Course Description

In this undergraduate course, students will critically examine the complex relationship between the United States and the Arab World during the past 150 years, with particular focus on relations during the past decade.

This course is divided into two sections. In the first section, students will study the history of the relationship between America and the Arab World. Analysis begins from the end of the 19th century and chronologically examines the economic, political, and social relations, highlighting the role of colonialism, the two World Wars, the creation of Israel, the Cold War, the war in Iraq, 9/11, foreign policy during the George W. Bush and Obama presidencies. In the second half of the course, specific topics will be our focus, such as US foreign policy and its interests in the region, including oil, Israel, foreign aid, and democracy promotion. The course ends with in-depth analysis of the aftermath of the “Arab Spring” and recent events including the refugee emergencies, America’s response to ISIS, and political crisis and war in Syria, Libya, and Yemen. The interdisciplinary course relies on a combination of analysis and critical inquiry in the fields of history, politics, international relations, and sociology.

Learning Objectives

- To have a foundational understanding of the historical, political, economic, military and cultural context of relations between America and the Arab World
- To analyze current events in the Arab World with an understanding of the historical and political context

Course Prerequisites

Students without a background in Modern Middle East History and International Relations are welcome to take the course but will be required to do extra reading in the first few weeks so they can keep up with the class.

Methods of Instruction

This course will include lectures, presentations, and short films. Students must be prepared to engage in discussion on the assigned readings for each week. The readings come from a variety of sources including peer reviewed journals, textbooks, and newspaper articles. All reading materials will be accessible through google drive.
Classroom Culture

Cell phones are to be switched off and should not be out during the class period. Note-taking must be done using a pen and paper, and a personal laptop can only be used during the final class period as part of the group presentation. Students will be penalized for unexcused absences, tardiness, or not being prepared for each class.

Students must attend class with all of the reading done and be prepared to discuss the reading. The course is filled with complicated, provocative, and controversial questions, and students are encouraged to be prepared with comments and questions for each week’s reading.

Students are asked to work together to cultivate a classroom culture of respect. In order to create an atmosphere of cordiality and respect, students should speak to and treat each other and the instructor in a manner that helps facilitate learning.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Map quizzes 5%
2. Exam #1 20%
3. Exam #2 25%
4. Group project and final paper 25%
5. In class participation, response to readings and reading quizzes 25%

Course Requirements

Attendance
Attendance is required. That means you are required to attend all classes, arrive on time (being over 15 minutes late results in an absence), and stay for the entire class period each and every time it meets. Any unexcused absences will be noted and will count against your collaboration grade. More than ONE unexcused absence will automatically result in a failing grade.

Map Quiz 5% There will be two map quizzes (2nd and 3rd class sessions). You will need to identify countries, capital cities, major cities, bodies of water, and major landmarks.

Exam 45% (2) Exam #1 will cover the first four class periods and will include all reading material, lectures, and classroom discussion. Exam #2 will only cover the second half of the course, from March 13 through May 8 and will include all reading material, lectures, guest speaker lectures, and classroom discussion.

Group Project 10% Students will be in groups of 3-4 students and will deliver presentations on the final day of class (May 15). The groups will be formed around a general theme, and each student will present on a specific topic within the theme.

Examples: Jordan-US relations 1. US foreign aid (water, historical sites, infrastructure)
2. The peace process and the importance of Israel
3. Assistance with refugees (Palestinian, Syrian, Iraqi)
4. Relationship concerning the “War on Terror”

US and Military aid
1. US Saudi relations and history
2. US Egypt relations and history
3. US Jordan relations and history
4. US Israel relations and history

US and refugee assistance
1. US and UNRWA
2. US and Syrian refugees
3. US and Iraqi refugees

**Individual Paper 15%** The final paper will be done by each student in relation to the group project. The essay should be 5-7 pages and focus on a specific topic related to the group project.

All group projects and individual papers must be confirmed in consultation with the instructor.

