

# Arab-Israeli Conflict (AIC) Simulation Mentor Seminar

Winter 2018 Tuesdays/Thursdays 1-2:30, West Quad G023 Course Site on **Canvas**

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## **Office hours:**

**Wednesdays 3-4 in 4007 School of Education**

**Thursdays 2:45-4 in 1041 West Quad, or by appointment.**

**Canvas Site: “Arab-Israeli Conflict Mentor Seminar W18”**

**Simulation Website:** <http://aic.conflix.org/> (also linked via CANVAS)

## **Country and Characters Website:**

[http://aic-background.conflix.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://aic-background.conflix.org/index.php/Main_Page) (linked via CANVAS)

## **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 the nature of diplomacy, about what is important to you as a learner and a teacher, and about what it takes to foster thoughtful discourse.

## **Commitment**

Each year hundreds of students 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 and readings 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 online a certain day, you *must* let me 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 me 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, I expect that you will contact me beforehand.

4) **Reflect on what you do.** I 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, drawing upon these observations.

## Class Schedule

**Jan. 4:** We'll talk about the simulation, the course, and the playful spirit of learning. We'll also talk about the strategic questions paper due on January 11 (see assignment description under January 11).

**Jan. 9:** We'll discuss the Birnbaum/Tibon article ("How the Israel-Palestine Peace Deal Died") and the "Everything you need to know about Israel-Palestine" guide (links on the announcements page of our CANVAS site). Regarding the Birnbaum/Tibon article, be prepared to talk and ask questions about the image you're given of Abbas and Netanyahu, and about the challenges of reaching a 2-state solution. Please also come with questions about matters discussed in the "Everything you Need to Know..." Guide, and be ready to share some thoughts about why resolving this conflict is so complicated.

### Country Reviews

Over the next few weeks, we will be dividing up the task of getting acquainted with the domestic and international politics of the nations represented in our simulation. You'll each be reading about several of those nations, and we'll discuss them all in class. As you do the readings in preparation for these discussions, consider topics like: **How does the nation define its interests with regard to the Middle East? How militarily strong is the country? Whatever it's military strength, what other sources of regional influence does the nation have? How are its leaders chosen? How invested is the nation in a "two-state" solution in Israel/Palestine? What are the most important domestic political considerations for this nation?**

### January 11:

1) Please read the **country profile** and the **what you should know about playing...** at the *AIC country and character profiles* site (links on the announcements page of our CANVAS site) about **your group's country, plus** the articles about your country under **pages** on CANVAS.

Jordan (Group 1)      Saudi Arabia (Group 2)      Egypt (Group 3)      Russia (Group 4)

2) **Strategic Question Essay:** Please write an essay **of at least 750 words (due on Canvas by midnight tonight—Jan. 11)** responding to the question below that

corresponds to the country you were assigned to research. Please be careful to both *make and support your assertions*:

***\*\* 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 One)***

***\*\* Many say that Saudi Arabia’s primary regional interest is protecting “stability.” The Saudis surely define stability in broad and varied terms. Talk about the different kinds of stability that the Saudis seek to protect, and how they try to do so. (Group Two)***

***\*\* Since the military took control of Egypt’s government in 2013, relations have warmed somewhat between Israel and Egypt, and Egypt has shown growing interest in mediating between Israel and Palestine (especially Hamas). What has Egypt done in this connection, and what does Egypt have to gain from taking on this kind of leadership role? (Group Three)***

***\*\* Russia’s involvement in Middle Eastern geopolitics continues to grow, most notably with its involvement in the Syrian Civil War, but also extending to its relations with Palestine and Israel. Talk about Russia’s policy regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and about the nature of the connections between Russia and both Israel and Palestine. (Group Four)***

## **RESEARCH GROUPS**

**Group 1:**

**Group 2:**

**Group 3:**

**Group 4:**

## **January 16:**

We’ll continue our **country review** discussions today, discussing the **round two** countries and organizations (listed below) that you’re to have read about for today. Please read the **country profile** and the ***What You Should Know about playing...*** on the *AIC country and character profiles* site for the country or political organization that you are assigned, as well as the readings for your country on CANVAS, and be ready to talk about the questions listed above under **COUNTRY REVIEW**.

The Lebanon March 14 Coalition (Group 1)

The Lebanon Hezbollah Coalition (Group 2)

Iran (Group 3)                  France (Group 4)

## January 18:

**Please bring to class** the sample goals statement for the **second** country that you studied with your comments written on it **as you would actually address them to the student diplomats**. *Do your utmost to both consider and reflect back to the student diplomats* the strengths you see in terms of its ideas, composition, clarity, evidence of thought, etc. I'd also like for you to discuss where the statement needs to be clarified or sharpened, and remember to use the powerful tool of questions...if there's something unclear, how would you frame your request for clarification? Honor the concerns that you might have about the document, but seek to use language that respects their efforts, and that you feel is encouraging **even** if you are asking for revisions (which you *must not* be shy about doing). Finally, think about what is MOST important for them to work on...you likely won't be able to polish this entire document, so where are the priorities in your mind?

*You'll hand in a paper copy of your marked-up strategic goals statement at the end of today's class.*

## The Simulation & Your Mentoring Responsibilities:

The AIC website opens on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, as the country teams start posting their strategic goals statements. The actual simulation begins on February 6<sup>th</sup>. 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 week day** starting January 30<sup>th</sup>, and during the 10 weeks of the actual simulation (apart from your spring break, of course).

## January 23:

1) Please read the **country profile** and the **what you should know about playing...** sections on our website about the following **round three** countries, along with the readings for your country on CANVAS. Once again, please be ready to talk about your country/organization vis-à-vis the questions listed above under **COUNTRY REVIEW**.

European Union (Group 1)    Turkey (Group 2)  
Iraq (Group 3)                Syria (Group 4)

2) Complete a Strategic Goals Statement for the country or organization that you're researching for today. *This assignment is to be handed in on CANVAS by class time—you'll also find a blank strategic goals statements under FILES for your use. Please also bring five copies of your strategic goals statement to share with your colleagues.*

## January 25:

1) We'll continue going over the Strategic Goals Statements you brought to the last class.

2) With the opening of the AIC website this week, we'll take a tour of the site and go over the logistics of site navigation, and we'll look in detail at the business of responding to strategic goals statements.

*Most of you will serve as National Security Advisors (NSAs) to several country teams. I expect that over the next two weeks you will read the country profiles for the teams that you've been assigned.*

## **January 30:**

- 1) We'll review the **scenario** today, so I will ask that you read it (available on CANVAS) before class.
- 2) We'll also talk today about Press Releases, and I'll give you an assignment that will be due **in class** on February 6<sup>th</sup>.
- 3) We'll talk about the political scene in Palestine (Please read the articles in the Palestine MODULE on CANVAS).

## **“The Lemon Tree”**

Over the next few 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). During the class sessions designated below, we will discuss that week's readings generally, and you'll have a specific assignment for class related to that day's readings.

## **February 1:**

**Lemon Tree, Chapters 1-4:** 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.

## **Mentor Team Meetings**

We will have several concurrent simulations running, and you will each be a member of a mentoring team that will facilitate one of those simulations. We'll speak in class about the specifics, but my expectation is the NSAs will come to *each class meeting* prepared to briefly discuss the content of any recent **press releases** that they've approved, or that have been submitted by their teams, and that everyone (especially the Game Mentor and the originating team's NSA) will have reviewed any submitted **action forms**. Starting later this month, each mentor team will co-create a **weekly team plan** during our Friday class (details follow below).

## **February 6:**

In addition to our team Meetings, we will discuss Weekly Reports, and we'll talk about the political scene in Israel (Read the articles in the Israel MODULE on CANVAS). *We will also discuss the Press Release assignment that was distributed in class on Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>, and that is due in class today.*

**February 8: Lemon Tree, Chapters 5-7:** 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..

**February 13:** Team Meetings/Review of your mentoring work. We'll also look at how the simulation looks to the teachers and their student diplomats

### **February 15:**

**Lemon Tree, Chapters 8-10:** 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.

### **February 20:**

Close Look at My Mentoring #1 due today on CANVAS.

