourteen: Academic experts, part II, conceptual scholars	15 and 17 April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goldstone, Jack A. 2011. “Understanding the Revolutions of 2011: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i>. 90: 8. • Stepan, Alfred, and Juan J. Linz. 2013. “Democratization Theory and the ‘Arab Spring.’” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 24(2): 15–30. • Puddington, Arch. 2012. “The Year of the Arab Uprisings.” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 23(2): 74–88. • Filali-Ansary, Abdou. 2012. “The Languages of the Arab Revolutions.” <i>Journal of Democracy</i> 23(2): 5–18. 	
Unit 3: Conclusions	
Week Fifteen	22 and 24 April
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papers Due • Presentations 	
Week Sixteen:	29 April and 1 May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • What I tried to accomplish in this course 	