**Weekly assignments and class participation 25%** There will be a combination of short writing assignments or brief quizzes or online assignment for each week’s reading assignment. All students should be prepared for each class and ready to participate in the lectures with comments, questions, and feedback. Participation in class is required and an important part of the course.

**Format and referencing**

All papers and assignments you submit should have a title, your name, be double-spaced with 1” margins and 12 sized font, have page numbers, include in text citations and a bibliography. Make sure that you provide citations for any piece of information you give me or any opinion which is not your own. Maps, tables, diagrams, and quotations must be referenced properly. For references please use the APSA Style Guide available here:


**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1 What is the Middle East? Introduction**

- Gasper, Michael. The Making of the Modern Middle East. (1-64)
- Little, Douglas. Gideon’s Band in the Holy Land. (1-8)
- Little Douglas. Orientalism, American Style. (9-42)
- Rogan, Eugene. The Emergence of the Middle East into the Modern State System. (39-61)
- Stewart, Dona. The Middle East and North Africa: Between Image and Reality. (3-15)
Stewart, Dona. Geography of the Middle East and North Africa. (23-48)

Additional readings, films, and podcasts

David Fromkin. How the Modern Middle East Map Came to be Drawn. In Smithsonian (166-170)

Watenpaugh, “The Middle East in the Making of Modern Humanitarianism”
http://www.ottomanhistorypodcast.com/2016/04/humanitarianism-middle-east.html

http://www.ottomanhistorypodcast.com/2016/03/women-missionaries-lebanon.html

Said, Edward. The Myth of The Clash of Civilization
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPS-pONiEG8&t=23s


Week 2  The Cold War in the Middle East

Khalidi, Rashid. The Superpowers and the Cold War in the Middle East. (157-176)

Little, Douglas. A Tale of Four Doctrines. (117-156)

Mufti, Malik. The United States and Nasserist Pan-Arabism. (141-160)

Sluglett, Peter. The Cold War in the Middle East. (62-78)

Map quiz

Week 3 1979-1991

Lesch, David. Introduction: The Secular Priesthood and “Annualizaton” (ix-26)

Little, Douglas. Kicking the Vietnam Syndrome (229-266)


Map quiz

Week 4 Post-Cold War Middle East

Hudson, Michael. The United States in the Middle East. (356-379)

Khalidi, Rashid. Victory in the Cold War and the Global War on Terror. (201-246)

Tyler, Patrick. George W. Bush: A World of Trouble (525-554)

Yetiv, Steve. The Iraq War of 2003: Why did the United States Decide to Invade? (394-410)

EXAM #1

Week 5  U.S. and Middle East Oil

Vitalis, Robert. America’s Kingdom (excerpts)
Jones, Toby Craig. America, Oil, and War in the Middle East. The Journal of American History. (208-218)
Timothy Mitchell, Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil. (1-11)

**Group projects confirmed**

**Week 6**

**U.S. and the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

Little, Douglas. The making of a special relationship: America and Israel. (77-115)
Mearsheimer, John and Stephen Walt. The Israel Lobby. London Review of Books. (3-12)
Reich, Bernard. The United States and Israel: The Nature of a special relationship. (220-243)

**Additional readings, films, and podcasts**

Al Madfai, Madiha. Jordan, United States and the Middle East Peace Process 1974-1991 (pp. 1-).
Jordan in the Carter Middle East Policy (see pages: 31-59, 67-115, & 119-208).
Elusive Peace, PBS https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEHqDG1EVHQ

**Week 7**

**Fall Break**

**Week 8**

**US-Jordan relations** 1-2 guest speakers

Brand, Laurie. In Search of Budget Security: A Reexamination of Jordanian Foreign Policy. (139-158 or 1-20).
Hayajneh, Adnan. US-Jordan Relations: The King Abdullah II Era: An Analytical Study (pp. 189-
Marshall, Shana. Jordan’s Military-industrial complex and the Middle East’s New model Army
Ryan, Curtis. Jordan and the Arab Spring (116-130)
Ryan, Curtis. Reviving Activism in Jordan

Additional reading
Seeley, Nicholas. The battle over nuclear Jordan
Davis, Rochelle, Abbie Taylor, Will Todman, and Emman Murphy. Sudanese and Somali Refugees in Jordan
US-Jordan Bilateral Relations (pp. 343-354).

