

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Course Syllabus

**THE MIDDLE EAST DISCONNECT**

Course No. X12.9243  
Wednesdays 10:00am - 11:40am  
September 17th – November 26th, 2008  
10 sessions

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**Course Description:**

This course focuses on the political, religious and ideological disconnect between East and West that has produced the current upheaval sweeping the Middle East. The course will include such topics as: Iran and the race towards nuclear proliferation, the role of Turkey in mediation and diplomacy, the rise of extremism in the Islamic world, Counterterrorism, exploring the Arab center: Egypt, Jordan and the Arab League, the plausibility of Democracy in the Middle East, Israeli national security, the future status of Jerusalem, Iraq five years and beyond, and the new era of US diplomacy.

**References:**

Muasher, Marwan *The Arab Center: The Promise of Moderation*  
Yale University Press (2008)

Miller, David Aaron *The Much Too Promised Land: America's Elusive Search for Arab-Israeli Peace*  
Bantam (2008)

Bar, Shmuel, *Warrant for Terror – Fatwas of Radical Islam and the Duty to Jihad*  
Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (2006)

Gelvin, James L. *The Modern Middle East – A History*  
Oxford University Press, New York (2005)

Zakaria, Fareed *The Post-American World*  
W.W. Norton (2008)

## **Presentations by Professor Ben-Meir**

### **September 17th**

Iran and the race towards for a nuclear weapon, can it be contained? What forces are at play and what are the viable options?

### **September 24th**

The rising power of Turkey in the Middle East: Can Turkey play a significant role in peacemaking and in promoting the dialogue between East and West?

### **October 1st**

The rise of extremism in the Islamic world: understanding the mindset and strategies behind groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, al Qaeda, Islamic Jihad, and the Takfiris

### **October 8th**

Counterterrorism: the prospects and strategies for defeating terrorism as we know it

### **October 15th**

Exploring the Arab center: the successes and failures of moderate Arab forces and the increasingly significant role they play in Arab politics

### **October 22nd**

Democracy in the Middle East: whereas political reform is necessary, is Western-style democracy the best option?

### **October 29th**

Israel: how its political system and extreme national security concerns play into the peace process

### **November 5th**

The future status of Jerusalem, can the city remain united and still serve as a capital of two states?

### **November 12th**

Iraq five years and beyond: looking at key developments including the Sunni Awakening, and the prospects of a stable Iraq in the wake of the early successes of the Surge.

### **November 19th**

The new era of US diplomacy: what will it take to restore America's moral authority and foster better relations between East and West?

**Attendance:**

Certificate students are expected to attend each class and participate in class discussions. In addition, they are expected to complete all reading and writing assignments.

**Grading for Certificate Students:**

Attendance and class participation -----50%  
Written paper -----50%