MODULE SYLLABUS POL41920:

POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR
IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

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CONTENTS

I) MODULE DESCRIPTOR & LEARNING OUTCOMES

Welcome to Political Behavior in the Middle East and North Africa!

The 2011 Arab Uprisings have brought the grievances of Arab citizens to the fore. Youth but also many ordinary citizens that had been excluded from politics for decades participated in large scale demonstrations, and, in some countries, in the first meaningful elections of their lives. While most autocratic leaders came out on top of the uprisings, the scale of the protests highlighted the important connections between grievances, political participation, and political choice in the Middle East and North Africa.

This module explores political behavior in the MENA both from the perspective of citizens and opposition movements. It makes use of the large array of public opinion data that has been generated in Arab countries over the past decade on issues ranging from views on democracy, support for terrorism, social capital, appraisals of performance of state institutions, and political participation. Students will not only learn how to use such data in their own research but also to critically interrogate the quality of such data and think about the circumstances under which they were gathered.

Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of key issues and debates on contemporary MENA political behaviour
- Understand citizen preferences in the MENA
- Appraise the link between grievances and political behavior in the MENA
- Ability to analyze and present Arab public opinion data
- Ability to analyze and present primary qualitative data (e.g. party manifestos, focus groups)
- Presentation & Paper writing skills

II) SHORT OVERVIEW

Session	Date	Topic
1	10/09	Introduction to political behavior and the module
2	17/09	Working with Public Opinion Data
3	24/09	Political Regimes in the MENA pre-Uprising
4	1/10	Citizen Grievances in the MENA
5	8/10	Arab spring movements
6	15/10	Outcome of Arab Spring- what changed where?
7	22/10	Corruption, & Political Efficacy
8	29/10	Content Analysis and Coding
9	5/11	Party Platforms
10	12/11	Political Disaffection
11	19/11	Thematic Presentations
12	26/11	Country Report- Short Presentations

III) ASSESSMENT

Your grades are composed of the following components

1) Active participation: 15%
2) Discussion Question: 15%
3) Thematic Presentation: 30%
4) Short Presentation of a section of your term paper in class: 10%
5) Term Paper 30%

These components involve the following activities:

Active participation (15%)

This involves the following elements: attendance, required preparation, and active participation in the discussion and activities. Obviously, if you do not attend, you cannot get these credits. However, if you just sit there and do not contribute, you will not get full credit for active participation. Likewise, it is very clear if a student has completed the required preparation in this module. To get full credit, please make sure to come prepared to the session.

Preparation of a discussion question (15%)

You have to prepare a question that a) speaks to the topic of the session and b) can be investigated with the data at hand; typically, the reading will help you identifying such a question. Please note that only six sessions require questions, namely 3,4,5,6,7,9. Your questions, refined through the class discussion, will contribute to our empirical investigations in that session.

- You must let me know **by the end of the second session for which session you would like to sign up**

- You must **email me your question two days before the session** (i.e. by Sunday evening) **together with a 500-word explanation** about a) why this is an interesting question and b) ideas how to investigate this session empirically

Thematic Presentation (30%)

Join with 1-2 other countries and prepare a joint presentation on one of the themes, or sub-themes of this module that is based on knowledge you have gained about your countries over the course of this module. You should attempt to answer a research question with your thematic presentation, for example, you could be asking whether party platforms in your three countries speak to the most important grievances in these countries and discuss potential explanations for whether this may or may not be the case. Your presentation should take between 15-20 minutes.

I will form groups by the 27th of September depending on class size.

Please propose me a topic for your presentation **by the 22nd of October**.

Country Report – Short Presentation (10%) and Term Paper (30%)

During the first session of this module you will be assigned a MENA country from the following list: Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia. For most sessions (see details below in detailed session structure), you will have to find some information about your country that we will use when looking into the politics of these particular countries. Information about the type of data you must find and where to find it will be provided on Brightspace.

Your term paper (30%) will consist of a country report.

Your term paper should have about 5,000 words, including references. It must be composed of the following sections. **Each section must be supported by macro and micro data**. The easiest way to go about this is to update your report with the information & data we have discussed in class after each session and produce a short write up on this. Your report must have the following sections, make sure that they are fairly balanced in length.

a) The political regime in [your country] before the Arab Uprisings
b) Grievances of citizens in [your country]
c) The Arab uprising and protesters in [your country]
d) Politics in [your country] after the Arab Uprisings
e) Corruption and Efficacy in [your country]

In addition, you must present one section of your country report in class on the 26th of November (10%).

