



Rothberg International School  
בית הספר לתלמידים מחו"ל ע"ש רוטברג  
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM  
האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים



Department of Summer Courses  
and Special Programs

המחלקה לקורסי קיץ  
ותוכניות מיוחדות

## Energy Politics in the Middle East (48810)

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June 28-July 22, 2021

Mon, Tue, Wed: 13:00-16:00

45 academic hours | 3 academic credits

### Tentative Syllabus

#### Course Description:

What determines the global price of energy resources? How does oil affect democracy, women's rights and war in the Middle East? How can we promote sustainability in a region where gasoline and electricity are so heavily subsidized? Can renewable energy ever fully replace fossil fuels, and if so, how can the oil-rich regimes of the Middle East survive the transition?

This course examines how the global energy markets operate and how energy policy is formulated, with a special focus on the Middle East and North Africa region. Students interested in working in the energy, environmental, or policy world (whether in the government, NGOs or private sector) will gain a deep understanding of the complexities involved in energy policy formulation and its profound impact on the security, economy and foreign policy of Israel, Iran and the Arab countries of the Middle East. Students will deal with issues such as securing energy markets and suppliers, managing oil revenue, deciding on the country's fuel mix for electricity, engaging with environmental concerns, using energy resources as a "weapon" in foreign policy, subsidizing renewable energy, dealing with water scarcity, and promoting nuclear energy in the Middle East. Students will then be tasked with writing their own op-eds and policy papers to try and influence the process of energy policymaking in a Middle East country of their choice. While the course focuses on the Middle East, it is widely relevant to students interested in energy policy formulation in the United States, Europe, or elsewhere.

**Course goals:**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze current events and trends in the energy markets and economies of the major powers in the Middle East, including Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran
- Access credible sources on energy consumption, production, and prices when devising policy regarding a country's energy market
- Produce an energy or environment-related policy paper that is relevant to government officials, using primary sources and relying on independent, objective, and evidence-based arguments
- Identify how politics determine what energy we consume and how we consume it, and seek ways to influence these links

**Assignments and course grading:**

The grade is comprised of the following:

1. Participation (10 points) - class attendance, subscription (free) to at least one weekly energy newsletter (details in class), and completion of required reading assignments
2. Mid-course exam (30 points) – A simple multiple-choice exam, comprised of 25 questions that will go over the basics discussed in class up until that point (topics 1-5). The exam is designed to make sure that everyone is on the same level before we begin reviewing the various policy dilemmas in the second half of the course.
3. Op-ed (20 points) - Students are tasked with writing a short op-ed about an energy issue that relates to a topic discussed in the course. The op-ed should be aimed at the general public, it should contain a single clear argument, and it should not exceed 800 words (Washington Post format). The op-ed could be written as a reply/rebuke to another article or current event in the news, so long as it relates to energy and Israel/Middle East. The op-ed could serve as a summarized argument of the final paper. Tips and details on how to write an effective op-ed will be given in class.
4. Policy paper (40 points) - Students are expected to produce a high-quality policy paper on a matter relating to energy policy in Israel and/or the Middle East. The paper can be addressed to the government of Israel or to another government in the Middle East, or to an external player with a direct interest in the energy markets of the region (US, EU, Russia). These recommendations will be based on the use of primary sources and original analysis (up to 15 double-spaced pages). Students will provide the background to the policy

issue of their choice, review how other countries in the region have dealt with the issue, and recommend paths to influence the processes concerned. Students studying Hebrew or Arabic languages will be encouraged to integrate official state documents from Israel and the surrounding countries into their work. Students will present a draft of their paper during the final class

Total points:

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Possible points</b>
Attendance, Participation, Newsletter and Reading	10
Mid-Term Exam	30
Op-ed	20
Policy Paper	40
<b>Total points possible</b>	<b>100</b>

### **Format of paper submissions:**

All work for this class should be typed, double-spaced, spell-checked, contain 1-inch margins, and use a 12-point font. The format for references and bibliography can be APA, MLA, Chicago, Harvard, etc. so long as the same style is applied consistently throughout the work.

