**Democratization Potential in The Middle East Post-Arab Spring**

**Presenter: Duncan Espenshade (Political Science)**

**Faculty Mentor:  Dr. Jenna Becker Kane (Political Science)**

The Arab Spring protests were massive pro-democracy protests which occurred throughout the Arab world in the early 2010s. These protests were primarily met with failure, with Tunisia being the only state involved in these protests that democratized following them. In response to this movement, authoritarian and semi-democratic countries in the Arab World have been cracking down on freedom of speech, limiting the civil society in their states, and increasing the oversight of international non-government organizations in their countries, in the hopes to hinder the development of future democratization attempts. This study, titled “Democratization Potential in the Arab World Post Arab-Spring” will hope to answer three research questions: 1.) What factors led to the Arab Spring? 2.) What factors led to Tunisia being the only democracy to result from the Arab Spring? 3.) How should western states support democratization efforts in the Arab World? To answers these questions, an in-depth literature review will be conducted on the geopolitical context of Tunisia, the history of the Arab World, public opinions towards democratization in Arab States, and democratization literature. The study will also include a model comparing Middle Eastern states in attempt to determine which factors led to success within Tunisia. This research is significant, as the vast majority of democratization assistance programs perpetrated by the United States have resulted in a failure. If the creation of a democratic world remains a foreign policy goal of the United States, then a different policy approach is required.