***Old Dominion University***

***College of Arts and Letters***

***The Graduate Program in International Studies***

**MA Thesis Defense**

**Hijacking the Syrian Revolution**

**Iman Nanoua**

The Syrian war marks one of the greatest tragedies in the Middle East during the twentieth century and there is a fear of destructive consequences that may affect the entire region. The Syrian crisis coincides with the democratic wave that shaped the Arab Spring. The thesis will discuss the decision-making system and the primary actors in the Syrian crisis within the framework of three distinct phases. Each phase contributed to the hijacking of the peaceful revolution and the dramatic developments on the Syrian stage. The first stage of the crisis started domestically with a peaceful demonstration that was founded on the principles of liberty and equality that rapidly evolved into political upheaval and a civil war. The second stage included the involvement of regional actors in the Syrian crisis who were motivated by various political or religious viewpoints. The third stage in the Syrian crisis witnessed the involvement of the two global powers - the United States and Russia and the revival of the cold war. This thesis will discuss the revolution, its short history, the actors and their motivations and how these actors hijacked the Syrian Revolution and deviated it from the original goals. I will conclude with a prognosis for the future of Syria

**Thesis Chair:** Dr. Peter Schulman

**Thesis Committee:** Dr. Kurt Gaubatz

Dr. Donald Zeigler

***Batten Arts and Letters Building***

***Room 7009***

***August 26, 2014***

***2:00 p.m.***