### **Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments:**

#### **Day 1: An Introduction to the Global Energy Market**

The introduction to the course will give a historical overview of how fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas) came to dominate our modern life, how Middle East politics (and the Arab-Israeli conflict) helped determine what energy sources we consume, and where the energy market is heading in the next two decades.

#### *Required reading:*

Brenda Shaffer (2009), "Introduction" in Energy Politics. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 1-18.

International Energy Agency Key World Energy Statistics 2018 - **browse the tables that rank the top global producers and exporters of oil/gas/coal**

U.S. Energy Information Administration, "What Drives Crude Oil Prices?" (January 2018) - **browse the graphs**

#### *Optional reading:*

Hughes, L., & Lipsy, P. Y. (2013). The Politics of Energy. Annual Review of Political Science, 16, 449-469.

Downey, Morgan Patrick (2009), "Chapter 1: A brief history of oil", Oil 101. Wooden Table Press, 2009.

## **Day 2: The Curse of the Middle East**

Many countries in the Middle East are blessed with vast oil reserves, but they are also cursed with corruption, authoritarian rule, frequent human rights violations and slower economic development compared to similar yet oil-poor countries. We examine what makes oil revenue so corruptive to society and regimes in the Middle East, and why are women most vulnerable to this effect. We will also explore ways to overcome this “resource curse” in countries who recently discovered energy sources, such as Israel.

### *Required reading:*

Humphreys, M., Sachs, J. D. & Stiglitz, J. E. “Chapter 1: Introduction”, in Escaping the Resource Curse. New York: Columbia University Press (2007), pp. 1-20.

Michael L. Ross, “Oil, Islam, and Women,” American Political Science Review Vol. 102, No. 1 (February 2008), pp. 107-123.

### *Optional reading:*

Beblawi, H. (1987). “The Rentier State in the Arab World”. In Beblawi, H. & Luciani G. (eds.). The Rentier State. London: Croom Helm.

Sabonis-Helf, T. (2012). “Power to the Producers: The Challenges of Electricity Provision in Major Energy Exporting States”. In Shaffer, B. & Ziyadov, T. (Eds.), Beyond the Resource Curse. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Spector, R. A. (2012). “Education Reform in Energy Exporting States: The Post-Soviet Experience in Comparative Perspective”. In Shaffer, B. & Ziyadov, T. (Eds.), Beyond the Resource Curse. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Michael L. Ross (2012). "Chapter one: The paradoxical wealth of nations". The oil curse: how petroleum wealth shapes the development of nations. Princeton University Press.

Smith, B. (2004). "Oil Wealth and Regime Survival in the Developing World, 1960-1999, American Journal of Political Science, vol.48 (2), 232-246.

## **Day 3: Choosing your Energy Mix**

How does a country decide on its energy mix for electricity generation? How does it balance between the need to ensure available, affordable and sustainable fuel supplies to its economy and military and what does this tell us about its political priorities? How long does it take to transition from one fuel to another, and what obstacles stand in the way once a decision is made? We will see how this question applies to the energy sectors of the Middle East, and how renewable energy technology and climate change are affecting these trends. We will focus on Israel and Saudi Arabia to see how contrasting motivations shape a country's energy mix.

**Guest speaker: Mr. Shaul Zemach, former CEO of Israel's Ministry of Energy**

*Required reading:*

Brenda Shaffer (2017). A Guide to the Application of Energy Data for Intelligence Analysis. *Studies in Intelligence* Vol. 61 (4), pp. 43-52.  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol-61-no-4/pdfs/energy-as-analytic-tool.pdf>

Sovacool, Benjamin K. "How long will it take? Conceptualizing the temporal dynamics of energy transitions." *Energy Research & Social Science* 13 (2016): 202-215.

Cohen, Nissim, and Michael Naor (2013). "Reducing dependence on oil? How policy entrepreneurs utilize the national security agenda to recruit government support: The case of electric transportation in Israel." *Energy Policy* 56: 582-590.

*Optional reading:*

Noel, Lance, and Benjamin K. Sovacool. "Why Did Better Place Fail?: Range anxiety, interpretive flexibility, and electric vehicle promotion in Denmark and Israel." *Energy Policy* 94 (2016): 377-386.

