Arab-Israeli Conflict (AIC) Simulation Mentor Seminar
Winter 2012  Wednesdays 10-1, 4212 SEB

Ctools Site: “Arab-Israeli Conflict Winter 2012”

Instructor: Jeff Stanzler (stanz@umich.edu)   tel. 763-5950
Office hours Wednesdays 2-3 in 516 School of Education, or by appointment.

AIC Simulation Website: http://aic.conflx.org/ (also linked via CTools)

Country and Characters Wiki:
http://aic-background.conflx.org/index.php/Main_Page (also linked via CTools)

Mentor Log Site: http://aicnsa.icsmich.org/ (also linked via CTools)

Course Purpose
This course is based on the idea that the most meaningful learning happens when one is actively engaged in a purposeful activity. By participating in AIC as a mentor, I hope that you will learn more about the politics and history of the Middle East, but that you will also have opportunities to think deeply about what is important to you as a learner and a teacher, about what it takes to foster thoughtful discourse, and about the nature of diplomacy.

Commitment
Each year hundreds of students and many teachers participate in AIC. A significant part of their experience depends on the work of the mentor team. Because your role is so important, it is essential that you make a commitment to fulfilling your responsibilities until the end of the term. By taking this course, you are taking on the job of a teacher, and your work will impact many others.

Course Requirements
Your responsibilities include the following:

1) Learn the simulation. Read the rules, learn how to use the website, and be familiar with the characters and the scenario. There will be several activities in the first few weeks related to this.

2) Check in on-line every day during the 10 weeks of simulation "play.” Yes, you really need to check in to the game EVERY weekday. If you absolutely cannot get on line a certain day, you must let Jeff know by e-mail or phone and make sure one of your colleagues can cover for you. Exactly what you will do online, and how we will divide up the mentoring work, will be discussed very soon.

3) Attend class. There will be many issues that come up as you go along, and while you should contact Jeff immediately with urgent concerns, our class meetings are the place to
solve problems together and share ideas. Class meetings are also times for you (and your fellow team members) to determine what needs to be done in your simulation. If, because of unavoidable circumstances, there is no alternative to your missing a class meeting, you must contact Jeff ahead of time.

4) Reflect on what you do. We want to know what was challenging, what was frustrating, what was rewarding, and what you think could be done to make AIC better for the participants as well as the mentors. Take note of these thoughts as you have them, and bring them up in the seminar. There will be regular written and in-class assignments that will ask you to engage in specific reflective tasks.

Grades

Grades will be determined based on the following:

Quality and consistency of mentoring work, including logs and updates (35%)
Seminar participation & attendance (25%)  Written assignments (25%)
Final reflection (15%)

Your mentoring is the most important component of your coursework. You must do your mentoring work on time and without "prodding," and if you are unavoidably unable to do your work at a certain time, you must give the rest of your group as much notice as possible and arrange for another mentor to cover for you. In general, because of the nature of the simulation, it is not possible to make up missed work. Doing an excellent job some of the time cannot make up for not consistently keeping up with your mentoring responsibilities.

For January 11:

1) Please read the country profile and the What You Should Know about playing... at the AIC country and character profiles site (link on the front page of our CTools site) about either Jordan (Group 1), Saudi Arabia (Group 2), Turkey (Group 3), or Russia (Group 4) plus either the chapter from Melissa Rossi’s “What Every American Should Know About The Middle East” (Plume Books: New York, 2008) related to Jordan or Saudi Arabia (on CTools under Required Readings for January Class Sessions inside the RESOURCES folder) or the articles regarding Russia and Turkey in the READINGS FOR JANUARY 11th folder.

2) Strategic Question Essay: Please write a double-spaced, 3 page essay (due on CTools by 5 p.m. Tuesday, January 10th) responding to the question below that corresponds to the country you were assigned to research. Please talk generally about your country's strategic interests along with responding to your particular question. Please be careful to both make and support your assertions:

** (Group 1) Jordan is considered to be an important “moderate” Arab nation (in the eyes of Israel and the West, to be sure). Why are they considered to be “moderate,” and how does the presence of a huge Palestinian population in Jordan affect its political actions/outlook?
**(Group 2) Many say that Saudi Arabia’s primary regional interest is protecting “stability.” The Saudis surely define stability in broad and varied terms. What kinds of stability are the Saudis seeking to protect, and how do they seek to do so?