The deadline for submitting your term paper is the 16th of December 2019. Your term paper must be uploaded on Brightspace.

IV) DETAILED SESSION STRUCTURE

The standard session format is as follows – there are of course some exceptions

1) Introductory lecture
2) Discussion & elaboration of questions for empirical analysis
3) Analysis of Data and Discussion of Findings in small groups
4) Discussion of broader patterns in large group

Note on data:

In most sessions, we will work with different types of data that will shed light on the theme of the session. In the first part of the module, an important data source will come from the Arab Barometer, a nationally representative opinion survey that has been conducted since the late 2000 in different Arab countries. These data are called individual-level data because they give information of what individual citizens in these countries think about a variety of things, for example, their governments, democracy, institutions and so on. You are not required to have previous experience in analyzing and interpreting such data. In addition, we will use country-level data that you will be collecting as a preparation.

In the second part of this module, we will look into qualitative data and ways to analyse them. In this case, the data are come either from documents that were generated by political organizations, such as party manifestos, or from qualitative interviews, such as focus groups. Again, you do not need to have prior experience in this, it is part of the things you will learn to do in this module.

S	Topic	Objectives	Your Preparation	Reading
1	Intro	• Basic knowledge of pol. behaviour research • Knowledge of expectations & allocation of countries	Read syllabus	Syllabus
2	Working with Public Opinion Data	• understand basic challenges and opportunities in working with PO • learn to do a crosstab in excel and the types of insights it gives	1) Download small country dataset from Brightspace & get acquainted with format 2) Search questions measuring support for democracy in Arab Barometer questionnaires 3) Reading	Tessler and Jamal 2008. Political Attitude Research in the Arab World: Emerging Opportunities
3	MENA Political Regimes pre-Uprising	• Understand context of political behavior in MENA • Understand how citizens relate to political institutions in the MENA	1) Reading 2) Prepare country-specific data on a) institutions pre Arab Uprisings and b) some basics on country history	Bellin 2004. The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective
4	Citizen Grievances in MENA	• Understand typical grievances in MENA: what are citizens concerned about?	1) Reading (only until p. 73) 2) Prepare objective data on reasons for grievances	Cammett & Salti 2018. Popular grievances in the Arab region. Evaluating explanations for discontent in the lead-up to the uprisings

S	Topic	Objectives	Your Preparation	Reading
5	Arab spring movements: who participated?	• Understand drivers of participation in Arab Spring movements; understand relation to organized opposition movements	1) Reading 2) prepare country-specific data on Arab Spring events/ protest 3) watch https://youtu.be/b_4XkP-Isqk and https://youtu.be/VzNzOiao418	Bellin 2012. Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring (especially from p.135 onward)
6	MENA politics post Arab Uprising I	• Understand what changes countries underwent in Uprising • understand attitudes towards political institutions post Uprising	1) Reading 2) Prepare country-specific data on institutions post Arab Uprisings 3) Download individual level data	Kao & Lust 2017. Why Did the Arab Uprisings Turn Out as They Did? A Survey of the Literature
7	MENA politics post Arab Uprising II	• understand beliefs about corruption and efficacy in present-day regimes	1) Reading 2) Prepare country-specific data on corruption 3) Download individual level data	Buehler 2019. "Judges, Bribes, and Verdicts: How Court Experience Reshapes Attitudes about Judicial Corruption..." Mediterranean Politics
8	Content Analysis and Coding	• Understand how to use content analysis to analyse qualitative data • understand types of coding • learn to apply codes	1) Reading	https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=61
9	Party Platforms	• Learn to use coding to analyse party manifestos; • learn about differences and similarities in MENA political parties	1) Identify 1-2 English language party platforms for your country (email to be one day before class) 2) read up on relevant political parties 3) collect information on support	Wegner & Cavatorta 2018. Revisiting the Islamist–Secular divide: Parties and voters in the Arab world
10	How ordinary citizens view politics	• understand political disillusionment in MENA • apply inductive approach	1) download and read through assigned transcripts 2) begin coding	Focus group transcripts provided on Brightspace
11	Thematic presentations	• student presentations	N/A	Download feedback sheet
12	Country report, short presentations	• get feedback on approach towards country report	N/A	N/A