

Yemen – Crafting a Comprehensive Strategy for a Fragile State

Monday, 7:30 pm – 10 pm; Robertson Hall; Room TBD

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Instructor: | Barbara Bodine x 87765 Robertson Hall 432 |
| Office Hours: | By Appointment via bbodine@princeton.edu |
| Assistant: | Bernadette Yeager x 84830 (byeager@princeton.edu) |
| Senior Coordinators: | Megan McPhee (mmcphee@princeton.edu) |
| | Megan Leahy (mleahy@princeton.edu) |

Yemen has been described as the “always almost failing state.” It is a paradox; it is not yet a failure. The challenges are manifold – governance, development, security, non-state actors and meddling neighbors. One of the poorest countries in the world, Yemen faces daunting demographic challenges (50% under the age of 15), diminishing water resources, inadequate energy and a non-functional governing structure. These challenges are compounded by and reflect the smoldering security challenges of a now-quiescent rebellion in the north, a simmering secessionist movement in the south, and the presence of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, a small but virulent off-shoot of al-Qaeda Central “credited” with the Christmas terrorist attempt over Detroit and linked to the Ft. Hood incident. Unlike Iraq and Afghanistan, however, Yemen has a strong national identity without sectarian or ethnic divisions, a nascent democracy and legitimate if imperfect government.

The US approach to fragile states is currently under high-level review. The security-first approach in Iraq gave way to General Petraeus’ counter-insurgency doctrine, with the primacy of political solutions and the need to protect the people. That has evolved into the concept of the 3 D’s – diplomacy, development and defense, a whole-of-government effort on stabilization and reconstruction of post-conflict societies, a re-interpretation of traditional nation-building. Yemen provides an important test case for the application of the Three D’s in a *pre-conflict* and *pre-failure* environment.

Task Force Objective:

This Task Force will examine the centrifugal forces that threaten to sunder Yemen and the centripetal factors that have allowed it to survive, the complexity and inter-relationship of the challenges and the need for a nuanced inter-agency approach to their solution, and will seek to devise an appropriate whole-of-government strategy. It will examine the history and forces that have created the modern day Yemen; efforts undertaken to date to address the challenges, by Yemen itself and its friends. It will review the current security assistance package, diplomatic efforts, and the new three-year USAID strategy, determine their strengths, and their gaps....and propose as-needed alternatives.

Core themes will be what constitutes state failure – loss of Weberian authority or an inability to provide basic services? – and thus what are the most appropriate avenues to address state fragility? What is the difference between “security” and “stability?” Stable governance and good governance? Authority and legitimacy? What is the proper balance between the center and the periphery? What is the role of outside actors?

The Task Force Joint Report will be presented in Washington to an interagency panel of officials charged with Yemen policy and programs.

Junior Paper Topics

Students will select their topics in consultation with the senior coordinators and the instructor. Topics must be relevant to the Task Force objective – a comprehensive and integrated US Government strategy to address the challenges faced by and posed by Yemen. It is expected and even preferred that there be a high degree of complementarity among the topics, but not redundancy. Coordinators and instructor will work with students to deconflict any duplication of topics.

Topics will evolve, as well as recommendations shift, as students become more familiar with both their individual issues and the broader issues addressed in the course readings and class discussions.

Instructor is available to meet with students as they develop and refine their topic choice, prepare their executive/summaries and final JP. This includes, in addition to regular Tuesday office hours, most Friday afternoons, the entire week of September 27th, the entire week of October 18th and the entire week of November 15th. Students should arrange meetings directly with the instructor via email.

Senior Coordinators will establish their own office hours schedule.

Students are advised to familiarize themselves with the entire syllabus at the beginning of the course. Many of the topics and issues are interrelated and may provide insight into topics, individual read-aheads, or guides to research.

Grades:

| | |
|-----|---|
| 15% | Final Briefing Paper/Executive Summary |
| 35% | Final Junior Research Paper |
| 20% | Oral Presentation |
| 20% | Group/Classroom Participation |
| 10% | Practitioners' Panel Presentation/Participation |

Readings:

Syllabus readings are heavily front-loaded to provide students with sufficient background on the history and domestic dynamics of Yemen, the realities of the policy-making process, and key issues to inform topic selection, guide research and presage options. Students' ability to actively and constructively engage in class discussions will be directly related to rigor in keeping up with the readings as well as current events.