**(Group 3) Turkey recently dismissed the Israeli ambassador as an expression of their displeasure over recent events, primarily the failure of Israel to apologize over the Mavi Marmara/Gaza Flotilla incident of 2010 which led to the deaths of several Turkish citizens. Fill us in on the backstory of the recent worsening of relations between Turkey and Israel—what has caused the tension and why has Turkey taken such a public stand?

**(Group 4) Despite it’s very different set of regional alliances, like the United States Russia has found itself conflicted about recent events in the Middle East, seeking to identify and act upon its strategic interests in a diplomatically savvy manner. Based on your readings, talk about Russia’s interests and concerns in the region, and discuss why Russia is diplomatically conflicted.

RESEARCH GROUPS
Group 1:
Group 2:
Group 3:
Group 4:

For January 18:
1) Please read the country profile and the What You Should Know about playing... on the AIC country and character profiles site (link on the front page of our CTools site) about the Lebanon March 14 Coalition (Group 1), the Lebanon Hezbollah Coalition (Group 2), France (Group 3) or Iran (Group 4), as well as the article from the Rossi book on Lebanon (groups 1 and 2) or Iran (Group 4), or the International Crisis Group’s recent report on France’s relations with Syria (Group 3). All readings are available on CTools in the Readings for January 18th folder inside RESOURCES. Be prepared to share some thoughts (and questions) about the strategic interests of the country you read about, and your sense of their position vis-à-vis other nations of the region, and what they or their leaders would consider to be important political considerations.

2) Be prepared to talk about the sample Strategic Goals Statement you were given for your country. Review the goals statement and be prepared to share your thoughts about where you see the strengths of each statement in terms of its ideas, composition, clarity,
evidence of thought, etc. I’d also like for you to think about where the statement needs to be clarified or sharpened, and which things you feel the diplomats should be thinking about as they move ahead.

3) Please read the character profiles for Marwan Barghouti and Mahmoud Abbas (Palestinian Fatah) and the country profile for Palestinian Fatah and be prepared to discuss their political interests and motivations as you understand them. Please also bring any questions you might have about them.

For January 25:
1) Please read the country profile and the What You Should Know about playing... sections on our website about the European Union (Group 1), Syria (Group 2) Egypt (group 3) or Palestinian Hamas (Group 4) as well as the articles on each in the Readings for January 25th folder inside RESOURCES on CTools. Once again, be prepared to share some thoughts (and questions) about the strategic interests of the country or leader that you read about, and your sense of their position vis-à-vis other nations of the region, and what they would consider to be important political considerations.

2) Complete a Strategic Goals Statement for the country or organization that you’re researching this week—details to be provided in class on January 18th. This assignment is to be brought to class and handed in there.

“The Lemon Tree”
For the next three weeks, we will be reading and discussing the book “The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East,” by Sandy Tolan (New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2006). Each week we will discuss that week's readings generally, and you’ll have a specific assignment either for class or to be handed in on CTools.

For February 1:
1) Lemon Tree, Chapters 1-5: Choose a passage from the week’s reading that really caught your attention... a new insight, an illuminating perspective, an instructive bit of history. Be prepared to share and discuss the passage you’ve selected, and to tell your colleagues about your reaction to the passage, what it made you think about, what questions it raised, etc.

2) Please read the character profiles for Benjamin Netanyahu & Avigdor Lieberman of Israel and the Israel country profile, and be prepared to discuss their political interests and motivations as you understand them. Please bring to class any questions you might have about them.

For February 8:
1) Lemon Tree, Chapters 6-8: Once again, choose a passage from the week’s reading that really caught your attention... a new insight, an illuminating perspective, an instructive bit of history. Be prepared to share and discuss the passage you’ve selected,
and to tell your colleagues about your reaction to the passage, what it made you think about, what questions it raised, etc.

2) **In-class assignment due:** Press Release Evaluation (details in class).

**For February 15:**

1) **Lemon Tree, Chapters 9-10:** Be prepared to speak in class about a specific connection you’ve seen between something that you read about in Lemon Tree and your work as a mentor. Talk about something you’ve read about that you think would be important for your students to understand, and speculate a bit about how you might support that understanding through your work.

**Due February 21st, essay of at least three pages:** Do you see “The Lemon Tree” as being ultimately a hopeful book? In your essay (to be handed in on CTools by 5 p.m. on February 21st) articulating your opinion, please support your response by discussing at least a couple of specific references from the book. In this paper, I will be looking for you to take a stand and to support that stand with evidence from the book as well as from your own point-of-view and your own process of making meaning. We’ll continue this discussion in class on the 22nd.

