IR 362
International Relations of the Contemporary Middle East
Spring 2011

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Course Overview and Objectives

This course focuses on several key themes in the contemporary international relations of the Middle East region. It begins with an overview of the approaches to studying International Relations of the region and an examination of its history, focusing on the forces that created and continue to shape modern Middle Eastern states. With this then as a background, we will move to examine the features of the Middle East regional system, the evolution of the Arab system and its relations with the non-Arab periphery. We then shift the focus to the global level and discuss the impact of the Cold War and analyze the region’s continued state of (in)security in the unipolar world. In addressing foreign policy analysis—a sub-filed of international relations—we will move to examine the foreign policies of three major Arab states: Syrian, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, as well as those of smaller states operating in the shadow of their powerful neighbors: Lebanon, the Sudan, and Qatar and UAE, respectively.

While war and conflict are not unique to the region, the Middle East has been viewed by many as a “conflict and war-ridden” region. In the context of the regional power distribution as well as social, economic and political dynamics in the region we will focus on the three Iraq wars that have been shaping the region since 1980 and the intractable Arab Israeli conflict as it has continued to defy a comprehensive settlement since 1948. To be able to go beyond the headlines and sound bites and to appreciate the complexity of the conflict, students will be assigned the roles of relevant actors, research the issue positions, participate in a simulated peace conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict and write a report.

In short, the course aims to provide students with a deeper understanding of the Middle East, analytical tools to make critical and observations, and empirical evidence to underpin informed arguments about states and questions of peace and war in the region.

Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Map Quiz</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace Conference Participation &amp; Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Required Texts

The following textbooks are required and available at the university bookstore:

Louise Fawcett, ed. *International Relations of the Middle East*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009


All other readings are also required and will be available through the class Blackboard.

Course-related Policies

No make-up exam will be given without a documented illness or emergency.
Please do not use cell phones or any other distracting devices in class.
Please arrive class on time and do not leave early.

Disability: Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.– 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776

Academic Integrity: Cheating on exams and plagiarism are strictly prohibited, are an automatic cause for failing the course, and will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards. Please refer to [www.usc.edu/scampus](http://www.usc.edu/scampus) for the relevant university policies.

Course Outline and Schedule

January 11: Introduction to course, discussion of syllabus

January 13: *International Relations and the Study of the Middle East*

Fawcett, Introduction

Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), Chapter 1
January 18 & 20: The Historical Legacy and the Emergence of the Modern Middle East

Fawcett, Chapter 1

Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), Chapter 3

Fred H. Lawson, *Constructing International Relations in the Arab World* (Stanford, 2006), Introduction and Chapter 1

January 25 & 27: The Arab and Middle East Regional Systems

Korany and Dessouki, Chapter 3

Fawcett, Chapter 3


February 1, 3, 8: The Middle East and the International System, post 1945

(10-minute map quiz at beginning of class on February 3)

Fawcett, Chapters 2, 15, and 16


Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009), Chapters 1, 2, and 3

February 10: The Study of the Foreign Policies of Arab States

Korany and Dessouki, Chapters Introduction, 1, and 2

February 15, 17, and 22: The Foreign Policies of Syria and Lebanon
Korany and Dessouki, Chapters 12 and 8


**February 24 and March 1: The Foreign Policies of Egypt and Sudan**

Korany and Dessouki, Chapters 5 and 11


**March 3: Midterm Exam**

**March 8: In-Class Film Viewing**

Film to be announced later

**March 10: The Foreign Policy of Morocco**

Fawcett, Chapter 9

*********(Week of March 14: Spring Break)*********

**March 22, and 24: The Foreign Policies of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States**

Korany and Dessouki, Chapters 10 and 13

Fawcett, Chapters 4 and 13


**March 29: Conflict and War in the Middle East**

Fawcett, Chapter 10

**March 31, April 5 and 7: The Arab–Israeli Conflict**
Fawcett, Chapters 11 and 12

Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, Chapter 1

Other reading readings from Charles Smith’s textbook and elsewhere will be added.

**April 12 and 14: International Peace Conference on the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

Students will assume assigned roles of relevant actors and participate in a peace conference.

Assignments and instructions will be provided.

**April 19, 21 and 26: Iraq and Three Gulf Wars**

Tripp, Chapters 1, 6, 7, and Conclusion

Fawcett, Chapter 14


Other readings will be assigned.

**April 28: Review. Conference Reports Are Due.**

**May 5: Final Examination, 4:30-6:30pm.**