Because of the episodic nature with which the West and especially the US, engages on things Yemeni, sparked most recently by the December attempt, much of the readings are from think tanks, advocacy groups and policy journals. There is an enormous amount of redundancy in these readings as each author provides a historical set-up to the core issue of their piece. You will learn how to skim through – but not skip – set-ups, find the focus of each piece and not get bogged down in a Groundhog Day-like recitation of basic facts. Given the intense focus by the US government in recent months, readings are supplemented by appropriate government documents, hearings and speeches. Additional, optional readings are provided for those with a particular interest in a given topic.

Basic Texts:

There are few good books on modern Yemen. Most tend to be anthropological in approach, dense and inaccessible in presentation and not directly relevant to our needs or, less useful, instant-expert works either agenda or media-driven. To the extent Yemen does appear in credible texts, it is as a chapter. Therefore, there are only two books required.

Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power and Performance in Yemen

Lisa Wedeen; University of Chicago Press 2008

Labyrinth Books

Yemen: Jewel of Arabia; Charles Aithie, 2009

Labyrinth Books

Other Readings Assigned and Sources:

- Relevant and useful chapters and journal articles are on *eReserve*.
- Public domain documents will be compiled and provided to students on a CD (noted on syllabus as an *), web link or hard copy (HC).
- There are also a number of think tank and organization websites that track data and events in Yemen and/or do occasional papers that are either no-fee subscriptions or can be arranged through the research librarian. Students are strongly encouraged to add these to their regular readings. They include but are not limited to:

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Gulf Research Council (excellent clipping service for regional press)
Chatham House (UK) - Yemen Forum
International Crisis Group
National Democratic Institute – primarily for run-up to April 2011 elections
Center for Complex Operations, National Defense University
Washington Institute for Near East Policy – over 150 “policywatches”
World Bank – publications and updates
Perry-Castaneda Map Library, University of Texas – Austin (utexas.edu)
An excellent source of maps.

- Additional readings will be provided when and as they become available.

Readings are in the Order They Should be Read

Week 1

September 20 Introduction and Overview – Background, Goals and Objectives

This session will review the goals and objectives of a Policy Task Force, and of this particular PTF. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with the Task Force Elements and with the syllabus. We will also begin to explore the basics of the Yemeni history and society, the economic, governance and security challenges it faces, and key US and regional interests, options and limitations. It is important that class members come prepared to discuss the readings below.

- CIA Fact book on the Republic of Yemen cia.gov
- World Bank Country Data Report for Yemen 1996-2008
www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/
- Economic Intelligence Unit Country Report: Yemen; January 2010 *
- Maps from Perry-Castaneda Library, University of Texas
- “The Gulf’s Ethnic Diversity: An Evolutionary History”*
 Chapter 2 – M.R. Izady (p.33-87); *Security in the Persian Gulf* Potter and Sick eReserve
- Wedeen** **“The Vexing Category of “Tribe”** **p. 170-176**
 Chapter 2 – Seeing Like a Citizen, Acting Like a State **p. 22-66**
 “Identifying Identity” **p. 181-185**
 Conclusion - Politics as Performance **p. 212-221**
- “Yemen: Primer and Prescriptions”; B.K. Bodine; Prism 1, No. 3, p. 43-58 *
- Optional: Yemen: Background and US Relations *
 Jeremy Sharp; Congressional Research Service January 13, 2010

Week 2

September 27 Yemeni Governance and Politics – Parties, Players and Processes

Yemen will hold parliamentary elections in April 2011. Once considered a model of indigenous democratization, there are concerns that reforms have stalled. Why, and can the process be reinvigorated? Who are the players? What is the role of the Islamist party, Islah?

- “Liberalization vs. Democracy” and “Islamist and Democracy”* p. 15-36/37-56 eReserve
Uncharted Journey: Promoting Democracy in the Middle East
 Edited by Carothers/Ottaway; CEIP 2005
- Wedeen** **“The Role of the Regime”** **p. 176-180**
 Chapter 3 – The Politics of Deliberation **p. 103-147**
- “Yemen - The Centrality of Process”*; Sarah Phillips p. 231-259 eReserve
Beyond the Façade: Political Reform in the Arab World edited by Ottaway
- “Democratization by Election – a Mixed Record”*; Steffen Lindberg eReserve
 Journal of Democracy Vol. 20 No. 3 July 2009; p. 86-92
- “Yemen’s 2006 Elections: High Water Mark of Islamist Politics”* eReserve
 April Longley; Middle East Journal Vol. 61 No. 2 Spring 2007; p. 240-262

