

The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Middle Eastern Studies
Term: Summer 2024

Time: MTWTHF 1:00 PM -2:30 PM (Delivered Via Zoom)
Office Hours: F 3-5; or by appointment

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RULE OF LAW IN THE MIDDLE EAST
GOV F366O/MES F341/ISL F373/RS F358L

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Rule of law has become one of the foundations of modern government. Its purpose is to limit the exercise of state power and to prevent its abuse. The phrase, “rule of law,” is used to communicate a set of intertwined ideas about strengthening the legal profession, fighting corruption, advancing the rights and professional participation of women, enhancing access to justice, and building a rule of law culture. Therefore, this course engages with questions about modern legal orders, good governance, corruption, and revolution. By implementing these ideas through well-thought-out programs, it is assumed that nation states can normalize a set of international standards for best practices of governance.

PREREQUISITES

None

GLOBAL CULTURES FLAG

This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

LEARNING GOALS

After completing this course successfully, students should be able to:

- Outline the central contentions within modern discussions on rule of law
- Identify key debates on the political future of good governance in the Middle East
- Situate calls to self-determination, liberation, and decolonialism within postcolonial Muslim states and evaluate current attempts to rethink democratic rule, revolution, and authoritarianism.
- Give an overview of specific case studies and reasons of national politics, mobilization, and political violence in local and global contexts

ONE-TIME-ONLY TRIGGER WARNING:

Over the course of the semester, you will be encountering a number of topics that you may find challenging or difficult. I will encourage you to carefully look at the themes and subjects of the textbook to seek potential accommodation according to UT policy or determine whether this course is suitable for you.

REQUIRED TEXTS [TEXTBOOK IS AVAILABLE FOR FREE ON UT LIBRARIES]

The Rule of Law in the Middle East and the Islamic World: Human Rights and the Judicial Process, eds. Eugene Cotran, Mai Yamani (I. B. Tauris (September 2, 2000)

Two copies available electronically through the UT Libraries (enter your EID and password):
https://search.lib.utexas.edu/permalink/01UTAU_INST/be14ds/alma991057928166306011

RECOMMENDED

Nathan Brown, *The Rule of Law in the Arab World: Courts in Egypt and the Gulf* (Cambridge Middle East Studies, 2007)

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS: To be placed on the course website on CANVAS

GRADING: Due to COVID-19 measures, our class will be meeting online via Zoom.

Required Assignments

“Online” Attendance/Participation	10%
(2) Quizzes, 15% each	30%
(4) Journal Entries, 5% each	20%
Midterm Test	20%
Final Test	20%

GRADING SCHEME

Total %	Letter Grade	Total %	Letter Grade
93–100	A	72-75.9	C
90–93.9	A-	69-71.9	C-
87–89.9	B+	66-68.9	D+
84–86.9	B	63-65.9	D
80–83.9	B-	60-62.9	D-
76–79.9	C+	<60	F

Note: Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY: Attendance is required. “Attendance” in this online format will be ability to watching the lecture synchronously or “watching” the recorded lecture if you have legitimate reasons that it will inhibit or cause difficulty for you to online attendance.

All students should read the assigned readings beforehand and be ready for class discussions. If these discussions are to be successful, students will need to have carefully read the assigned texts. Students will be expected to ask informed questions, and to respect each other, the professor, teaching assistant and guest lecturers. Students can increase their participation grade by visiting their professor during his office hours for informal conversation and/or help with the course.

POP-UP QUIZZES: will usually be on *Fridays* and will be held on Canvas. Students will have a 24-hr period to complete. It will be a short question or multiple-choice quiz administered and graded via Canvas. These quizzes will be based on both class notes and readings. A failure to stay on top of course readings will result in poor grades. I will offer make-up quizzes and tests only for extenuating circumstances, at my discretion, if the reason is compelling and documented according to UT policy.

JOURNALS: Over the course of the semester, you must write *4 journal entries* (each entry is 5% of the overall 20% assigned to Journals). The entries are based on the readings/documentaries assigned on the due date. Please upload your journal to canvas. Entries must be submitted by 11:59 PM on the due dates given in the syllabus. Late entries will be marked *2 points* down for *each* late submission.

