

INTL 4370: Middle Eastern Politics¹

Fall 2023

CRN: 46139

Instructor

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Office Hours: Monday 1-3 pm

217 Candler Hall

Class Schedule

Tuesdays and Thursdays

2:20-3:35 pm

MLC 350

Course Description

In this course, we'll embark on a journey to understand the modern history of the Middle East and the various non-democratic political systems that have been prevalent in the region for the past few decades. We'll delve into the reasons behind authoritarianism in the Middle East, exploring cultural, social, economic, and political factors at domestic, regional, and international levels that have influenced and been influenced by non-democratic regimes.

We won't just stick to traditional scholarly perspectives as we dive into the subject. We'll also examine the challenges these regimes face, which have gradually set the stage for the events unfolding since 2011. By doing so, we'll be able to critically assess and question long-held assumptions about the resilience of authoritarianism and the potential for democracy in the region.

In the course's final section, we'll focus on the current political developments in the Middle East since the start of the uprisings. We'll analyze their causes and varied trajectories and assess how much they create new opportunities for significant political transformation.

No prior knowledge or coursework in Middle Eastern studies is necessary for this course. Whether you're familiar with or new to the subject, I anticipate that all students will stay on top of the assigned readings and assignments and actively participate in class discussions.

Course Objectives

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of the historical, cultural, and social factors influencing political and regime development in the Middle East and North Africa.
- Critically assess and analyze existing literature and assumptions surrounding authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, both in the past and present.
- Investigate the possibilities and challenges of democratic transitions in the region, taking into account the impact of events such as the Arab Spring, ongoing conflicts, and the resulting human rights issues.

¹ *This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester.*

Required Books

The main textbook for this course that needs to be obtained by students:

Lust, Ellen. **The Middle East**, 15th or 16th Edition, CQ Press (available for purchase at the UGA bookstore). A more affordable eBook version of this text can be rented or purchased here:

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/the-middle-east/book274959>

Some of the additional readings will be provided to you through eLC, so make sure to check the course page before each week.

ALL READINGS ARE TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE TUESDAY CLASS EACH WEEK.

Course Grading

Your grade in this class will be composed of the following items:

- 1. Discussion participation and class attendance (10% of final grade).** Participation from you will be expected during both Tuesday and Thursday as only part of each class will include a brief lecture by the instructor; the rest of the time will be spent on a discussion or on your own presentation. You are expected to participate, not just attend every class. That means you need to come to class and be ready to discuss the assigned readings.
- 2. Discussion post (20% of final grade).** You are required to post one discussion post every week on eLC expressing in a few paragraphs what you found interesting or intriguing. Then pose a good question about the readings at the end of your post. Additionally, you will need to produce at least one thoughtful response to your classmates' post. This must be done by the middle point of each week (Wednesday 11:59 PM). Late posts will be penalized by score deductions.
- 3. Presenting a recommended reading (10% of final grade).** The 15-minute presentation (plus a short discussion) will be worth 10% of the final grade and should be done with the aid of PowerPoint. The students will be assigned a recommended reading and asked to prepare a presentation according to the rubric.
- 4. Annotating a recommended reading (10% of final grade).** The students will be assigned one recommended reading (different from the one used in presentation) and will be asked to extensively annotate the paper, incorporating information and ideas learned throughout the course when making connections among them. The annotated document in a pdf format will need to be uploaded to eLC under the relevant week heading.
- 5. Participation in Simulation I (15% of final grade).** The students will participate in a simulation during Thursday class on September 19 (half the grade). After the simulation the students will be required to upload a memo (1-2 double-spaced pages in pdf format) discussing what they have done during the simulation, what they have learned, and what it all means in the context of the course and the material covered up to that point. Due: before class on September 26.
- 6. Participation in Simulation II (10% of final grade).** The second activity will take place during the last week of the course on Tuesday November 28. No memo is required for this activity; however, if a student decides to write one and uploads it before 3 PM on December 5, 1 extra point will be added to the student's final grade.

7. Final Paper (25% of final grade). The students will have to write one final analytical paper, addressing the question: “What are the democratic prospects for the country or the group of countries you have selected?” This assignment will consist of two parts. **First**, the students will need to choose a country or a group of countries (at most 3) and provide a brief (one page) description of why they chose the country (or a group); this description (5% of final grade) will need to be uploaded on eLC by November 9.

Second, students will be required to write a 8 to 10-page paper (double spaced) discussing the relevant required and recommended readings from the course (outside sources are encouraged). The rubric to follow will be posted on eLC. The paper should be uploaded in a pdf format to eLC no later than 3 PM on December 7. A complete final paper will account for 20% of the final grade.

Extra Credit: Movie Review (1 point to the final grade) The students may choose to complete one review of a movie from among those assigned, recommended, or screened in class. It must be at least one thousand words long and go beyond a mere retelling of the plot and description of the events. In other words, you should include theories and other insights from the readings, making it a review with a political slant. The document should be uploaded to eLC in a pdf format not later than October 26.

Course grades will be assigned as follows: 94–100% = A, 90–93% = A-, 87–89% = B+, 84–87% = B, 80–83% = B-, 77–79% = C+, 74–77% = C, 70–73% = C-, 67–69% = D+, 64–67% = D, 60–63% = D-, 0–59% = F.

Other Issues

1. Disabilities: Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to tell me at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services Office will be accommodated according to university policy. Contact Disabilities Services for more information.