Optional (all on CD):

Report on the 2006 Presidential and Local Council Elections in the Republic of Yemen
National Democratic Institute

“Tribal Diversity, Political patronage and the Yemeni Decentralization Experiment”
Daniel Egel; January 2010

Between Government and Opposition – The Case of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah);
Amr Hamzawy, Carnegie Middle East Center No. 18 November 2009

Yemen: Tribal Conflict Management Program Research Report
National Democratic Institute March 2007

Week 3
October 4

Identity Politics - the Houthi and the South

Yemen’s periphery has long had a difficult relation with the center. The governing arrangement might well be described as “primordial federalism.” In 2005 that tension erupted into an inchoate rebellion in the north and a growing restiveness in the South. Together they may present the greatest security and existential threats to the state and test the concept of identity...

Wedeen Chapter 4: Practicing Piety – Disorder as Control p. 148-185

“Yemen: Defusing the Sa’ada Time Bomb”; International Crisis Group
Middle East Report No. 86//27 May 2009 *eReserve*

“The Southern Movement in Yemen”; Nicole Strake and Mohammed Saif Haidar
Gulf Research Council Report April 2010 *

“Fighting Brushfires with Batons: An Analysis of the Political Crisis in South Yemen”
Longley/al-Iryani; Middle East Policy Brief No. 7 February 2008 *

“Southern Aspirations and Salih’s Exasperation: The Looming Threat of Southern
Secession in South Yemen” April Longley Alley and Abdul Ghani al-Iryani
Middle East Viewpoints June 2009 *

Optional: Fault Lines: Tracking Armed Violence in Yemen
Small Arms Survey/Yemen Armed Violence Assessment
Issue Brief No. 1 May 2010; www.yemen-ava.org

October 8 - Junior Paper Topics should be presented to and approved by course director.

Week 4
October 11

Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) – The Third Front or A Third Tier Threat?

...the West – and especially the US – focus, however, has been on the re-emergence of Al Qaeda with the establishment of AQAP in 2009. Why was it able to reconstitute with such vigor? How does it relate to Yemen’s other security challenges and governance issues?

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Senate Foreign Relations (SFRC) Committee Written Testimony Gregory Johnson; Doctoral Candidate, Princeton University | * |
| “What Comes Next in Yemen? Al-Qaeda, the Tribes and State-building” Sarah Phillips Carnegie Papers, Middle East Program No. 107 March 2010 CEIP | * |
| “Yemen: Coping with Terrorism and Violence in a Fragile State” <i>International Crisis Group Report No. 8; 8 Jan. 2003 (optional)</i> | <i>eReserve</i> |
| <u>Optional:</u> Al Qaeda in Yemen and Somalia: A Ticking Time Bomb SFRC Staff Report January 21, 2010 | * |
| “Combating Terrorism in the Horn of Africa and Yemen” Deborah L. West; JFK School 2005 (Yemen section only) | * |

| |
|---|
| October 15 – Research Plan/Draft 2-page Briefing Paper/Executive Summary Due |
|---|

| | |
|--------|--|
| Week 5 | October 18 U.S. Policy-making Primer – Players and Processes |
|--------|--|

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|
| <i>Allison/Zelikow</i> | <u><i>Essence of Decision</i></u> <i>Introduction p. 1-11</i> <i>Chapter 5 p. 255-313</i> | <i>eReserve</i> |
|------------------------|---|-----------------|

| | |
|--------|--|
| Week 6 | October 25 Four Horsemen of the Yemeni Apocalypse: Demography, Water, Energy and Qat |
|--------|--|

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| World Bank Yemen Quarterly Economic Review, Spring 2010 | * |
| “Why Democracies Fail”; <i>Kapstein and Converse</i> ; p. 57-68 <i>Journal of Democracy Vol. 19 No. 4 October 2008</i> | <i>eReserve</i> |
| “Yemen: Fear of Failure”; Chatham House Briefing Paper; January 2010 | * |
| USAID – Yemen’s Population and Development Challenges | HC |
| The Shriveling State: Water, History and Civilization in Yemen Scoot Moore, MS degree candidate, Oxford Uni. (Princeton/Rhodes) | * |
| Wedeen Chapter 5 - Piety in Time | p. 186-211 |
| USAID – Country Health Statistical Report – Yemen Dec.2009 | HC |
| <u>Optional:</u> | |
| Yemen Cross-Sectoral Youth Assessment; USAID November 2008 | * |
| Yemen Poverty Assessment; Government of Yemen, The World Bank and The UN Development Program; November 2007 | * |