Griffiths, Steven. "A review and assessment of energy policy in the Middle East and North Africa region." *Energy Policy* 102 (2017): 249-269.

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (2019), "Energy Vulnerability in the Arab Region". E/ESCWA/SDPD/2019/1.  
<https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/energy-vulnerability-arab-region-english.pdf>

Khatib, Hisham (2014), "Oil and natural gas prospects: Middle East and North Africa." *Energy Policy* 64: 71-77.

Stirling, Andy. "Transforming power: Social science and the politics of energy choices." *Energy Research & Social Science* 1 (2014): 83-95.

Moe, Espen. "Energy, industry and politics: Energy, vested interests, and long-term economic growth and development." *Energy* 35, no. 4 (2010): 1730-1740.

#### **Day 4: Using Energy as a Political Weapon**

We discuss the role of energy resources in a country's foreign policy. We examine how resource-rich countries in the Middle East try to use their energy resources as a coercive and/or attractive tool to promote desired outcomes in the international system, whether these attempts are effective, and how major energy importers try to leverage against them with sanctions.

##### *Required reading:*

Clayton, B., & Levi, M. (2012). The Surprising Sources of Oil's Influence. *Survival*, 54(6), 107-122.

Hughes, L., & Gholz, E. (2016). Energy, Coercive Diplomacy, and Sanctions. In *The Palgrave Handbook of the International Political Economy of Energy*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. pp. 487-504.

U.S. Energy Information Administration (July 2017). "World Oil Transit Chokepoints". **Most updated version is available at:**  
<https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/regions-topics.cfm?RegionTopicID=WOTC>

##### *Optional reading:*

Brenda Shaffer (2011). "Israel—New natural gas producer in the Mediterranean." *Energy Policy* 39, no. 9: 5379-5387.

Brenda Shaffer, "Chapter Two: Foreign Policy", in *Energy Politics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press (2009), pp. 28-46.

Brenda Shaffer. "Natural gas supply stability and foreign policy." *Energy Policy* 56 (2013): 114-125.

#### **Day 5: Energy, War, and Peace**

What do we know about the link between energy and armed conflicts? We discuss civil wars and international conflicts over energy resources in the Middle East and the role of energy in the Arab-Israeli conflict. We will take a close look into maritime disputes over resource exploration in the Mediterranean Sea, and we will examine under what circumstance can energy trade promote peace.

##### *Required reading:*

Michael L. Ross (2004). "What Do We Know About Natural Resources and Civil War," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No. 3.

Colgan, J. D. (2011). Oil and resource-backed aggression. *Energy Policy*, 39(3), 1669-1676.

Rubinovitz, Ziv, and Elai Rettig. "Crude Peace: The Role of Oil Trade in the Israeli-Egyptian Peace Negotiations." *International Studies Quarterly* (2018).

*Optional reading:*

Elai Rettig (2016), *Claim what's yours: Natural Gas, Regional Perception and Socioeconomic Discourse in Israel*, Tel-Aviv: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Bialer, Uri (1999). "Introduction", *Oil and the Arab-Israeli Conflict – 1948-1963*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mildner, S. A., Lauster, G., & Wodni, W. (2011). Scarcity and abundance revisited: A literature review on natural resources and conflict. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 5(1), 155-172.

Collier, P., & A. Hoeffler (2000). *Greed and grievance in civil war*. World Bank Working Paper Series 2000-18, April 26, Washington, DC.

### **Day 6 – Fieldtrip to Ashalim Solar Power Station**

**Visit to the power station and discussion with entrepreneurs from Israel's booming "clean-tech" industry**

### **Day 7: The Politics of Climate Change**

We take a look into the challenges of combatting climate change and why we are so far away from our goals. We discuss the politics of joining international climate agreements and why so many countries in the Middle East refuse to take a meaningful part in them.

*Required reading:*

Giddens, Anthony (2009), "Introduction," *The Politics of Climate Change*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Daniel Yergin (2011), "Chapter 26: In Search of Consensus", *The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World*. New York: Penguin Press.