**For February 22:**

1) **Lemon Tree, Chapters 11-14:** We’ll discuss the concluding chapters, with a special focus on the question you responded to in the essay turned in on February 21st.

**The Simulation:**

The online project begins on January 23rd. The actual simulation begins on February 6th. There will be other simulation-related assignments that will be discussed in class, as will the specific nature of your mentoring work. For the moment, know that your work related to the simulation is the central part of your overall coursework, and I expect that you will be online every day starting January 30th, and during the 10 weeks of the actual simulation (apart from your spring vacation, of course).

**Logs & Weekend Updates**

Starting on February 22nd, both National Security Advisors and Game Mentors will do weekly in-class logs. In-class logs are started in class for the week upcoming, and are used as tools to guide your mentoring work each week. By the conclusion of each weekend, starting the weekend of February 25/26, the National Security Advisors will post brief updates to your fellow mentors on what each of the teams they work with has been doing since Wednesday’s class. Details on the above will be provided in class.

**In-Class Presentations**

Starting March 14th, each of you will take a turn making a short presentation to the class related to an interaction you had with a student or a team during the previous week. NSAs can talk about responding to a Press Release or a Weekly Report, and Game Mentors can talk about how they turned a press release/s into an *In The News* Update,
or they can discuss how they dealt with an action form. Start with the student work, and talk about what the student did, where you found its strengths (as well as its weaknesses), and where you saw teaching and learning opportunities. Next, tell us how you thought about and ultimately decided how to respond as you sought to seize some of those opportunities, and conclude by showing us your actual response.

The Rest of the Schedule in Brief (Other assignments and classroom activities will be added as needed)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topics</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-22</td>
<td>Group discussion of simulation, team meetings</td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work, complete first nsa/mentor in-class log &amp; first weekend update message</td>
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<td>2-29</td>
<td>Group discussion of simulation, team meetings</td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work, complete in-class log &amp; weekend update message #2</td>
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<td>Assignment for March 14: “Reflection on Mentoring—What I’ve Learned” (details in class)</td>
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<td>3-14</td>
<td>Group discussion of reflection on mentoring essay, simulation, team meetings. <strong>In-class presentations begin</strong></td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work, complete in-class log &amp; weekend update message #3 “Reflection on Mentoring—What I’ve Learned” assignment due by classtime.</td>
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<td>3-21</td>
<td>Group discussion of simulation, team meetings</td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work, complete in-class log &amp; weekend update message #4</td>
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<td><strong>In-class presentations continue</strong></td>
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<td>3-28</td>
<td>Group discussion of simulation, team meetings</td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work, complete in-class log &amp; weekend update message #5</td>
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<td><strong>In-class presentations continue</strong></td>
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<td>4-4</td>
<td>Group discussion of simulation, team meetings</td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work, complete final in-class log &amp; weekend update message #6</td>
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<td><strong>In-class presentations continue</strong></td>
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<td>4-11</td>
<td><strong>Final Class Meeting</strong></td>
<td>Continue daily on-line work through April 13th. Final updates/summaries/NSA messages must be posted on the AIC website by <strong>Tuesday, April 17th at 5:00pm. Final Reflection paper due (on CTools) on April 22nd</strong></td>
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<td>Team meetings, reflections on the experience</td>
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<td><strong>In-class presentations continue</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Simulation ends April 13th</strong></td>
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After World War I, the French and British draw the borders of the modern Middle East, and the League of Nations sanctions their domination of the region.

Map: Geoffrey Gaudreault, NPR; Source: A History of the Arab Peoples by Albert Hourani

Map taken from the National Public Radio’s Middle East and the West: WWI and Beyond website:
http://www.npr.org/news/specials/mideast/the_west/mandates_map.html
The United Nations General Assembly decided in 1947 on the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem to be an international city. The plan, which was rejected by the Palestinians, was never implemented.

In a pre-emptive attack on Egypt on 5 June 1967 that drew Syria and Jordan into a regional war, Israel made massive territorial gains capturing the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula up to the Suez Canal.

The principle of land-for-peace that has formed the basis of Arab-Israeli negotiations is based on Israel giving up land won in the 1967 war in return for peace deals recognising Israeli borders and its right to security. The Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egypt as part of the 1979 peace deal with Israel.

Maps above taken from the BBC News “Israel and the Palestinians” website at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/world/2001/israel_and_palestinians/key_maps/
Map taken from University of Texas Perry-Castañeda Library
Map Collection: