

History of the Modern Middle East

HIST-161-10 SUMMER 2018

ICC 213
Monday-Thursday 10:45-12:45

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Office Hours: By appointment
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Course description:

The course outlines the factors that have shaped the political and social features of the modern Middle East from 1500 to the present. Its geographic scope comprises the central provinces and territories of the former Ottoman and Safavid empires: Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, and the Gulf states of the Arabian peninsula. The syllabus emphasizes three analytical themes: first, the historical evolution of "Middle Eastern" polities from dynastic and religious empires in the 16th century to modern "nation-states" in the 20th; second, the impact of industrial capitalism and European imperial expansion on local societies and their modes of production; and third, the socio-cultural and ideological dimensions of these large-scale transformations, specifically the rise of mass ideologies of liberation and development (nationalism, socialism, rights movements, political Islam), and the emergence of structural and social imbalances (economic polarization, cultural/ethnic conflicts, demographic growth, urbanization).

This class will primarily examine the history of the region across the 19th-20th centuries with an emphasis on the analysis of primary sources and relevant academic scholarship. The course aims to enable students to engage critically with primary and secondary sources on the history of the region, to become familiar with the three of the most common historical categories of analysis (class, gender, and race), and to understand the impacts of two different forms of state organization (empire and nation) on the region in the modern period

Course readings:

Students should have access to copies of both textbooks. They are available for rental or purchase in the bookstore and elsewhere.

Gelvin, James L. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. Fourth edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Khater, Akram Fouad. *Sources in the History of the Modern Middle East*. Second edition. Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2011.

In addition to their notes on *and* copies of the day's assigned readings, students are required to bring something to write on and something to write with by hand (such as a notebook and a writing utensil), particularly on days of in-class writing assignments.

Learning goals:

Students are expected to engage with the course materials and one another through respectful discussions of even the most contentious subjects. Class discussions will be an inclusive environment for students of all backgrounds to learn together.

Students are expected to attend class regularly, participate actively in the discussions, offer each other constructive feedback on their written work, and complete all of the assignments. By the end of the semester, students will have:

1. Gained a broad and deep understanding of the modern history of the Middle East, contextualized within global trends.
2. Learned to engage with a broad variety of perspectives and sources, including a variety of genres and types of media, both print and visual: academic works such as peer-reviewed journal articles, memoir, journalism, official governmental and non-governmental reports, speeches, poetry, and literature. In other words, students will be able to identify and distinguish between different types of primary and secondary sources, noting their respective strengths and weaknesses.
3. Honed critical thinking and skills of analysis, interpretation, and communication (both written and verbal). Students should be able to articulate their ideas verbally and in writing, in both cases supported with the strongest evidence possible, properly cited.
4. Improved their ability to think critically about historical narratives; the work, methods, and concepts of other historians; and the relationship between past and present.

Assignments and grading:

Participation and attendance (25% of total grade)

- 10% Discussion participation. Students should note one important theme or topic of interest and prepare at least one question for discussion based on each day's assigned material. Good preparation will result in a B participation grade; active participation in subsequent discussion is necessary to raise the grade to an A.
- 15% Three pop reading quizzes will be given throughout the semester in order to assess the preparation of students who may find it difficult to participate consistently in the discussion.

Mini-exams (60%)

In place of a midterm and final, there will be four weekly mini-exams (worth 15% of the grade each) to test your knowledge of the material covered in the readings, lectures, media, and discussions. The exams will be composed of key term identifications (IDs), and short essay questions. More information will be distributed in advance of each.

In-class writing assignments (15%)

The purpose of these three exercises (each worth 5%) is to review and reflect deeply on important concepts, ideas, themes, and scholarly interpretations of events. This is an in-class essay assignment, written by hand, in response to a prompt.

Further direction and detailed grading guidelines for all assignments will be posted on Canvas. Please see the documents entitled "Assignments."

Communication, office hours, meetings with instructor

Email is always the best way to contact me (jdr55). I will respond as soon as possible, typically within a day, sooner if received during the day. I am always glad to meet individually to discuss any questions or concerns with the course. Please contact me by email or ask in person to schedule an appointment outside of office hours. I am generally available before and after class for quick conferences.

Classroom policies

Classes are a hybrid format alternating seminar discussions with mini-lectures, four times weekly, for two hours each day. There will be a short break mid-class.

Most classes will begin by going around the table and giving each student the opportunity to raise a discussion question for the class and note a particular theme or area of interest from the week's assignment. The exceptions are when the round-the-table raising of questions and themes is preceded by the occasional pop reading quiz, which will be given at the start of class at the discretion of the instructor, or by scheduled in-class writing assignments or exams. After students offer their prepared discussion points, the instructor will then introduce the assignments by contextualizing them in the broader history and historiography, and raise discussion questions of his own.