Michaels, Lucy, and Alon Tal. "Convergence and conflict with the 'National Interest': Why Israel abandoned its climate policy." *Energy Policy* 87 (2015): 480-485.

*Optional reading:*

Rich, Nathaniel (August 2018), " Losing Earth: The Decade We Almost Stopped Climate Change," *New York Times*.

[https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/08/01/magazine/climate-change-losing-earth.html?emc=edit\\_mbae\\_20180822&nl=morning-briefing-asia&nid=6409640820180822&te=1](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/08/01/magazine/climate-change-losing-earth.html?emc=edit_mbae_20180822&nl=morning-briefing-asia&nid=6409640820180822&te=1)

Smil, Vaclav. Energy myths and realities. Washington, DC: AEI Press, 2010.

International Energy Agency (2017) "Executive Summary", Global Electric Vehicle Outlook 2017.

<https://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/GlobalEVOutlook2017.pdf>

Paul Tobin (2016). "The Politics of Climate Change: Can a Deal be Done?" Political Insight. <https://www.psa.ac.uk/insight-plus/politics-climate-change-can-deal-be-done>

Elai Rettig (2016), "Limits to Cooperation: Why Israel Does Not Want to Become a Member of the International Energy Agency", *Israel Affairs*. Volume 22 (2). pp. 512-527.

Scholten, Daniel, and Rick Bosman (2016). "The geopolitics of renewables; exploring the political implications of renewable energy systems." *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 103: 273-283.

**Day 8: Should Israel Allow Room for Ethical Considerations in its Oil Imports?**

Is it ethical to purchase oil from a country that violates human rights? Is it moral to buy "stolen" oil if it's cheap? How should a country balance between security, economic and moral considerations when trying to secure the most vital commodity to its economy and military might? We discuss Utilitarian vs. Kantian ethical principles to tackle these questions and examine them on the case of Israel's oil import policy.

**Guest Speaker: Ambassador Dr. Ron Adam, the former Special Envoy on Energy at the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Israel**

*Required reading:*

Wenar, Leif (2015), "Introduction". *Blood oil: Tyrants, violence, and the rules that run the world*. Oxford University Press.

Bahgat, Gawdat. "Israel's energy security: the Caspian Sea and the Middle East." *Israel Affairs* 16, no. 3 (2010): 406-415.

*Optional reading:*

Sovacool, B. (2013). "Introduction". Energy and ethics: Justice and the global energy challenge. Springer.

Bialer, Uri (2007). "Fuel Bridge across the Middle East—Israel, Iran, and the Eilat-Ashkelon Oil Pipeline." Israel Studies 12 (3): 29-67.

### **Day 9: Should the Iranian Government Subsidize Fossil Fuels?**

Should oil and gas-rich countries subsidize fuel and electricity for their citizens? We discuss the consequences of energy subsidies to the economy and the environment in the Middle East, and the challenges of removing them once put in place.

#### *Required reading:*

Krane, Jim. "Stability versus sustainability: The Dilemma of GCC energy policy." EPRG Working Paper 1302 (2012).  
<http://www.eprg.group.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/1302-PDF.pdf>

Blondeel, Mathieu, Jeff Colgan, and Thijs Van de Graaf. "What Drives Norm Success? Evidence from Anti-Fossil Fuel Campaigns." Global Environmental Politics 19, no. 4 (2019): 63-84.

Chapters 1 + 2 - Fattouh, Bassam, and Laura El-Katiri. "Energy subsidies in the Arab World." United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Arab Human Development Report Research Paper Series (2012). <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/ahdrps/Energy%20Subsidies-Bassam%20Fattouh-Final.pdf>

#### *Optional reading:*

"Islamic Republic of Iran: Selected Issues" (2017), International Monetary Fund: Country Report No. 17/63.  
<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2017/02/27/Islamic-Republic-of-Iran-Selected-Issues-44708>

Fails, M. D, 2019. Fuel Subsidies Limit Democratization: Evidence from a Global Sample, 1990–2014. International Studies Quarterly.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), "Energy subsidies in the Middle East and North Africa: Lessons for Reform". Summary note. March, 2014.  
<https://www.imf.org/external/np/fad/subsidies/pdf/menanote.pdf>

International Monetary Fund (IMF), "How Large are Global Energy Subsidies?". IMF Working Paper WP/15/105. May, 2015.  
<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2015/wp15105.pdf>

## **Day 10: Should the Saudi Government Promote Renewable Energy?**

We take a look into the future of renewable energy (solar, wind, hydro) and review each technology's limits and potential.

