

University of Toronto
Department of Political Science
2013-14
POL 498H1/2801H (S)
Intensive Course: The Middle East & International Diplomacy -
Today & in the Future

I. Course Description

This course is aimed at providing students with a practitioner's perspectives on diplomacy and mediation in the Middle East today. As such, it will take three main approaches:

1) A discussion and understanding of where the region stands today, with all its current dynamic changes. Although this subject will be specifically covered in the first session, it will pervade all other discussions. Part of the intention of the course is to gain this greater understanding of political and other key dynamics by looking at various forms of active and practical diplomacy in the region.

2) A look at four cases studies of mediation, policy development and international intervention, with an aim of gaining "lessons learned" regarding the practice of diplomacy and mediation today. These will include: discrete Track II mediations that Mr. Bell has facilitated, the Jerusalem Old City Initiative, a Canadian-led policy development process, a look at the state of play in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, as well as the failures of international diplomacy with regard to the Syria crisis.

3) An introduction to new ideas that may make diplomacy more successful in the future. Many of these will be rooted in greater understanding of human functioning, i.e. anthropology and psychology. In order to understand the diplomatic context better, a look at various forms of mediation active today will also be considered. The need for new approaches will also be interwoven into the discussion of the case studies: as lessons are learned, the investigation of innovative options will be considered.

II. Course Details & Schedule

This intensive course is open to ten 4th-year undergraduate students (pending Departmental approval) and ten graduate students. This course counts as a half credit course and will be composed of eight 3-hour sessions (see schedule below). In general, each session will be composed of an hour introduction and lecture by the professor, one hour for a case study or practical examination of an issue, and one for interaction between the professor and students. This pattern differs according to the needs of each issue being examined.

Schedule: Monday, January 20, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Tuesday, January 21, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Wednesday, January 22, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Thursday, January 23, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Monday, January 27, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Tuesday, January 28, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Wednesday, January 29, 2014, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m.
 Thursday, January 30, 2014, 9:00 – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Sidney Smith Hall, Room 3130

Session 1: An Overview of the Middle East.

In order to proceed with the other dimensions of the course, a general overview of current political and other trends in the region is required. Where are we at today? What are the major current dynamics, cultural and geopolitical? There will be a focus on the Arab revolutions but also on the status of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the struggle for regional hegemony between Israel, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and other matters.

- a) Presentation of the Dynamics in the Region by professor
- b) Open Discussion
- c) Counterviews to the presentation by students

Session 2: Track II mediation - Case Study

What is Track II mediation?

Case study: How do you get Israel and Hamas, or Israel and Hizballah, to talk? How do you manage it if they do?

- a) Introduction to Track II in general and presentation of the parameters for the case study to students
- b) Students' responses: how they would manage the case
- c) Professor presents the actual experience of the case study (in comparison to students' presentations). Discussion

Session 3: The World of Mediation - A Review

Where does it stand today? What are the different approaches by used by various organizations? What processes are pursued: mediation, peacebuilding, dialogue, policy development? What is effective, what isn't? This session will also deal with the differences between Track 1, 1.5 and 2 diplomacy as well as the role of civil society.

- a) Presentation of world of mediation
- b) General Questions and Answers
- c) Focus on what works, what does not? What is missing?

Session 4: The Jerusalem Old City Initiative (JOCI)

An example of a Track II policy development (vs. mediation) process. Beyond examining this very process, its benefits and limits, there will be a discussion of the question of Jerusalem as an issue of political contention. How would the students tackle Jerusalem?

- a) Presentation on JOCI and on Jerusalem
- b) Questions and Answers
- c) Students present their answers to the city

Session 5: Critical issues in the region - Israel-Palestine

This issue will be examined from a policy and conflict resolution standpoint. Is it at a dead end? Will the current negotiations go anywhere? What are the lessons learned from past efforts?

- a) Presentation of the mediation history on the issue
- b) Where we stand today and what can be done? Open Discussion
- c) Students present their recommendations on solutions: what can work, or, if a process cannot, why. (Preparation will be through the sessions preceding and some of the reading; however, it is expected that they are also capable of contributing rapidly as information is provided).

Session 6: Critical issues in the region - Syria and the Failure of International Diplomacy

Why has the situation unfolded as it has? Were there other scenarios possible? What are the lessons learned?

- a) Presentation of how the Syrian crisis occurred
- b) Question period
- c) Students role-play various actors in the crisis. Discussion of the role-play.

Session 7: Looking forward - Where is the Arab world going after the Revolutions?

What are the root causes of the events? How can the Arab World proceed on a more constructive path? What positive role can countries in the West play? Do we need to look at each country separately, or are there regional dynamics? In this session, the order is reversed:

- a) Students first provide their views
- b) Questions from Professor
- c) Discussion of possible scenarios by professor and students.

