

The Middle East and the United States; A Study in the Politics of Conflict, Violence and Power

This unit is both brief and different from previous units. Here, even more than in previous units, history is in the service of policy making. Your essay test will be policy recommendations for Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton. Your thesis will be your recommendations; your argument will be the historical material you have read and researched.

There are two distinctive challenges in this unit. First, there is an extra-ordinary amount of information relevant to this unit, and there are many excellent websites, documentaries, and sources for information, as well as a host of books. There are also many silly, hysterical, and even appalling sources. Learn to tell the difference. Second, there are many strong views that swirl around these topics – another reason to look at a variety of sources. Indeed, the material in this unit, moreso than earlier units, is quite controversial. Prepare for this by speaking up for views you value or wish to examine, and by analytically addressing views you find mistaken or offensive. Remember, “Diplomacy is not talking to your friends; it is talking to your enemies.”

Your goal for the test is to be able to write an intelligent informed essay about several key aspects of the Middle East (ME) for US policy. (see the three listed below). You may emphasize two more than the others; that is, you may focus your attention in this unit on two of the topics (but do not utterly neglect the other two!). One of the key goals of this unit is to discover the very different, complex and interrelated problems that are bundled under simplistic names such as “Middle East Crisis”, “terrorism”, or “Islamic fundamentalism.”

Topics covered:

1. “A War on Terror.” The Middle East and US wars: Iraq and Afghanistan.
2. "A Sea of Arabs": The US/Israel alliance and Arab nationalism vs. Islamicism.
3. US-Iranian relations: the broken alliance.

The course website has a long list of relevant links. Please help me update and supplement them. We will also use the PBWorks website which will have the supply of required and supplementary handouts.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2 Test.	3 Lesson #1 Lewis (start)	4 Lesson #2 Lewis (finish)	5 Lesson #3 Israel MP 154-163	6 Lesson #4 Islam & Iran MP 538-543.
9 Lesson #5 Iran MP 547-553. Map Quiz	10 Lesson #6 Gulf War II MP 574-585	11 Lesson #7 Afghanistan MP 571-574 and handout.	12 Lesson #8 Arab Awakening: handout	13 Lesson #9 Catch-up and Test Review
16 TEST	17 US Foreign Policy MP 3-5, 593-599	18 <i>Exam Review</i>	19 <i>Exam Review</i>	20 <i>Exam Review</i>

The final exam will be on Friday, May 27th at 8:30AM.

Two paths?



Protesters in Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt.
January 2011



Protesters in Quetta, Pakistan
May 2011