



CIEE Seville, Spain

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| Course name: | Politics and Society in the Contemporary Arab World |
| Course number: | POLI 3001/SOCI 3002 CSCS |
| Programs offering course: | Liberal Arts, Advanced Liberal Arts, Business and Society and Communication, New Media and Journalism – Spanish Programs |
| Language of instruction: | Spanish |
| U.S. semester credits: | 3 credits |
| Contact hours: | 45 hours |
| Term: | Fall 2019 |

Course Description

This course, with its practical and communicative orientation, will seek to analyse the principal elements of the contemporary Arab world from a political and social perspective, paying particular attention to the socio-religious factors that condition the continuous process of change.

The course will serve as a tool for reflection and permit the student to identify the principal conditioning factors of one of the most important geographically strategic regions in the 21st century.

In a globalized world where the danger of religious fundamentalism is seen as one of the principal threats to the political integrity of states, the growing awareness of Arab society may serve as the bridge towards realizing what some political leaders have called “an alliance of civilizations”.

In this course, we will pay special attention to how the Image of the Arab World has been constructed through the media and the Western world’s view of the Arab World by analysing the impact that Al Jazeera has had on the audio-visual sector.

We will look at the economic and political potential of the Arab region, analyzing its main strengths and opportunities, taking into account the impact that the Arab Spring may have on its future. We will study the evolution of countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Saudi Arabia as well as the impact caused by Qatar’s political and economic influence on the region.

Learning Objectives

This course aims to achieve the following specific learning outcomes:

- The course participants will learn about the evolution of State and Society in the Middle East against the backdrop of Islam, oil, inter-state conflicts and major power intervention as the dominant variables.
- Students will develop the ability to understand the relations between the dominant variables and assess their implications in a thematic fashion for the Middle East.
- Students will be able to analyze the political dynamics of a number of key Middle Eastern states as significant case studies, and judge for themselves why the Middle East region is, on the one hand, very significant and, on the other, volatile.
- Students will develop an ability to advance arguments based on both historical and contemporary understanding of the Middle East from varying perspectives.



Course Prerequisites

To get the most out of the course, the student should have some previous knowledge about the political reality of the Arab world, although this is not a requirement.

4 semesters of college-level Spanish (or equivalent). Students need to have a GPA of at least 2.5.

Methodology

1. The contents of the course syllabus will be imparted primarily through class lectures, which will facilitate the active participation of the student throughout the course. A high value will be placed on students' contributions to reflections and class discussions, serving as a way to boost their strategies for linguistic competency in Spanish.
2. In addition to the class lectures, videos, guest lecturers and out-of-class visits to organizations dedicated to political analysis and development (such as Three Cultures Foundation or the International Institute of Arab Studies and the Muslim World) will grant the student a pluralized perspective of the subject at hand.
3. In conjunction with the aforementioned methodology, the professor will be available for advice and assistance via the planning of an orientation tutorial schedule, which will facilitate the learning process and the deepening of student research.
4. The use of other materials such as readings, statistics, maps, graphs, articles or opinion pieces will also be utilized whenever possible, which will also serve to increase the student's analytical capacity concerning various sources of information.
5. The students will be required to actively participate in additional activities using social networks (Facebook) and the online project platform: Canvas.

Assessment and Final Grade

Grading and attendance will adhere to the norms established by CIEE. Grading will be based on the following criteria and will consist of at least two formal exams, one at the mid-term and one at the close of the semester, which will include maps, graphs and text commentaries.

CIEE classes are not graded on a curve nor is there extra credit work. The final grade will be based upon the following criteria:

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| • Midterm exam | 30% |
| • Final exam | 40% |
| • Active class participation | 10% |
| • Research project | 20% |

Course Requirements

Research Project: The student will be responsible for completing a research project in relation to one of the topics developed in class, the object being an in-depth investigation of a historical fact, figure, movement, publication or determined work. The student will be required to present this project in class (1-hour minimum). The following will be considered in the grading of this project:

- Demonstration of knowledge and originality of ideas
- The student's capacity to summarize and analyze information, quality being more highly valued than quantity



- Verbal fluency and fluidity and the use of specific vocabulary

Attendance policy

Students are not allowed to miss class for unjustified reasons. For each unexcused absence, the participation portion of the grade will be lowered. Hence, it will be very difficult to receive a 100 in the class. Please keep this in mind. If a student misses class twice without a valid excuse (a note from a physician in the event of an illness), then the professor will automatically lower the final grade by 5 points (on a 100-point scale) for each class missed thereafter. Students with 6 or more absences will fail the course.

Students should arrive to class on time. Arriving more than 15 minutes late for a class will count as an unexcused absence. Please note that an excused absence is one that is accompanied by a doctor's note: signed, stamped, and dated. Travelling and/or travel delays are not considered valid reasons for missing class.