### **Close Look at Your Mentoring**

I will ask each of you to choose and share with me recent examples of your mentoring interactions so that I can offer you some feedback, support and guidance. I'll tell you more in class, but the basic idea here is that you'll include a piece of student work, your response to it, and your rationale for responding as you did. This is an opportunity to both focus on the details of your work and to reflect on your process, and the choices you make. You'll do this on two separate occasions, once on February 21<sup>st</sup> and again on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

**February 22: Lemon Tree, Chapters 11-14:** We'll discuss the concluding chapters and your sense of Dalia and Bashir, and we'll also discuss the question (directly below) that you'll respond to for the essay you'll turn in tomorrow.

**Due February 23<sup>rd</sup>, an essay of at least 750 words in response to the question:** Do you see "The Lemon Tree" as being ultimately a hopeful book? In your essay (to be handed in on Canvas) articulating your opinion, please support your response by citing and discussing *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.

### **March 6:**

We'll have team meetings today and will concentrate on getting caught up with what has taken place over break. Each mentor team will also do its first Weekly Team Plan.

### **March 8:**

More time for team meetings today.

### **In-Class Presentations**

Starting March 19<sup>th</sup>, each mentor team will take a turn making a short, informal presentation to the class related to an issue/s unfolding in their game. I'll ask that you talk about a situation in your game where you're facing a choice of some kind, whether it be how or whether to enact a particular action form, how to complicate things for a country team that is taking a strong initiative in the game, or how to present productive challenges to your diplomats. We'll talk more about this in class.

***I'll give you a specific schedule for these presentations on March 13th***

## **In the News**

For our class meetings on March 15<sup>th</sup> and April 5<sup>th</sup>, I'll ask that you read an article or watch a video in advance of class, something that will allow us to go into a little greater depth about some aspect of regional geopolitics. I will be selecting these readings as close to the actual due dates as possible, and will talk more about the specific details in class.

**The rest of the schedule in brief (Schedule subject to change, and other assignments and class activities will be added as needed)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topics</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
3-13	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Draft Weekly Team Plan</b>	Continue daily on-line work
3-15	Guest Presenter: Journalist & activist <b>Ashley Bates (readings are our "In the News" article #1).</b> Group discussion of simulation, team meetings	Continue daily on-line work
3-20	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings. Former Game mentor Sarah Jacob visits class. <b>Draft Weekly Team Plan</b>	Continue daily on-line work
3-22	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Group presentations start today (silver)</b>	Continue daily on-line work <b>Close Look at My Mentoring #2 due tomorrow (3-23) on CANVAS.</b>
3-27	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Draft Weekly Team Plan'</b> <b>Group presentation (Red)</b>	Continue daily on-line work
3-29	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Group presentation (Green)</b>	Continue daily on-line work <b>Yes! Moments</b> paper assigned— <b>due on CANVAS by March 31<sup>st</sup></b>
4-3	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Draft Weekly Team Plan</b> <b>Group presentation (Gold)</b>	Continue daily on-line work.
4-5	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Discuss "In the News" article #2</b>	Continue daily on-line work
4-10	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Draft (Final) Weekly Team Plan</b> <b>Group presentation (Blue)</b>	Continue daily on-line work
4-12	Group discussion of simulation, team meetings <b>Simulation ends April 13th</b>	Continue daily on-line work.
4-17	<b>Final Class Meeting</b> <b>Reflection on AIC</b>	Final updates/summaries/NSA messages must be posted on the AIC website by <b>Tuesday, April 17th</b> <b>Final Reflection paper due (on CTools) by Monday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> at midnight.</b>

**Grades will be determined based on the following:**

Quality and consistency of mentoring work (25%)    Written assignments (20%)  
Final reflection (35%)    Seminar participation & attendance (20%)

*You must do your mentoring work on time, consistently, 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. Owing to the nature of the simulation, it's rarely possible to make up missed work in the necessary time frame. Doing an excellent job some of the time can't make up for not consistently keeping up with your responsibilities.*

**Grade Scale**

A	4.0	95 - 100
A-	3.7	90 - 94
B+	3.3	86 - 89
B	3.0	82 - 85
B-	2.7	78 - 81
C+	2.3	74 - 77
C	2.0	70 - 73
C-	1.7	67 - 69
D	1.0	60 - 66
F	0.0	0 - 59





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](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/1/hi/english/static/in\\_depth/world/2001/israel\\_and\\_palestinians/key\\_maps/](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/world/2001/israel_and_palestinians/key_maps/)



