This course examines Egyptian politics from the birth of the first Egyptian republic in 1952, through the January 2011 uprising (or “revolution”) against Hosni Mubarak and subsequent political developments. It attempts to understand the dynamics of different Egyptian political regimes, under Gamal Abdel Nasser (1952-1970), Anwar Sadat (1970-1981), Hosni Mubarak 1981-2011, and through the present. The course examines the major actors (e.g., military, Muslim Brotherhood, liberal and secular parties, youth, labor, etc.) and the major issues in Egyptian politics during this period (including the character and identity of the nation, the relationship between religion and state, economic orientation and economic policies, external relations and foreign affairs, and questions about authoritarianism and struggles for democracy).

The last few years in Egyptian politics have been both dramatic and tumultuous. Following protests in Tunisia in December 2010 and January 2011, millions of Egyptians demonstrated to demand political change. Between January 25 and February 11, 2011 citizens took to the streets to protest against the regime of Hosni Mubarak. The octogenarian Mubarak had been in power more than 29 years, since 1981. After eighteen days of sustained nationwide mobilization in the face of violent regime repression, Mubarak was forced from power, with the help of the Egyptian military. “The January 25 Revolution,” as it was dubbed, was heralded as ushering in a new era in Egyptian history, including the possibility of democracy.

Since Mubarak’s ouster the country has continued to experience political instability. Egyptians have gone to the polls seven times (!) during this period to vote on constitutional amendments, parliamentary elections for the lower and upper houses of parliament, a new constitution in 2012, presidential elections, and most recently, another new constitution (January 2014). The country has also continued to experience political turmoil including demonstrations, periodic economic crises, and most significantly, a popularly backed military “coup” in July 2013 against the country’s first democratically elected civilian president. And Egyptians are likely to go back to the polls two more times in the next year to elect (yet another) president and parliament. But is Egypt any closer to democracy?

In order to make sense of recent events in Egypt, we must examine Egyptian politics both before and after the 2011 uprising. Thus, we will devote approximately half of the course to exploring politics in Egypt under Gamal Abdel Nasser, (1954-1970), Anwar Al Sadat (1970-1981), and Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011). This course will also, of course, address a series of questions about “the January 25 revolution,” Egyptian politics, and the country’s future.
What were the immediate “triggers” and the underlying causes of the “January 25 revolution”? Which groups, both new and old, were involved in the uprising? What role did youth, civil society and technology play in the uprising? How should we understand the political changes that have taken place in Egypt (e.g., as a “revolution,” an uprising, something else)? Was the Mubarak regime toppled or only its president? What role did the military play in these events and what role is the institution likely to play in the future?

Much has happened in Egypt since Mubarak was removed from office and this course will also attempt to understand the period from Mubarak’s departure until the present. How have “liberal” forces, Islamists (e.g., Muslim Brotherhood, various Salafi groups, etc.), and others fared in Egypt since the “revolution” and how are they likely to do in the future? What types of political debates and struggles have taken place in the country since February 2011? What have parliamentary and presidential elections (and referendums) revealed about the character of Egyptian politics (at present) and voting publics, if anything? Was the July 3, 2013 ouster of President Mohamed Morsi a “coup” or a continuation of the “January 25 Revolution”? What is the current status and likely future of the now banned Muslim Brotherhood? Is Egypt progressing toward democracy? In addition to addressing these questions we will also monitor ongoing developments in Egypt weekly.

**Course Goals:** By the end of course students should have a deep familiarity with contemporary Egyptian history and politics, especially the period from 1952 until the present. Students will be also exposed to some of the theoretical literature about authoritarian politics and will have gained particular insight into the bases of authoritarian regime support. Students will also have developed a deep knowledge of recent Egyptian political history, especially the “January 25 revolution,” the Muslim Brotherhood, the current state of politics in the country. Class discussions and presentations are intended to provide students with an opportunity to effectively express their ideas analytically, coherently, and persuasively to colleagues. Other course requirements are intended to allow students to synthesize and independently assess historical and conceptual material, and formulate their own critical opinions through writing. Writing assignments are also geared to improving students’ abilities to write clearly and effectively. The final writing assignment for the course involves independent research and will provide students with the opportunity to analyze primary and secondary sources.