* Notes from a physician will only be valid and admitted by the Program Manager if the doctor confirms that the visit could not have been arranged at another time, or that the student was too ill to attend class that day.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to act in accordance with their university and CIEE's standards of conduct concerning plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Use of online translators for work in Spanish will result in an automatic failure.

Linguistic Resource Center

Students are encouraged to use the Writing Center for help with class activities as well as for the final essay.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Conceptual and Methodological Introduction to the Contemporary Arab World

1.1 Presentation of the professor, students, course objectives and methodology and general introduction to the course.

1.2 Conceptualization of terms:

- Distinction between the terms *Islam* and *Muslim*. Distinction between the terms Arab world and Muslim world
- Distinction between the classic Arab world and the contemporary Arab world. Notion of the contemporary Arab world

1.3 Geographic delimitation of the Arab world

- Geographic area that the Arab world occupies. Physical, climatic and human conditions.
- Countries and regions of the Arab world.
- Different parts of the Arab world: Greater Maghreb or North Africa, the Middle East, Gulf countries, certain regions of the African continent.

1.4 Introduction to the Contemporary Arab world. Intrinsic characteristic and function within the world order.

Readings:

1. Instituto Internacional de Estudios Árabes y del Mundo Musulmán-Casa Árabe. "Datos básicos sobre los países miembros de la Liga de Estados Árabes"

2. Diálogo entre civilizaciones. Felipe González. El País.

Week 2: Summary of the contemporary history of the Arab world

2.1 From the reign of the Ottoman Empire to Colonialism

- British Colonialism and the regions of its influence in the Arab world.
- France and the colonization of North Africa (Maghreb)
- The epoch of the mandates

Readings:

Reading: Xavier Batalla. *Noventa años del acuerdo de Sykes Picot*. La vanguardia.

Week 3: Summary of the contemporary history of the Arab world

3.1 The processes of political independence

- Colonialism and Arab nationalism
- The temporary malfunction of the various Arab countries on the road toward independence.
- Independence in the former British Colonial area.
- The difficult and often violent processes of independence in the formerly French area

Readings: Ricardo Maruzca. *“La penetración colonial europea en el mundo árabe”*.

Video. “La batalla de Argel” Gillo Pontecorvo. Italia. 1967

Week 4: Summary of the contemporary history of the Arab world

4.1 The modern Arab states

- Generalities on the formative process of the various Arab countries.
- Arab nationalism, Pan-Arabism, Pan-Islamism and the consolidation of the state model in each of the various Arab countries.
- The internal relations among Arabs: diplomacy and institutions of cooperation (the Arab League, MAU CCG, etc.)

Readings:

1. Ismail Sabril. *Cooperación, integración, unificación*. Trad. Carmen Ruiz Bravo.
2. Instituto Internacional de Estudios Árabes y del Mundo Musulmán-Casa Árabe. *Integración regional árabe*. Realidad o quimera.
3. Sati Al Musri “La formación de las nacionalidades”. Conferencias sobre el nacimiento de la idea nacionalista. Traducción de Carmen Ruiz Bravo.
4. Sylvia G. *El Partido Baath. Constitución*. Naim. Arab Nationalism. An anthology.
5. Tratado de creación de la Unión del Magreb Árabe

Week 5: Summary of the contemporary history of the Arab world

5.1 The great regional conflicts I

- The Arab-Israeli conflict as a catalyst in the general evolution of the region. Historical evolution, analysis of the current situation, and political consequences for the stabilization of the region.

Readings:

1. Palestina 181. 60 años después. Recopilación de documentos de las Naciones Unidas sobre la cuestión palestina. Pág 32. Consejo de Seguridad de Naciones Unidas.
2. Resolución 242. Consejo de Seguridad de Naciones Unidas.



3. Inan Halevi. Anatomía de la crisis política en Palestina. Instituto Internacional de Estudios Árabes y Mundo Musulmán. Casa Árabe

Week 6: Summary of the contemporary history of the Arab world

5.1 The great regional conflicts II

- The Arab-Israeli conflict as a catalyst in the general evolution of the region. Historical evolution, analysis of the current situation, and political consequences for the stabilization of the region (Part II).

Video-forum: "[Promises](#)". Documental de Justine Shapiro, B.Z. Goldberg y. Carlos Bolado. Discussion.

MIDTERM EXAM

Week 7: Summary of the contemporary history of the Arab world

7.1 Iraq as a conflict area

- The Gulf Wars. Political motivations, general consequences for the region and future perspectives.
- Petroleum as a geo-strategic factor in the Persian Gulf region.