In each entry, you must do the following:

- Summary of the reading's key issues and arguments
- Relate this reading to other conversations in class or approaches discussed in the reading
- Offer your own reflections upon the reading
- Entries should be 250-300 words in length
- Style: Font: Times New Roman, 11pt; Margins: 1 inch; Line Spacing: Double
- Each journal entry will be assigned **5 points**, equally distributed between the categories in the rubric below:

Deadlines for Journal Entries

- Journal Entry # 1 — July 19, 2024 @ 11:59 PM
- Journal Entry # 2 — July 26, 2024 @ 11:59 PM
- Journal Entry # 3 — August 2, 2024 @ 11:59 PM
- Journal Entry # 4— August 9, 2024 @ 11:59 PM

Rubric for Journals:

	A-B range (5-3)	C-D range (3-2)	F range (1-0)
Content (3 points)	Journal entry focuses on the important information in the reading. It details key issues and arguments of the readings	Journal entry provides a general idea about the reading but it does not address the arguments or the issue of the reading. It offers some summary of the readings	Journal entry does not engage with the reading and offers no relevant information
Reflection (1 points)	Journal entry offers a reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and/or strategies presented in the reading materials to date. Viewpoints and interpretations are insightful and supported.	Journal entry offers a minimal reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and/or strategies presented in the course materials to date. Viewpoints and interpretations are unsupported or supported with flawed arguments	Journal entry offers no reflection on, or personalization of, the theories, concepts, and/or strategies presented in the course materials to date. Viewpoints and interpretations are missing, inappropriate, and/or unsupported.

Grammar, Mechanics, Spelling, and Sentence Structure (1 points)	Journal is polished; maximum of <i>one</i> grammar or spelling error	Journal is adequate; maximum of <i>three</i> grammar or spelling errors.	Inadequate discussion; more than <i>five</i> spelling or grammar errors.
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MID-TERM TEST – The format of this test will consist of identifications (terms and passages), and short essays. This will be a take-home test administered via Canvas on Monday, July 29. Students will have a 24-hr period to complete the test. The test must be completed in the same session once you start it.

FINAL TEST – the final test will be a take-home test administered via Canvas on the last day of classes August 16, 2024. Students will have a 24-hr period to complete the test. The test must be completed in the same session once you start it.

COURSE WEBSITES

In this class I use Canvas – a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://canvas.utexas.edu>– to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, etc. You can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk at (512) 475- 9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

WEEK ONE

July 15: Syllabus + Course Introduction

July 16: The Rule of Law in Egypt from a Judicial Perspective [asynchronous]

July 17: Human Rights, the Rule of Law, and the Construction of Tradition

July 18: Human Rights Protection and the Rule of Law

July 19: The Middle East Peace Process and the Rule of Law

- **Journal Entry # 1 — July 19, 2024 @ 11:59 PM**

WEEK TWO

July 22: A Pause: Class discussions

July 23: The Rule of Law in Palestine

July 24: The Rule of Law in Iraq

July 25: The Rule of Law and Human Rights in Jordan

July 26: Documentary: ([The Arab Awakening: Absolute Power](#), Aljazeera English)

- **Journal Entry # 2 — July 26, 2024 @ 11:59 PM**

WEEK THREE

July 29: Midterm Test (Via Canvas)

July 30: The Rule of Law in Yemen

July 31: The Rule of Law in Saudi Arabia

August 1: Human Rights in Afghanistan

August 2: Documentary: ([Life in Taliban's Afghanistan](#) by Vice News)

- **Journal Entry # 3 — August 2, 2024 @ 11:59 PM**

WEEK FOUR

August 5: **Midterm Test [Canvas]**

August 6: Muslim Women and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia

August 7: The Islamization of Laws in Pakistan

August 8: The Shura and Human Rights in Islamic Law

August 9: Documentary: [Six days that changed the Middle East: The '67 Arab-Israeli War](#) (Al Jazeera English)

- **Journal Entry # 4 — August 9, 2024 @ 11:59 PM**

WEEK FIVE

August 12: Islamic constitutionalism and rule of law

August 13: Democratic authority, public Islam, and Shi'i jurisprudence in Iran and Iraq

August 14: Class Feedback

August 15: Reading Day

August 16: Final Test [Canvas]



COURSE POLICIES

Use of Class Materials:

The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, exams, quizzes, and homework assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. Such violations include, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students.

University Policy on Religious Holidays:

A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible (at least **fourteen days** in advance), so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

Extension Policy:

Extensions on papers and exams will only be granted for documented, exigent circumstances.

Accessible Education:

The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. You will need to provide documentation to the Dean of Student's Office so that the most appropriate accommodations can be determined. Specialized services are available on campus through Services for Students with Disabilities (SSB 4.104, 512-471-6259). Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (512-471-6259 voice or 512-471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:

“The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community” (University Honor Code). “As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity” (New Student Honor Code). Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty of plagiarism are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the Student Judicial Services Web site: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

E-mail and this Course:

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, you are responsible for reading your email for university and course-related information and announcements. You are responsible for keeping the university informed about changes to your e-mail address. You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-critical. University policy suggests that students should check e-mail at a minimum of twice per week. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address at www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php.

Drop Dates:

Please consult the registrar's website for important information on drop dates.

Resources for Life and Learning at UT Austin:

The University of Texas has numerous resources for students to provide assistance and support for your learning. They include:

- Sanger Learning and Career Center: <http://lifelearning.utexas.edu/>
- Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>
- Counseling & Mental Health Center: <http://cmhc.utexas.edu/>