**Films:** You will be required to view several films inside and outside of class during the term. Check the syllabus (and “announcements” via email and D2L) for information about films, recommended viewing times (in relation to the syllabus), etc.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Please note that the syllabus is subject to change. Announcements regarding any such changes will made in class, via email, and through D2L. Please also note that because this course takes up current Egyptian politics, you are required to follow developments in Egypt throughout the semester. Below are some resources for doing so. We will sometimes discuss current happenings on the Egyptian political scene in class each week.

**English language resources,** which can be consulted throughout the semester, include: *Al Ahram Online* [http://english.ahram.org.eg/], *Al-Ahram Weekly*, an excellent, credible source of news and opinions [http://www.ahram.org.eg/weekly], *Mada Masr* [http://madamasr.com/], *Daily News Egypt* [http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/], and Aswat Masriya [http://en.aswatmasriya.com/], *The Arabist*

I encourage you to sign up for the Project on Middle East Democracy’s Daily (Egypt) News Summary. This is an excellent (and easy) resource for following developments in Egypt. You can sign up for the daily update here: http://pomed.org/email-updates/
The Atlantic Council’s EgyptSource emails are also excellent:
http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/egyptsource/about-egyptsources

You can also access the web sites of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood at: [English --- http://www.ikhwanweb.com/]. Several useful official Egyptian Government sites include: State Information Services [http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Default.aspx]; Egyptian Cabinet [http://www.cabinet.gov.eg/]; Cabinet Information Decision Support Center:
http://www.idsc.gov.eg/

I also recommend the English-language websites of human rights groups working in Egypt:

**Background Reading:** Students who want to familiarize themselves with Egyptian political history might consult (somewhat dated, but still useful), Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot’s *A Short History of Modern Egypt* (New York: Cambridge University Press) 1985 or Maye Kassem, *Egyptian Politics: The Dynamics of Authoritarian Rule* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner) 2004. A short, entertaining, and interesting account of many of the modern day difficulties of life in Egypt, told through the stories of Cairo’s cab drivers, is Khaled Al Khamissi’s *Taxi* (Aflame Books), 2008.

**“Recommended” & “Further” Readings:** In addition to the assigned readings, at times I have also included several “recommended” or “further” readings on the syllabus for each topic. *Neither are “required readings.”*

**Requirements:** This course is a seminar whose success depends on the active participation of everyone. Each week I will present general background information and an overview of the topic but much of the class will be devoted to focused discussion and analysis of readings.

1) Therefore, students are required to read and be prepared to discuss the readings before they come to class.
2) Everyone will be required to co-lead discussion with the instructor once during the semester. Please note that co-leading discussion DOES NOT MEAN presenting a lecture. I will explain exactly what is entailed in successfully leading a class discussion in class.
3) You will also be required to write a five-page paper that is a reaction to course reading. This is not intended to be a summary or book review but your own critical engagement and reflections on one set of readings.
4) Watch several movies related to the course. These will be available online or in the library.
5) Follow news developments in Egypt using the internet sources listed above in addition to traditional media sources.
6) Write a final research paper of between 15-20 pages on a subject of your choice in consultation with the instructor. Please start thinking about the subject of your paper early in the semester. I suggest finalizing a topic no later than March 1. You are required to speak with me about the topic of your paper during the semester.

**Grading/Assessment:**
- 15% attendance
- 20% participation in discussion
- 15% 5-page paper
- 10% in-class presentations
- 40% final paper

**Academic Integrity:** I take academic integrity extremely seriously. Academic misconduct such as plagiarism or other types of dishonesty will not be tolerated. I am also required to report such incidents. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the OU Student Guide to Academic Integrity available here: [http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html](http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html)

**Books Available for Purchase:**

**Further Optional Reading:**

*Readings marked with an * will be available on D2L. Some readings will be available online and others will be available through JSTOR (through university computer terminals).