Readings:

1. Isabel Lafont "*La nueva crisis del oro negro*". Diario El País.
3. Iraq. *Condiciones de vida en una economía de guerra*. Instituto Internacional de Estudios Árabes y Mundo Musulmán. Casa Árabe

Week 8: Introduction to the contemporary Arab political regimes

8.1 Governing systems of the Arab countries. Classification

- Constitutional monarchies
- Traditional monarchies
- Socialist republics
- Westernized republics
- Specific regimes

8.2 Authoritarianism and elitism in the various Arab political regimes

- Power concentration
- The rule of the people of the various regimes

Reading: Poder y regímenes en el Mundo Árabe Contemporáneo. Fundación CIDOB

Week 9: The Arab Spring: Political paradigm shift in the Contemporary Arab World

- Motivations, origin, and the expansion of the political revolution process
- Technology's influence on the expansion of the social movement
- Geopolitical and new order in Arabic politics
- Al Jazeera new player in communication for new political times in the Arab world

Readings:

1. La nueva legitimidad árabe. Diario El País
2. Europa y la revolución democrática árabe. Diario El País



Week 10: Contemporary Arab societies

10.1 Current social movements. Islamism as a political and economic phenomenon

- Differences and similarities between social movements and Islamic movements
- The rise of Islamist movements; the theoretical nature, principal groups, fields of action and countries in which they have the greatest strength
- Islamic finances: developments and projections

Readings:

1. Los hijos de la miseria. Diario Córdoba

10.2 The image of the Arab and Islamic world in the media

- Representations of Difference or culture shock
- Islam and radicalization processes in the media
- Arab and Western vision of the conflict through the media

Readings:

Informe “La imagen del mundo árabe y musulmán en la prensa española”.
Fundación Tres Culturas del Mediterráneo

Week 11: Contemporary Arab Societies

11.1 The legal division between genders, the situation of women in the Arab world

- The effect of Islamic tradition on social functions of men and women in the arena of politics, marriage, children, social conventions and the workforce.
- The road towards legal equality advocated by some Arab governments and the social barriers facing its realization.
- Progress and steps backwards in the legal and social equalization of the sexes
- Feminist movements

Readings:

1. Fatima Mernisi. *Sobre la autonomía del feminismo árabe*.
2. Hacia la mejora del estatus de la mujer en el mundo árabe. 4º Informe PNUD.

Week 12:

REVIEW

RESEARCH PROJECTS

FINAL EXAM

Out of Classroom Activities

Visit to the three cultures *Foundation of the Mediterranean* as a model of public institution dedicated to the study and research of political and cultural relations between the Arab world and Spain.

Course Materials

Readings

- AYUBI, Nazig, N. *Política y sociedad en Oriente Próximo. La hipertrofia del estado árabe*. Barcelona, Biblioteca del Islam Contemporáneo, 1998.
- BADUEL, P.-R. (ed.). *Les partis politiques dans les pays arabes*. París, 1998.
- BIDWELL, R. *Dictionary of Modern Arab History. An A to Z of over 2000 Entries from 1798 to the Present Day*. Londres, 1998.
- (The) *Cambridge Encyclopaedia of the Middle East and North Africa*. Cambridge-Nueva York, 1988.
- CLEVELAND, W.L. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. Oxford, Westview, 1994.
- ETIENNE, B. *El islamismo radical*. Madrid, 1996.
- ESPOSITO, J.L. (ed.). *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. Oxford, 4 vols., 1995.
- FLORY, M. y MANTRAN, R. (ed.). *Les régimes politiques arabes*. París, 1990.
- HOURANI, Albert. *Historia de los pueblos árabes*. Barcelona, Editorial Ariel, 1992.
- LAURENS, H. *La question de Palestine*. París, 1999.
- LÓPEZ GARCÍA, B. y FERNÁNDEZ SUZOR, C. *Introducción a los regímenes y constituciones árabes*. Madrid, 1985.
- LÓPEZ GARCÍA, Bernabé. *El mundo árabo-islámico contemporáneo. Una historia política*. Madrid, Editorial Síntesis, 1997.
- MARTÍN MUÑOZ, Gema. *Democracia y derechos humanos en el mundo árabe*. Madrid, 1993.
- MARTÍN MUÑOZ, Gema. *El estado árabe. Crisis de legitimidad y contestación islamista*. Barcelona, 1999.
- MARTÍNEZ CARRERAS, José Urbano. *El Mundo Árabe e Israel. El Próximo Oriente en el siglo xx*. Madrid, Ediciones Istmo, 1992.
- PLANHOL, X. De. *Las naciones del Profeta. Manual de geografía política musulmana*. Barcelona, Biblioteca del Islam Contemporáneo, 1998.
- WAINES, David. *El islam*. Barcelona, Cambridge University Press, 1998.