Session 8: An Investigation of New and Innovative Ideas

Given the failure of governance and many diplomatic initiatives in the region so far, what is the basis for more effective diplomacy and politics? A presentation of a few possibilities for discussion.

- a) Presentation of new foundations by the professor
- b) Discussion
- c) Concluding questions

III. Primary Objective of the Course

The objective of the course is to leave the students with a sense of the complexities and the "art" of political judgment required to deal with international conflict and policy development. Therefore, there will be a strong reliance on student participation in class, and involvement in case studies. There are required and recommended readings (see below). Appreciation of the course will be much enhanced through attending to the recommended readings as well.

IV. Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students should have:

- A better appreciation of the complexities of the Middle East as a region, the lacunae in Western policy towards the region, and future processes that may be more constructive.
- An understanding of a range of mediation efforts in the Middle East, their strengths and limits.
- An idea of where the world of mediation and diplomacy may need to go in the future to become more effective in the Middle East and elsewhere.

V. Course Requirements

In order to place a greater emphasis on the practical experience of diplomacy, this class is heavily oriented towards interaction between the professor and students, as well as between students, to resolve case studies or investigate possible scenarios. Therefore, there is a heavy weighting in the assessment process on oral participation in the class:

- Active participation in all course discussions (40%)
- Contribution to the four case studies (Track II Mediation, Jerusalem, Israel-Palestine, Syria) (30%) (see below for more detail)
- Analytical Essay (3000 words, not including notes and bibliography) (30%) (to be submitted after the end of course). Topic to be discussed with professor.

Active participation in course discussions will be judged by both the quality and quantity of interventions, the originality of remarks and insightfulness of questions, as well as the ability of the student to interact with the comments of fellow students, and incorporate elements of their ideas into his/her own.

Regarding the case studies, the assessment is based primarily, but not solely, on the following:

- a) Track II case Study (session 2): originality and political judgment in presenting how to handle the case.
- b) Jerusalem Issue (session 4): Coherence and comprehensive nature of students' answers to the city, as well as arguments regarding the practicality of their propositions.
- c) Israel-Palestine (session 5): Demonstration of understanding of complexity of issue on all sides, what compromises need to be made, and can be made, and the political cost of such compromises.
- d) The Crisis in Syria (session 6): Appreciation of geopolitical breadth of issue as well as limits of actors. During role-play: an ability to defend and advocate interests of

specific actor as well as creativity in finding solutions (while still being realistic of political reality of each actor).

The essay can be on any of the subjects presented during the course, or another of interest to the student that meets the agreement of the professor, and will be assessed on the strength of analysis, innovation and forward looking perspectives, and practical considerations, i.e. can the ideas presented meet the test of reality and, if not, what is their longer term purpose.

VII. Course Reading List

Required Reading:

In addition to academic works listed, the course will rely on using op-eds and analysis from the media as required readings for the sessions because that is the source of information and a definer of discourse for policymakers. As such, students will get a stronger sense of the information environment in actual diplomacy.

Overall:

Track Two Diplomacy, A Theoretical Approach, Peter Jones, University of Ottawa.

The Peace Puzzle: America's Quest for Arab-Israeli Peace, 1989-2011 (Published in Collaboration with the United States Institute of Peace), [Daniel C. Kurtzer](#) (Author), [Scott B. Lasensky](#) (Author), [William B. Quandt](#) (Author), [Steven L. Spiegel](#) (Author), [Shibley Z. Telhami](#) (Author)

The Second Arab Awakening, Marwan Muasher, to be released December 31, 2013

Session 1

"**A Festival of Lies**", Thomas Friedman, New York Times.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/25/opinion/sunday/friedman-a-festival-of-lies.html?emc=eta1>

The Arab Wars of Religion, Shlomo Ben Ami, <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/egypt-and-the-struggle-for-arab-democracy-by-shlomo-ben-ami>

Redrawing the Middle East map: Iran, Syria and the new Cold War, Roxanne **Farmanfarmaian**
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/11/2012111311424048459.html>

The Shadow Commander, Dexter Filkins
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2013/09/30/130930fa_fact_filkins

It's ever so simple: a tribal map of the Middle East
<http://www.karlremarks.com/2013/03/its-ever-so-simple-tribal-map-of-middle.html>

Session 2

Background for Case Study: To be made available by professor

Session 3

From Pre-Talks to Implementation: Lessons Learned from Mediation Processes,
Crisis Management Initiative

Managing a Mediation Process, United States Institute for Peace,
<http://www.usip.org/publications/managing-mediation-process-0>

Familiarization with the following organizations:

Crisis Management Initiative (<http://www.cmi.fi/>)