**Wednesday January 14**
**Introduction:**

*Syllabus, course mechanics, requirements, schedule, in-class and out-of-class assignments.

**Wednesday January 28**
**Topic 1: Introduction to Egypt & Egyptian Politics**

• Various news articles and analysis about the current situation in the country – distributed via D2L.

**Wednesday February 4**

**Topic 2: The July 23 “Revolution” and Nasser’s Egypt**


Recommended Viewing:
*http://nasser.bibalex.org/main.aspx* (Highly Recommended -- Peruse)
Project of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in cooperation with the Nasser Foundation (in Arabic). This site includes hundreds of speeches, photographs, and historical documents related to Gamal Abdel Nasser and is, in my opinion, the best internet sources on this topic.

*Film: Nasser 56*

Optional Further Reading:

**Wednesday February 11**

**Topic 3: The Muslim Brotherhood (I)**

• *Samer Shehata, “The Founders,” in Robin Wright (ed), The Islamists Are Coming (Woodrow Wilson Center/USIP), 2012. Available at: http://theislamistsarecoming.wilsoncenter.org/islamists/node/23181/#the_founders
• Wickham, The Muslim Brotherhood, chapters 1 – 4 (you can skim chapter 4).

Optional (Background) Further Reading:
Wednesday February 18
Topic 3 (con’t) – The Muslim Brotherhood (II)

- Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, chapters 5-7, 9 and skim chapter 8.

Wednesday February 25 – No Class Meeting
**Use this time to work on a 5-page paper critically analyzing Wickham’s book (due March 2)**

Wednesday March 4


Further Reading:

Wednesday March 11 – VIDEO CONFERENCE with students at the American University in Cairo (10:00 am, location TBD)** Please try to make yourself available at this time.

Spring Break – March 19

Wednesday March 25


**Further Readings:**

**Wednesday April 1**  
**Topic 7: Economics: Neo-Liberal Policies, Labor Protests, & Inequality**

- *In-class Film Screening – “We Are Egypt”*

**Further Readings:**
Wednesday April 8
Topic 8: Youth Movements, Civil Society, and Technology

- In-class film screening: *Frontline* about April 6 Youth Movement
- David Wolman, “The Instigators: How a small band of digital activists risked their lives and helped bring down the government of Egypt,” *Atavist*, Number 4. *(possible reading)*
- Also see the graphic available at: http://atavist.net/the-instigators/
- Review Chapters 2-3 in *Journey to Tahrir*.

Wednesday April 15
Topic 9: The January 25 “Revolution” – 18 Days

- Robert Springborg, “Game Over: The chance for democracy in Egypt is lost,” Middle East Channel, *Foreign Policy*, February 2, 2011. Available at: http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/02/02/game_over_the_chance_for_democracy_in_egypt_is_lost

Wednesday April 22
Topic 10: Student Presentations

**Wednesday April 22: VIDEO CONFERENCE with students at the American University in Cairo (10:00 am)** Please try to make yourself available at this time.

Recommended Viewing:
- PBS Frontline: “Revolution in Cairo” (24 minutes)
- PBS Frontline: “Gigi’s Revolution” (11 minutes)
- TBA (including online videos available on Youtube)

Topic 11: April 17 – Politics since the “Revolution” & Student Presentations

*The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) in politics (TBA)*
*Elections (TBA)*
*Muslim Brotherhood, Liberal and Secular Forces, “Revolutionary Youth” (TBA)*
*2012 Constitution and Debates about the Constitution (TBA)*
Topic 12: April 24 – Where is Egypt today? & Student Presentations

*PBS Frontline: “Egypt in Crisis” (September 2013)