Water Resources Information in Yemen (June 2005) HC
Qahtan Yehya al-Asbahi; Integrated Water Resources Management Program Yemen

World Bank - Yemen: Towards Qat Demand Reduction HC
Report No. 39738-YE June 2007

November 1-6 Fall Break

Week 7

November 8 US Interests and Yemeni Aspirations – Focus on Democracy and Development...

“Reform Priorities for Yemen and the 10-Point Agenda” *
Chatham House MENAP Roundtable 18 February 2010

USAID/Yemen: 2010-2012 Yemen Country Strategy *

“Tipping the Balance: A Regional Approach to Yemen’s Economic Challenges”; Chatham House Programme Meeting Summary May 2010 *

“Democracy Assistance: Political vs. Developmental”; p. 5-19 eReserve
Thomas Carothers; *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 20 No. 1 Jan. 2009

“How Development Leads to Democracy” Inglehart and Welzel eReserve
Foreign Affairs March/April 2009 Vol. 88 No. 2 p. 33-48

Optional:

“Treasury’s Approach to State-building: Lessons and Implications” *
Jeremy Pam, USIP 2008 (Iraq precedent and broader implications)

“...and Justice for All”; Haugen and Boutros; *Foreign Affairs* eReserve
Foreign Affairs May/June 2010

Week 8

November 15 ...or on Security?

The National Security Strategy – May 2010 (at whitehouse.gov) *

Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East Jeffrey Feltman’s and
Coordinator for Counterterrorism Daniel Benjamin’s SFRC Testimony January 2010 *

“On the Knife’s Edge: Yemen’s Instability and the Threat to American Interests”
Exum and Fontaine; Center for Naval Analysis; November 2009 *

“Helping Others Defend Themselves”; Robert Gates p. 1-6 eReserve
Foreign Affairs, May/June 2010

“Strengthening Yemeni Counterterrorism Forces: Challenges and Political
Considerations”; M. Knight; *Washington Institute for Near East* *
PolicyWatch #1616; January 6, 2010

“Fixing Broken Windows: Security Sector Reform in Palestine, Lebanon and Yemen” *
Yezid Sayigh; *Carnegie Papers; Carnegie Middle East Center No. 17 October 2009*

Optional:

“Following the Money in Yemen and Lebanon: Maximizing the Effectiveness of US Security Assistance and International Financial Institution Lending”; SFRC Staff Report January 5, 2010

*

November 19

Draft Research Paper Due

Week 9

November 22

Best Frenemies Forever - What is Success; What is Failure?

What would state failure mean in Yemen? What would it look like? And what implications would that have for the people, the region and for the US? Is it inevitable, and might we tip the balance in the wrong direction? What are some lessons we can take from other efforts, such as Afghanistan and Somalia?

“Yemen, the Region and the World: Perceptions of Regional and International Interests”; Chatham House 6 April 2009

*

“Closing the Sovereignty Gap: An Approach to State-Building”
Al-Ghani et al; Overseas Development Institute, September 2005

*

“From the Sun King to Karzai-Lessons for State-building in Afghanistan”
Sherri Berman; Foreign Affairs March/April 2010 Vol. 89 No. 2 p. 2-9

eReserve

“In the Quicksand of Somalia”; B. Burton
Foreign Affairs November/December 2009 p. 79-94

eReserve

Optional:

“Avoiding the Downward Spiral”; Christopher Boucek
Carnegie Papers Middle East Program No. 102 September 2009

*

November 25

THANKSGIVING

Week 10

November 29

Oral Presentations – 5 at 30 minutes/each

Week 11

December 6

Oral Presentations – 5 at 30 minutes/each

Week 12

December 13

Discussion of Joint Report

December 17

Draft Joint Report Due

January 4

Juniors’ Final Briefings Papers Due NLT 5 pm

January 5

Final Draft Joint Report Due as Read-ahead for Panel

January 7th

Presentation in DC (to be confirmed; details forthcoming)

January 11th

Final Joint Report Due NLT 5 pm