

PLSS 3030-01: REGIONAL AREA STUDIES--MIDDLE EAST
Spring 2011, Oxendine 1258

Instructor: Dr. Kevin S. Freeman
Office: Oxendine 1309
Phone: 521-6447

Class Hours: MWF 9:00-9:50 AM
Office Hours: MWF 11:30 AM-12:30 PM, 2:30-3:30 PM
Email: kevin.freeman@uncp.edu

Course Description: This course is designed to give students an overview of approaches to the study of Middle Eastern politics, a background in the most salient issues in the study of Middle Eastern politics, and a general knowledge of Middle East culture, religion, and society. This interdisciplinary course pays special attention to political Islam, the clash between Islam, democracy, and "modernization," and Arab culture and identity. .

The format for class meetings will consist of lectures and opportunities for discussion and debate. The instructor will make every effort to relate course concepts to developments taking place in and around Asia at the time.

Course Objectives:

1. To gain a basic understanding of the geopolitical setting presented by the Middle East
2. To learn and put into political context the relationship between 'mosque and society' in Middle Eastern states.
3. To discuss whether or not democracy can co-exist with Islam
4. To analyze the tenuous relationship between the United States and Middle Eastern countries

Texts: There are two texts for this course:

1. *Understanding the Contemporary Middle East (3rd Ed.)* by Jillian Schwedler and Deborah Gerner
2. *The Government and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa* by Long, Reich, and Gasiorowski (eds.)

There are also two supplemental readings you are required to read as well.

Diamond, Larry. "Why are there No Arab Democracies?" *Journal of Democracy* 21(1), pp. 93-112. Available on electronic database or outside of my office. Please return them if you borrow from me).

Anderson, Roy, Robert Seibert, and Jon Wagner. *Politics and Change in the Middle East*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2009. Chapter 2: "The Foundations of Islam." Available on Library Reserve or outside my office. Please return them if you borrow from me.

I reserve the right to assign additional readings as necessary. This course will be much more enjoyable (and informative) for both you and your instructor if you are prepared for class discussion. (Remember: a happy instructor is a nice instructor!) Similarly, as we will also be talking about current events in the Middle East, it is imperative that the student read newspapers and magazines and/or watch news on television as well.

Attendance: Attendance is expected in this class. It will be very difficult to make a decent grade in this class without regular attendance--many of the test questions will be directly from lecture material and may not necessarily be found in your text.

Students are allowed two absences per semester as religious holidays. If you are observing a religious holiday that falls on an examination day, please notify me **ahead of time** so we can make arrangements. Posthumous notification of absence due to religious observance will result in a grade of zero on said exam.

Tardiness: Do not make it a habit of arriving into my class late. I will keep track of late arrivals, and two tardies will count the same as one absence for the purpose of attendance grades. This policy is instituted to discourage chronic tardiness which has become increasingly prevalent in recent semesters.

Classroom Etiquette: While as a whole I have minimal in-classroom requirements, I do expect some degree of respect to be shown in the classroom environment. This includes having your cell phone OFF or on VIBRATE when in class, not bringing your breakfast or lunch into class, not studying for another test while in my class, and not talking when others are. Systematic violations of this can result in a reduction of grade and/or a dismissal

from the classroom. This is a university-level class, and you will be treated as adults. As such, you will be expected to act like adults.

Office Visits: You are more than welcome to meet with me at any time that is mutually convenient. My office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. If these times are not convenient to you, we can easily arrange some other time. Do not assume that office visits are only to address problems you might be having in class. I'm happy to talk about whatever you like.

Students with Disabilities: Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak directly to Disability Support Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please contact DSS at 521-6695. This syllabus is also available in alternative formats upon request. Please call the aforementioned number if you desire this. Do not spring this on me on the day of a test, as you will take the test with the same rules as everyone else.

Grading: There will be three tests—two midterms and a final exam—during the semester. The tests will consist entirely of essays. The final exam (**scheduled for Wednesday, May 4 at 8:00 AM**) will NOT be comprehensive. In addition, throughout the semester, you will be charged with becoming an 'expert' on one Asian country chosen from a list on the next page. You should do this by reading, checking the internet, and watching the news. Throughout the semester, you will be given four take-home "country studies" pertaining to your country. Of these four, I will drop the lowest graded assignment.