### *Required reading:*

International Energy Agency (2017), "Executive Summary", Renewables: Analysis and forecasts to 2022. <http://www.iea.org/Textbase/npsum/renew2017MRSsum.pdf>

Scholten, Daniel (2018). "The Geopolitics of Renewables—An Introduction and Expectations." In *The Geopolitics of Renewables*, pp. 1-33. Springer, Cham.

Fischhendler, Itay, Daniel Nathan, and Dror Boymel. "Marketing renewable energy through geopolitics: solar farms in Israel." *Global Environmental Politics* 15, no. 2 (2015): 98-120.

### *Optional reading:*

Gawdat Bahgat (2014). "Alternative energy in Israel: opportunities and risks." *Israel Affairs* 20, no. 1: 1-18.

Pages 1-25: Laura El-Katiri, "A Roadmap for Renewable Energy in the Middle East and North Africa". The Oxford Institute for Energy Studies: MEP6. January, 2014. <http://www.oxfordenergy.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MEP-6.pdf>

International Renewable Energy Agency - IRENA (2019). "Renewable Energy Market Analysis: GCC 2019." Abu Dhabi: UAE. <https://www.irena.org/publications/2019/Jan/Renewable-Energy-Market-Analysis-GCC-2019>

Sybille Roehrkasten and Mohammed Qader (2017). "Renewable energy: a recent but dynamic trend in the MENA region". In Jalilvand, David Ramin, and Kirsten Westphal, eds. *The Political and Economic Challenges of Energy in the Middle East and North Africa*. Routledge, 2017.

International Energy Agency (2019). "Energy Policies beyond IEA Countries: Morocco 2019". *Energy Policies beyond IEA Countries*. <https://webstore.iea.org/energy-policies-beyond-iea-countries-morocco-2019>

Alnaser, W. E., and N. W. Alnaser. "The status of renewable energy in the GCC countries." *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews* 15, no. 6 (2011): 3074-3098.

## **Day 11: Should the Middle East Go Nuclear?**

We discuss the pros and cons of introducing nuclear energy to the Middle East. We will go over the basics of nuclear technology, dispel some common myths, and debate over nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence theories in the case of Israel and Iran's nuclear conflict

**Guest Speaker: Ambassador Merav Zafari-Odiz, the former Israeli Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

*Required reading:*

Gershon Grossman and Tal Goldrath (2011). Nuclear power station in Israel. Summary and recommendations of the Energy Forum at the Samuel Neaman Institute

<https://www.neaman.org.il/Files/energy%20forum%2022%20abstract.pdf>

Socolow, Robert H., and Alexander Glaser (2009). "Balancing risks: nuclear energy & climate change." *Daedalus* 138, no. 4 (2009): 31-44.

Rabinowitz, Or (2016). "Nuclear energy and desalination in Israel." *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 72, no. 1: 32-38.

*Optional reading:*

Yossi Melman (April 2016). "Analysis: the cloudy future of Israel's nuclear reactor," *Jerusalem Post*. <http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/ANALYSIS-The-cloudy-future-of-Israel's-nuclear-reactor-452406>

Sobotka, Lee and Suzanne Loui (2019) "The cost of lies: A technical analysis of HBO's Chernobyl". Department of Chemistry, Washington University in St Louis. <https://chemistry.wustl.edu/news/cost-lies-technical-analysis-hbos-chernobyl/?hash=IOiNn9jYdm6uu2MORQVSbuJKkIWggOAqpFGKhclsXEg>

Corner, Adam, Dan Venables, Alexa Spence, Wouter Poortinga, Christina Demski, and Nick Pidgeon (2011). "Nuclear power, climate change and energy security: exploring British public attitudes." *Energy Policy* 39, no. 9: 4823-4833.

**Day 12: Student Presentations of Policy Papers**