The History and Politics of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East

MAMES –2018

Instructor: Brandon Friedman, PhD
b.bfried@gmail.com
Office: Gilman Building, 421
Office hours: TBA

Course Description

This course is a graduate level introduction to the history and politics of weapons of mass destruction (“WMD”) in the Middle East, with a focus on nuclear energy and nuclear weapons. This course is not intended to examine nuclear strategy or theory, but it may touch on those issues as they relate to the various cases in the Middle East. Instead, this course will focus on the existing empirical scholarly literature on these issues with an emphasis on analyzing how historical context (change and continuity in time and place) has influenced WMD developments in various countries of the region.

Grading

70% course research paper
30% attendance and participation

Course Requirements

Your primary assignment for this course is a research paper (70%). I grade papers based on 4 basic elements: 1) Did the student demonstrate a command of the secondary source literature on the topic? 2) Did the student demonstrate a command of the facts on his/her topic? 3) Did the student raise an important question regarding the topic or introduce a unique analytical argument about the topic? In other words, did the student successfully locate his/her analysis in the existing arguments about the issue? 4) Was the paper well-organized and presented?

Paper topics must be submitted for approval before the end of the semester. Papers that are submitted prior to receiving my approval on the topic will not be graded. Students may submit topics via email as an attachment in Microsoft Word (no more than 2 pages). The topic should include a research question(s) and a preliminary secondary source bibliography.

Your attendance and participation are the second component of your final grade (30%). Classes will be interactive. This is a graduate seminar and learning will be based on independent reading outside of class and interactive discussions of the materials during our seminar meetings. You are expected to attend each class, prepare yourself to participate in class discussions, and make a reasonable effort to join class discussions. You are also expected to actively prepare readings before class meetings. At a minimum, this means you are responsible for identifying each reading’s
main argument/hypothesis and assessing whether the author has convincingly supported his/her argument/hypothesis based on how he/she has presented and marshalled sources and theoretical concepts.

Course Plan

1. Week 1: Introduction

2. Week 2-4: Israel

3. Week 5-7: Iran


4. Week 8-10: Iraq


5. Week 11: Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Turkey


6. **Week 12: Saudi Arabia and UAE**

7. **Week 13: Nuclear Crisis, Nuclear Diplomacy, and Nuclear Terrorism**