Midterm 1	100 points
Midterm 2	100 points
Final Exam.....	100 points
3 Country Study Assignments (50 points each).....	150 points
Participation.....	50 points
TOTAL	500 points

Grading Scale: 465-500=A; 450-464=A-; 435-449=B+; 415-434=B; 400-414=B-; 385-399=C+; 365-384=C; 350-364=C-; 335-349=D+; 315-334=D; 300-314=D-; < 300=F.

Extra Credit: I do give opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. However, these opportunities are planned and given by me. Please do not ask for extra credit outside of what I offer to the course as a whole. I may also offer other opportunities as they present themselves.

Date	Event	Extra Credit Points
February 21, 7:30PM	Distinguished Speaker: <i>Judy Shepard</i>	5
April 26, 7:30 PM	Distinguished Speaker: <i>Hill Harper</i>	5

Make-up Policy: All graded assignment dates are clearly indicated on this syllabus. If these dates do not fit into your schedule, you should consider dropping this course or taking a different section. **As such, no make-up exams will be given except in cases of serious, documented emergencies or official university-sanctioned events.** The documentation must have contact information that allows me to call and verify your story. Vacations, birthdays, oversleeping, eye doctor appointments, and/or hangovers do not qualify as emergencies. Note that what qualifies as a valid excuse is at the discretion of the instructor.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty of any variety will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment, and plagiarism. Any instance coming to the attention of the instructor will result in the assignment of an "F" grade for the course, and notification of appropriate Deans. In order to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please read the complete description of the UNCP policy on academic dishonesty, which is available in the student handbook and online at <http://www.uncp.edu/studentconduct/honor/>.

Clickers: You will be assigned a clicker on the first or second day of class. Be sure to note the number on your clicker, and **use the same one each day!** Clickers will be left in the classroom at the end of each day.

Disclaimer: We all know how boring long, droning lectures can be. Teachers can learn a few things from class discussion, too. But above all, I want this class to be both FUN and INTERESTING for all of us!

It is your responsibility to keep up with when assignments are due and when tests and quizzes might be given. Just because I don't announce a test or quiz ahead of time does not mean that I am going to push it back. To be safe, check your syllabus regularly.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Jan 10 Jan 12 Jan 14	Introduction and Syllabus Review The Geography of the Middle East Political Culture in the Middle East	--- CME Ch. 1 Notes
Jan 17	No Class: MLK, Jr. Holiday	---
Jan 19-24 Jan 26-31 Feb 2-4 Feb 9-11	A Brief History of the Middle East The Foundations of Islam The Politics of Religion Islam and Democracy	CME Ch. 2 Seibert et al. CME Ch. 12 Diamond article
Feb 14	Midterm Examination #1	---
Feb 16-18 Feb 21-25 Feb 28-Mar 4	Stereotypes and Misconceptions Women: An Invisible Population? International Relations in the Middle East	Notes CME Ch. 11 CME Ch. 5
Mar 7-11	No Class! Spring Break	---
Mar 14-18 Mar 21-25	The Arab-Israeli Conflict Middle East Political Economy	CME Ch. 6 CME Chs. 7-8
Mar 28	Midterm Examination #2	---
Mar 30-Apr 4 Apr 6-11 Apr 13-18 Apr 20	Case Study: Turkey Case Study: Egypt Case Study: Saudi Arabia Case Study: Israel	MENA Ch. 2 MENA Ch. 13 MENA Ch. 4 MENA Ch. 11
Apr 22	No Class: Good Friday!	---
Apr 25-27	Case Study: Israel	MENA Ch. 11
Apr 29	No Class: Professor Out of Town	---

Here are a list of countries from which one will be selected for you to become an 'expert.' This country will be randomly selected on the first day of class. If you would like to swap with a classmate, that is fine, but let me know.

Bahrain
Iraq
Lebanon
Afghanistan
Morocco

Cyprus
Algeria
Libya
Somalia
UAE

Tunisia
Jordan
Oman
Sudan
Yemen

Iran
Kuwait
Qatar
Syria

Your country study assignments will be handed out during the following dates, and will be due approximately two weeks after this date. Remember that I drop the lowest of these take-home country studies. I **WILL NOT** accept late country assignments for **ANY** reason, so don't ask! If you plan to be absent during a due date, make arrangements to return it in early, have a friend turn it in for you, or email it to me. Do not test me on this.

Assignment 1: January 19 (Due February 2)

Assignment 2: February 16 (Due March 2)

Assignment 3: March 23 (Due April 6)

Assignment 4: April 13 (Due April 27)