

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus.
The syllabus for the course you are
enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's
syllabus for more information on
specific requirements for a given
semester.

International Studies/NELC 5645
CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN THE MIDDLE EAST
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Instructor:

Office:

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course has developed out of the consensus among Middle East experts that a proper understanding of recent events in the Middle East requires more than a casual or narrowly-focused knowledge of the cultural, social, historical, economic, religious and political background of these events. This course will provide students with an opportunity to study, through an in-depth interdisciplinary approach, one of the world's most complex yet important regions which, except for its crises, is virtually ignored in the news media of most Western countries. This course will seek to illuminate the host of factors underlying contemporary issues in the Middle East and in some North African and Central Asian countries. History, Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Literature and Religious studies perspectives will all be embedded within the course. The role of shared and divergent values across these various ethnic and religious groups will be considered as the issues of conflict, peace and security are studied. The ultimate goal of the course is to provide the students with an enlarged perspective in which to understand developments in the region. The first 15 minutes of each session will be devoted to discussion and analyses of daily developments in Middle Eastern countries.

READINGS

Each of the following is ***required:***

John Esposito, The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality

Roy Andersen, Robert Seibert and John Wagoner, Politics and Change in the Middle East

Recommended:

Arthur Goldschmidt, A Concise History of the Middle East

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 10% Regular attendance; participation in discussions and completion of other assignments
- 20% In-class Midterm Exam or short research paper (4-6 pages)
- 35% Final Examination
- 35% Term Paper (Topics to be approved by the instructor, 20-25 pages for graduates, 12-14 pages for undergraduates – double space, 12 point font)

Students are required to follow the Code of Student conduct. Please be aware of these rules and regulations – especially those of citation, exams and term papers. You may read current regulations on the Committee for Academic Misconduct website at: <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/home.html> . If you have any questions at all, do not hesitate to contact the professor, the GTA, or COAM Office (292-7262)

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. The instructor will report such instances to the committee on Academic Misconduct.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

“Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.”

WEEK 1 (January 9 – 13)

1. The Geographic and Historical Setting
 - a. Ancient Lands
 - b. Ancient Peoples
2. The Social and Cultural Setting
 - a. Traditional Cultures
 - b. The Cradle of Civilizations and Socio-Political Organizations

WEEK 2 (January 16 – 20)

2. The Social and Cultural Setting, continued
 - c. Nomads
 - d. Farmers
 - e. Townspeople
3. Major Religions of the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia
 - a. Judaism
 - b. Christianity
 - c. Islam

Readings: Andersen: Chapters 1 & 3

WEEK 3 (January 23 – 27)

1. The role of Religion and Ethnicity in Social and Political Life
 - a. Theories on Growth and Decline in the Islamic State
 - b. Legitimacy in Government (Religious)
 - c. Status of Men and Women
 - d. Rights and Obligations of Minorities
2. The Economic Setting
 - a. Middle East as a Cross-Road of Economic Activity Connecting Africa, Asia and Europe
 - b. Importance of Waterways and Oil

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 11
Esposito: Chapter 2

WEEK 4 (January 30 –February 3)

1. Politics in the Middle East
 - a. Theories on Islamic State and Umma (Community of Muslims)
 - b. Sharia (Islamic Law) and Fiqh (Jurisprudence)
 - c. The Rise of Western-Style Nationalism
 - d. Modernizing Reforms and the Role of Elite Groups

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 3
Esposito: Chapter 4

WEEK 5 (February 6 – 10)

1. Western Imperialism and Western Ideologies in the Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia
 - a. French Interests in the Middle East
 - b. British Interests in the Middle East
 - c. Soviet/Russian Interests in the Middle East and Central Asia
 - d. U.S. Interests in the Middle East and Central Asia

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 4

WEEK 6 (February 13 – 17)

1. Reactions to Foreign Influences and Ideologies
 - a. Pan-Islamism
 - b. Pan-Arabism
 - c. Arab-Socialism
 - d. Different Radical Movements

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 6

WEEK 7 (February 20 – 24)

1. Regional Conflicts
 - a. The Arab-Israeli Conflict to 1956
 - b. 1956-1973

WEEK 8 (February 27 – March 3)

1. Regional Conflicts, continued
 - c. 1973-1978
 - d. 1978-Present
2. Video: *Arab and Jew: Return to the Promised Land*

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 13

WEEK 9 (March 6 – 10)

1. Conflict in Lebanon
 - a. Background
 - b. 1973-Present
 - c. Video: *Inside Hizbollah*
2. MIDTERM EXAMINATION (or SHORT PAPER DUE)

Readings: Esposito: Chapters 1 & 3

WEEK 10 (March 13 – 17) SPRING BREAK

WEEK 11 (March 20 – 24)

1. Soviet-Afghan Relations
 - a. Background
 - b. Afghanistan in the Cold War
 - c. Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan
 - d. International Reaction to the Occupation
 - e. The U.S. Role
 - f. Peace Initiatives and Current Situation

Readings: Payind's Articles and Red Flag over Afghanistan by Hammond, on closed reserve

WEEK 12 (March 27 – March 31)

1. Iran-Iraq Conflict
 - a. Background
 - b. Iranian Revolution
 - c. War of 1980-88 and Outside Interests

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 13, Iranian Foreign Policy

WEEK 13 (April 3 – 7)

1. Iraq-Kuwait Conflict
 - a. Background
 - b. Iraqi Occupation of Kuwait
 - c. International Reaction to the Occupation
 - d. The U.S. Role
2. Videos: *PBS The Gulf War*

WEEK 14 (April 10 – 14)

1. Religious Activism in the Middle East and Selected Muslim Countries
Interpretations of Religious Activism
2. Videos: *National Geographic: Suicide Bombings, A History*

Readings: Andersen: Chapter 8
Esposito: Chapters 5 & 6

WEEK 15 (April 17 – 21) WRAP UP AND REVIEW

PAPERS DUE: April 18, 2017

FINAL EXAMINATION: Monday, May 1, 2017 @ 10:00am-11:45am