

# POLS 289: POLITICAL ECONOMY OF DEVELOPMENT IN EGYPT



Summer 2012

Hobart and William Smith Colleges



## POLS 289: Political Economy of Development in Egypt

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### Program Dates

This is a 3-week course running from May 18 – June 3, 2012.

### Application Deadline

Tuesday, November 1, 2011 at 5:00pm.

### Faculty Directors

The course will be co-taught by Professors Vikash Yadav and Stacey Philbrick Yadav, both members of the HWS Political Science Department.

### Itinerary

The course itinerary will have three main thematic sections, each detailing a different aspect of the ways Egyptians have approached a variety of development challenges. In each section of the course, some attention will also be paid to the contributing causes and consequences of the political and economic change brought about by the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. Classes in basic Egyptian Arabic will be held throughout the course, focusing on vocabulary related to the substantive topics to be addressed each day.

### Pre-departure Preparation:

Before leaving for Egypt, students will read a history of the city of Cairo, the world's fifth largest metropolis, and a novel that explores the contradictions and complexities of life for modern Cairenes. This will "frame" the course and the key questions students will address while in Egypt.

**Section I: Political Economy of Tourism:** Students will visit the key touristic sites in the Greater Cairo area, following a rough historical chronology. Each of these visits will include guided tours (often led by academic experts) and follow-up discussions with the professors. Ancient sites will include Pharonic ruins such as the Giza and Saqqara pyramids, and Greco-Roman ruins in the port city of Alexandria. Medieval sites will include early Coptic Christian monasteries, the Ben Ezra synagogue, the walled city of Fustat, and a series of significant Fatamid and Ottoman-era mosques. The itinerary will also include visits to sites of importance to contemporary Egyptians, highlighting the extreme variations in living and working conditions in different sections of the city, from the City of the Dead necropolis to the Khan al-Khalili bazaar beloved by European and American tourists and expatriates, to the glamorous malls that attract Egyptian elites and summer tourists from the Gulf region. Students will also have the opportunity to explore the emerging phenomenon of "revolution tourism," with a visit to Tahrir Square and through discussions with participants in the 2011 revolution. Throughout all of these site visits, students will be both tourists and partici-





pant observers, encouraged to critically reflect on the political and economic effects of the tourism sector.

**Section II: Development Challenges in Urban Egypt:** Students will meet with practitioners and academics working in and around Cairo and Alexandria to learn about the process of economic development in contemporary urban Egypt. Speakers will include, for example, representatives of the Cairo office of international NGOs such as the Population Council and the UN Development Program, as well as representatives of the Egyptian foreign ministry and U.S. and EU diplomatic missions, including the U.S. Agency for International Development. A panel on youth politics in Egypt will bring students together with Egyptian peers for an evening of informal discussion and dialogue.

**Section III: Rural Development and the Challenge of Sustainability:** The last section of the course will be “on the move” in rural areas of the Nile Delta (Northern Egypt), as well as the areas around Luxor and Aswan. Students will stay at the Desert Development Center, an experimental farm focusing on sustainable desert agriculture, for a series of lectures and local tours. They will then travel by train to Upper Egypt and take a boat along the Nile between the cities of Luxor and Aswan, stopping along the way to visit historic and contemporary sites of interest (ranging from the ancient Karnak Temple to modern factories and farms). Class sessions will be held on the boat as we go, tying together the threads of the three-week investigation of the politics of Egypt's tourist economy and the challenges and successes in Egypt's development trajectory. We will end with a discussion of how Egypt's revolution has – and hasn't – changed the political and economic landscape in the Arab region's largest country.

#### **Housing and Meals**

Throughout the trip, students will be housed in shared rooms, usually two students per room. Each room will have its own bathroom, storage space for clothes, and two beds. In Cairo, we will stay at a small conference hotel on the island of Zamalek. The hotel is well-situated in a quiet residential neighborhood featuring nearby cafes and bookstores, with an internet cafe, full-service laundry and grocery store immediately adjacent to the ho-



tel. Students will also stay at the retreat facility at the Desert Development Center, where students will have quad rooms, with shared bathrooms. While traveling between Cairo and Luxor, students will experience the famed overnight train (with double sleeper cabins), and will then be assigned double berths on the boat from Luxor to Aswan. All meals will be provided by the program (either at the hotel/boat, as part of our daily excursions, or through the provision of a meal stipend), but students will also have ample opportunity to purchase snacks as desired (at their own expense). Students requiring vegetarian meals will be fully accommodated, but those with kosher dining needs are advised that kosher meals will be unavailable and such students should plan to maintain a vegetarian diet on the trip.

### **GPA Requirement**

Students applying for this program should have a minimum of a 2.8 cumulative GPA for courses taken at HWS. In the case of first-year students, a high school transcript should be provided, since the application will be due before the release of grades from their first semester. *First years should also submit a note of endorsement from their advisor.*

### **Credits**

This course will be worth one HWS course credit in Political Science. Advisors in related fields may choose to count the course for major/minor credit, as well, but students should discuss this with their advisors in advance.

### **Eligibility**

Qualified first-years, sophomores and juniors will have priority. Seniors who apply will be put on the waiting list and admitted on a space-available basis.

### **Pre-requisites**

While there are no formal pre-requisites for participation in this program, strong applicants will have taken at least one class related to the Middle East and/or the political economy. All students will be evaluated in terms of their ability to explain the relevance and importance of this trip to their proposed course of study at HWS and career goals.

### **Costs**

Program fees will be approximately \$3000, which will cover tuition, room, board, entrance fees and travel within Egypt. Students will also need to budget for round-trip airfare at approximately \$1500, books at \$150, immunizations at \$170 (see section on immunizations below) and a non-refundable administrative fee of \$100 charged for all faculty-led short-term programs.

### **Funding**

In an effort to assist students in financial hardship wishing to participate in a short-term program, there is a limited pool of HWS grant funding available. If you are accepted to this program, we will invite you to submit a grant application. Grants will be allocated on a need basis and we will contact the financial aid office to verify your need status. We will also contact the Student Affairs office and the Dean's office to access your social/disciplinary records as part of determining your eligibility for a grant. We will let you know whether you have been awarded a grant *before* the deadline by which you are required to put down a deposit for your place on the program.

### **Immunizations**

Two immunizations are recommended for Egypt: Hepatitis A and Typhoid. Students and parents should consult the CDC website for more information on these recommendations in deciding whether or not to get them: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationEgypt.aspx>. Students should talk to their home doctor or a medical clinic specializing in travel about these immunizations. To find your nearest travel medicine clinic, use this link: <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentTravelClinics.aspx>. The CDC recommends that immunizations be administered at least 4-6 weeks before departure.

### **Cancelation**

New parliamentary elections are scheduled to be held in Egypt in November 2011, and the post-revolutionary military regime should be replaced by a civilian government. We fully anticipate that it will be possible for this program to go forward in May 2012, but reserve the right to cancel the program in the event that the political or security situation deteriorates. The faculty directors, long-time residents of Cairo, remain in close contact with colleagues and US government officials in Egypt and will receive relevant security updates in the coming months. In the event that the course is cancelled for security-related reasons, tuition will not be billed and the administrative fee for the course will be fully refunded.

For questions about application procedures, please contact Sharon Walsh in the Center for Global Education at 315-781-3663 or [walsh@hws.edu](mailto:walsh@hws.edu).

For specific questions about the program itself, please contact the co-directors:

Vikash Yadav at [vyadav@hws.edu](mailto:vyadav@hws.edu) or

Stacey Philbrick Yadav at [philbrickiyadav@hws.edu](mailto:philbrickiyadav@hws.edu).