The use of screens in class is highly discouraged, except in the case of an ARC accommodation (see below). Laptops and tablets impede discussion and offer potential sources of distraction while in class. Your active participation is an essential component to learning.

Cell phones should be silent and invisible during class.

Use of an electronic device for any reason not related to the discussion will result in a deduction of 1/3 of a letter from your participation grade; persistent usage will lead to a ban.

In addition, examining the readings in print (that is, print out the readings if you do not obtain physical copies of the books) is highly encouraged. At the very least, print out your notes on the readings; or even better: take notes by hand (which has been proven to improve recall).

Attendance policy

Attendance is mandatory. Students are excused one absence for the semester. Each additional absence will result in a 1/3 letter deduction from the participation grade.

Students must arrive on time out of respect for the rest of the class. Any student arriving more than five minutes late will be considered absent for that day.

In case of emergencies, students must have their dean contact the instructor to excuse the absence.

Assignments and grading

Assignment and grading guidelines will be posted and distributed well in advance.

Students are welcome to discuss their grades; however, they should prepare a written response engaging with the instructor's grading comments before entering the discussion.

Honor Code

As Georgetown students you are bound to the university honor code. As the instructor, I am required to report any instances of suspected plagiarism or cheating, which will then be adjudicated by the university.

You are encouraged, in fact required, to use the ideas of others — either to critique or to build off of them. This is the basis of all academic scholarship. But the source of the idea must always be cited. Detailed guidelines for citation will be provided in the Assignments document.

Accommodations

If you believe you have a disability, you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu). The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.

University Policy on Sexual Misconduct and Harassment

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors of sexual misconduct, harassment, or assault. University policy requires faculty members to report any disclosures about sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator, whose role it is to coordinate the University's response to sexual misconduct. For confidential resources, see <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu> or <https://titleix.georgetown.edu/>, in particular "How To Get Help."

Instructional continuity

Should classes be canceled, students should await case-by-case directions from the instructor.

Readings:

This course does not have any requirements and is open to all students, regardless of background or level of experience with the region or its history.

Note: Short excerpts, articles, and primary sources will be available to download and print from Canvas as noted throughout the syllabus with the abbreviation (Ca).

Suggested media for enrichment (ask instructor for more recommendations):

Course schedule (subject to change)

WEEK 1

Monday, 4 June

Introductions, syllabus review and course overview
Readings: Khater, xi-xiii; Gelvin, viii-xii

Tuesday 5 June

What is the “Middle East”?
Readings: Rashid Khalidi, “The Middle East as Framework of Analysis,” 74-80 (Ca)
Abbas Amanat, “Is there a Middle East?,” 1-7 (Ca)
Roger Adelson, “British and U.S. Use and Misuse of the Term ‘Middle East,’” 36-55 (Ca)

Wednesday, 6 June

What is a primary source, and what is modern history?
Readings: Khater, 1-9; Gelvin 1-31

Thursday, 7 June

Political change and reform
Gelvin 32-65 and 175-185; Khater 10-33

WEEK 2

Monday, 11 June

Economics and trade
Khater 34-56; Gelvin 69-105 and 166-174

Tuesday, 12 June

In-class writing assignment
Watch (in class): *The Magnificent Century* (Episode 1)

Wednesday, 13 June

Socio-cultural transformations
Khater 57-84; Gelvin 106-157

Thursday, 14 June	First exam
WEEK 3	
Monday, 18 June	<u>Nations and nationalism</u> Gelvin 189-229; Khater 85-141
Tuesday, 19 June	In-class writing assignment Watch (in class): Clips from <i>Lawrence of Arabia</i> (1962)
Wednesday, 20 June	<u>Consequences of nation-building</u> Khater 142-190; Gelvin 230-256
Thursday, 21 June	Second exam
WEEK 4	
Monday, 25 June	<u>Post-independence nation-states and the Cold War</u> Gelvin 259-316; Khater 195-260
Tuesday, 26 June	In-class writing assignment Watch (in class): Clips from <i>Persepolis</i> (2007)
Wednesday, 27 June	<u>Repression, resistance, religion</u> Khater 261-345; Gelvin 317-333 and 359-367
Thursday, 28 June	Third exam
WEEK 5	
Monday, 2 July	<u>Recent past, present, and future</u> Gelvin 334-358 and 368-371; Khater 346-380
Tuesday, 3 July	In-class writing assignment Watch (in class): TBD
Wednesday, 4 July	NO CLASS
Thursday, 5 July	Fourth exam