Week 9  US and foreign aid in the Middle East  guest speaker

Ahmed, Nasim. Rethinking foreign aid in the Middle East.  
Dickinson, Elizabeth. Shadow Aid to Syria refugees  
http://www.merip.org/mer/mer272/shadow-aid-syrian-refugees
http://merip.org/mero/mero101414
Martinez, Jose Ciro. Bread Is Life.  
http://www.merip.org/mer/mer272/bread-life

Sharp, Jeremy M. and Humud, Carla E. “U.S. Foreign Assistance to the Middle East: Historical Background, Recent Trends, and the FY2016 Request.” Congressional Research Service, 19 October 2015.

Week 10  Arab Spring and aftermath, ISIS, Obama foreign policy

Cammett, Melani and Ishac Diwan. Toward a Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings  
http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/30001
Council on Foreign Relations: Targeted Killings  
https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/targeted-killings
Human Rights Watch. A Wedding that Became a Funeral.  

Lizza, Ryan. How the Arab Spring remade Obama’s foreign policy. New Yorker.  
https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/05/02/the-consequentialist

Marshall, Shana and Joshua Stacher.  
http://www.merip.org/mer/mer262/egypts-generals-transnational-capital

Wheeler, Marcy. From Bush to Obama, Eyes Wide Shut. Foreign Policy.  
http://foreignpolicy.com/2014/12/12/from-bush-to-obama-eyes-wide-shut-torture-drones/

Additional readings, films, and podcasts
Al Sarhan, Atallah S. The United States, Jordan, and Terrorism (pp. 195-199).
President Obama Speech to the Muslim World in Cairo,” Video online
Gregg, Heather S. US Relations with Islamic Groups in the Middle East (pp. 109-117).
Moran, Daniel. War in the Middle East (pp. 66-80).

Week 11  US response to Syria, Libya, Yemen

Blanchard, Chris. Libya: Transition and US Policy. (1-38)
Deeb, Mary-Jane. The Arab Spring: Libya’s Second Revolution. (64-78)
Eng, Brent. Starvation, Submission and Survival.
Gelvin, James. Conclusion: The arab world at the intersection of the national and Transnational.
Gunter, Michael. Iraq, Syria, ISIS and the Kurds. (102-111)
Humud, Carla. Armed Conflict in Syria: Overview and US Response. (1-45)
Khaddour, Kheder. The struggle for Syria’s regions
Lesch, David. The uprising that wasn’t supposed to Happen: Syria and the Arab Spring.
Sharp, Jeremy. Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention. (1-12)

Additional readings, films, and podcasts
“Syria’s Second Front” Frontline, PBS http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/syrias-second-front/

Week 12  Exam #2

Week 13 & 14  Group presentations & Final papers due

Readings:
- Tyler, Patrick. 2009 “A World of Trouble: The White House and the Middle East--from the Cold War to the War on Terror.” Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Brand, Laurie. In Search of Budget Security: A Reexamination of Jordanian Foreign Policy. (139-158 or 1- 20).
- Cammett, Melani and Ishac Diwan. Toward a Political Economy of the Arab Uprisings http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/30000/Toward-a-Political-Economy-of-the-Arab-
Uprisings-Part-One
- Blanchard, Chris. Libya: Transition and US Policy. (1-38)
- Deeb, Mary-Jane. The Arab Spring: Libya’s Second Revolution. (64-78)
- Eng, Brent. Starvation, Submission and Survival.
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