Centre for Humanitarian Development (<http://www.hdcentre.org/en/>)

Search for Common ground (www.sfcg.org)

Conciliation Resources (<http://www.c-r.org>)

Toledo International Centre for Peace (www.toledopax.org)

The Carter Centre (www.cartercenter.org/)

St. Egiddio (<http://www.santegidio.org/index.php?&idLng=1064>)

Wilton Park (<https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/>)

Forward Thinking (<http://www.forwardthinking.org/>)

The Dialogue Advisory Group (<http://www.dialogueadvisorygroup.org/>)

Session 4

The Jerusalem Old City Initiative: An Analytical History of the Product, Dr. David
Cameron, Acting Dean, Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Toronto

The Jerusalem Old City Initiative, Summary Papers, University of Windsor

New Muslim vision for Temple Mount, Sinem Tezpayar
<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4355421,00.html>

The Future of Jerusalem, The Editors of the Atlantic Monthly,
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/11/the-future-of-jerusalem/248355/>

No One People Owns Jerusalem, Karen Armstrong,

Session 5

"The Emperor has no Clothes", Crisis group.
<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/israel-palestine/122-the-emperor-has-no-clothes-palestinians-and-the-end-of-the-peace-process.aspx>

'Peace Without Partners', Ami Ayalon, Orni Petruschka and Gilead Sher
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/24/opinion/peace-without-partners.html?emc=eta1&_r=0

"Madrid + 20" Meeting, Summary of Discussion, Toledo International Centre for Peace

'**After the Peace Talks fail**', Amira Hass, <http://www.haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-1.537559>

Map of Settlements in the West Bank:

<http://peacenow.org.il/eng/sites/default/files/Settlement%20Map%20Nov%202011%20Page%201.pdf>

The Most Contentious Settlements in the West Bank, Dan Rothem,

http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/11/the-most-contentious-settlements-in-the-west-bank/247650/#.Tq_rFnYQP50.facebook

Session 6

Context Blindness and the Crisis in Syria, John Bell and John Zada

<http://www.theplanisphere.com/2013/syria-context-blindness-caetextia/>

The Syrian Heartbreak, Peter Harling, <http://merip.org/mero/mero041613>

The Bombing of Al Bara, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/foreign-affairs-defense/syria-behind-the-lines/the-bombing-of-al-bara/>

A Seven Point Plan to Prevent the Collapse of Syria, Hossein Mousavian,

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/04/preventing-collapse-of-syria.html>

Asking Assad to stay is asking Syrians to be party to a charade, Amal Hanano,

<http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/asking-assad-to-stay-is-asking-syrians-to-be-party-to-a-charade#full>

Identity Crisis, The Atlantic Monthly, February 1993, Robert Kaplan. To be distributed by professor.

Session 7

Media Survey of opinions across the Arab world,

http://menamediasurvey.northwestern.edu/#section=free_speech&q=1

Insights into Arab Youth Today, Rami G. Khouri,

http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Summary_Report_A_GENERATION_ON_THE_MOVE_AUB_IFI_UNICEF_MENARO_.pdf

This is Not a Revolution, Hussein Agha and Rob Malley. New York Review of Books

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2012/nov/08/not-revolution/?pagination=false>

Demystifying the Arab Spring. Full Text Available By: Anderson, Lisa. *Foreign Affairs*, May/Jun2011, Vol. 90 Issue 3, p2-7, 6p,

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=58&hid=113&sid=84856e94-ea9d-4471-a928-6290bc0d7111%40sessionmgr13&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=60122515>

Political Order in Egypt [Francis Fukuyama](#), <http://www.the-american-interest.com/articles/2011/5/1/political-order-in-egypt/>

Why Men revolt, Robert Kaplan, <http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/why-men-revolt>

Session 8

Why is Iran so difficult to get right in Washington? Al Jazeera, Reza Marashi and Trita Parsi
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/06/2013630111133190971.html>

Them and Us, Cult Thinking and the Terrorist Threat, Dr. Arthur Deikman
<http://deikman.com/wrong.html>

Old World New Mind, John Bell <http://albabblog.blogspot.com/2011/05/old-world-new-mind.html>

'Axis of evil' versus 'the great Satan', John Bell, Human Givens Journal

"Culture in the Mediation of International Disputes." Carnevale, Peter J. and Dong-Won Choi, *International Journal of Psychology* 35, no2 (2000):105-110

La fin de l'humanité, Walid Joumblatt,
<http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/818242/la-fin-de-lhumanite-.html>

Behind Flurry of Killing, Potency of Hate, [KATRIN BENNHOLD](#),
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/13/world/europe/behind-flurry-of-killing-potency-of-hate.html?_r=0

Recommended Reading and Viewing:

Overall

The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967, Fouad Ajami

Democracy Without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World, Ghassan Salame (ed.) I.B. Tauris, 2001

Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring. Full Text Available By: Game III, F. Gregory. *Foreign Affairs*, Jul/Aug2011, Vol. 90 Issue 4, p81-90, 10p
<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=60&hid=113&sid=84856e94-ea9d-4471-a928->

[6290bc0d7111%40sessionmgr13&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=61295102](http://www.muse.jhu.edu/journals/world_politics/v053/53.3ross.html)

Session 1

Does Oil Hinder Democracy? World Politics (April 2001), 53 (3), pg. 325-361
Michael Lewin Ross http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/world_politics/v053/53.3ross.html

The Black Swan of Cairo. Full Text Available By: Taleb, Nassim Nicholas; Blyth, Mark. *Foreign Affairs*, May/Jun2011, Vol. 90 Issue 3, p33-39, 7p, 1 Black and White Photograph
<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=60&hid=113&sid=84856e94-ea9d-4471-a928-6290bc0d7111%40sessionmgr13&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=60123020>

The Dwarfs, Uri Avnery, <http://www.avnery-news.co.il/english/index.html>

The Arab Spring and Climate Change, Caitlin E. Werrell, Francesco Femia, and Anne-Marie Slaughter
<http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/report/2013/02/28/54579/the-arab-spring-and-climate-change/+c>

Imagining a Remapped Middle East, ROBIN WRIGHT
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/29/opinion/sunday/imagining-a-remapped-middle-east.html?ref=international&r=3&>

The Risings Three Years On, Rami G. Khouri,
<http://www.aucegypt.edu/gapp/cairoreview/pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=486>

Session 4

An Interreligious Council for Jerusalem, Dr. Michael Dumper
<http://www.toledopax.org/uploads/Religious%20Council%20of%20Jerusalem.pdf>

The Politics of Sacred Space: The Old City of Jerusalem in the Middle East Conflict, Michael Dumper, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Jan 1, 2002

Mapping The Dangerous Future Of Jerusalem, By Sarah Wildman,
<http://www.newsweek.com/mapping-dangerous-future-jerusalem-62961>

Session 5

Toward a New American Policy, Daniel C. Kurtzer,
<http://www.aucegypt.edu/GAPP/CairoReview/Pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=300>

Recommended Viewing: "The Gatekeepers" - Film Documentary. "Six former heads of the Shin Bet, Israel's secret service agency, agree to share their insights and reflect publicly on their actions and decisions. Intimately interviewed, they shed light on the controversy surrounding the Occupation in the aftermath of the Six Day War."

Session Six

How Obama bungled the Syrian revolution, By Jackson Diehl,

http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-10-14/opinions/35501906_1_foreign-policy-syria-experts-barack-obama

The Right Questions on Syria, [NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF](#)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/05/opinion/kristof-the-right-questions-on-syria.html?partner=rss&emc=rss>

Session Eight

Inside White House, a Head-Spinning Reversal on Chemical Weapons, Adam Entous, Janet Hook and Carol E. Lee

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323527004579077401049154032>

Them and Us: Cult Thinking and the Terrorist Threat, Dr. Arthur Deikman, Bay Tree Pub., Sep 1, 2003

Biography: John Bell

John Bell has worked for over two decades on Middle East politics, policy development and mediation. He was worked and lived in Cairo, Beirut, Gaza and Jerusalem and has had considerable experience on the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as political developments in the Arab world.

He is today Director of the Middle East and Mediterranean Programme at the Toledo International Centre for Peace in Madrid, Senior Advisor for the Middle East and North Africa at Crisis Management Initiative in Helsinki, Finland, and was formerly Middle East Director in Jerusalem for Search for Common Ground, a global conflict resolution organization..

He is also a former United Nations and Canadian diplomat who served as a political officer at Canada's embassy in Cairo, a member of Canada's delegation to the Refugee Working Group in the peace process, Political Advisor to the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for southern Lebanon, advisor to the Canadian Government during the Iraq crisis in 2002-03 and Consultant to the International Crisis Group on recent developments in Jerusalem.

Mr. Bell is also a founding member of the "Jerusalem Old City Initiative" (University of Windsor), an effort to find creative options for this contentious issue. Mr. Bell also has extensive experience in communications as spokesperson for the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and Communications Coordinator for the Signing Conference for the International Treaty to Ban Landmines in Ottawa, 1997.

He has lectured on Middle East issues at universities in Canada, as well as the Canadian

Foreign Service Institute and has written articles on these matters in newspapers and journals across the globe. Today, he also has a cultural blog on the region: <http://albabblog.blogspot.com>. Mr. Bell is fluent in English, Arabic and French.