2. Instructor Availability: I am available to meet with students by appointment if anyone cannot attend my posted office hours. Please email me to schedule a meeting.

3. Classroom Behavior: Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Disruptive behavior in discussion sections will not be tolerated. Laptops may be used to take notes in class, but not in a way that is disruptive to other students. Texting is never appropriate in class. Be respectful of other students' thoughts and opinions.

4. Cheating and Plagiarism: All course work must meet the standards put forth in the University of Georgia's Student Honor Code. See the Academic Honesty Policy for details on what is expected of you:

<https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Student-Honor-Code/>.

5. Covid 19: Information related to Covid 19 and how this will impact our course and the University of Georgia more generally can be found at the end of this syllabus.

Course Schedule

Week 1 (TH 8/17) Introduction to the course

Assignment: Watch **The Lawrence of Arabia** and be ready to discuss

The film can be accessed for free at:

<https://digitalcampus.swankmp.net/univofgeorgia369029/watch/48B7AFEEDA3B9C5F>

Week 2 (8/22 and 8/24) The Making of the Modern Middle East

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 1 - The Making of the Modern Middle East by Michael Gasper

Week 3 (8/29 and 8/31) Religion Matters

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 4 - Religion, Society, and Politics in the Middle East by Robert Lee and Lihi Ben Shitrit

8/31 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 4 (9/5 and 9/7) Iran's Theocracy

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 11 - Iran by Mehrzad Boroujerdi.

9/7 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 5 (9/12 and 9/14) The Islamist-Secular Divide

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 10 - Egypt by Tarek Masoud.

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 20 – Palestine by Alaa Tartir and Benoît Challand

9/14 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 6 (9/19 and 9/21) Authoritarian Political Institutions

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 3 - States and Institutions by Ellen Lust.

9/19 Simulation I (see eLC course page for details)

9/21 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 7 (9/26 and 9/28) Monarchies of the 20-th Century Middle East

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 21 - The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by Dina Al Sowayel

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 18 - The Lower Gulf States by Michael Herb

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 14 – Jordan by Laurie A. Brand

9/28 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 8 (10/3 and 10/5) Armies, Coup D'états, and Military Regimes

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 9 - Algeria by Lahouari Addi.

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 22 - Syria by Raymond Hinnebusch.

10/5 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 9 (10/10 and 10/12) Civil society, Social Movements, and Political Participation

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 5 - Citizens' Participation: Actors, Arenas, and Dilemmas by Rabab El-Mahdi.

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 13 – Israel by Lihi Ben Shitrit

10/12 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 10 (10/17 and 10/19) Ethnic Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 2 - The Israeli - Palestinian Conflict by Mark Tessler

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 23 - Sudan by Liv Tønnessen.

10/19 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 11 (10/24 and 10/26) The Arab Spring and Its Consequences

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 24 - Tunisia by Intissar Kherigi

10/26 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 12 (10/31 and 11/2) Civil Wars in the Middle East and North Africa

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 17 - Libya by Jacob Mundy

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 26 - Yemen by Sarah G. Phillips

11/2 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 13 (11/7 and 11/9) Geopolitics of the Middle East

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 8 - International Relations by Marc Lynch

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 16 - Lebanon by Paul Salem

11/9 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 14 (11/14 and 11/16) Oil and Political Economy of the Region

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 7 - The Political Economy of Development in the Middle East by Melani Cammett, Ishac Diwan, and Steven Heydemann

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 15 - Kuwait by Hesham Al-Awadi

11/16 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 15 (11/21 and ~~11/23– Thanksgiving– No Class~~) Taking Stock of Social Change in the Middle East

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 6 - Social Change in The Middle East by Valentine M. Moghadam

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 19 - Morocco by Saloua Zerhouni and Driss Maghraoui

11/21 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 16 (11/28 and 11/30) Prospects for Democracy?

Reading: The Middle East: Chapter 12 - Iraq by Julia Choucair-Vizoso

The Middle East: Chapter 25 - Turkey by Mine Eder.

11/28 Simulation II

11/30 Student Presentation (see Addendum on eLC for titles and assignments)

Week 17 (12/7 – Final Paper Due: 3:00 pm)

CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

UGA adheres to guidance from the University System of Georgia and the recommendations from Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) related to quarantine and isolation. Since this may be updated periodically, we encourage you to review the latest guidance here. The following information is based on guidance last updated on December 29, 2021.

Face coverings:

Following guidance from the University System of Georgia, face coverings are recommended for all individuals while inside campus facilities.

How can I obtain the COVID-19 vaccine?

University Health Center is scheduling appointments for students through the UHC Patient Portal. Learn more here .

The Georgia Department of Health, pharmacy chains and local providers also offer the COVID- 19 vaccine at no cost to you. To find a COVID-19 vaccination location near you, click here.

In addition, the University System of Georgia has made COVID-19 vaccines available at 15 campuses statewide and you can locate one here.

What do I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

Students showing COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and get tested. You can schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I test positive for COVID-19? (Isolation guidance)

If you test positive for COVID-19 at any time, either through a PCR test, an Antigen test, or a home test kit, you are required to report it through the DawgCheck Test Reporting Survey. Follow the instructions provided to you when you report your positive test result in DawgCheck.

As of December 29, 2021, when an individual receive a positive COVID-19 test: Everyone, **regardless of vaccination status**, should:

- Stay home for 5 days
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house and return to class.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

What do I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19? (Quarantine guidance)

If you have been exposed (within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24- hour period – unmasked**) to someone with COVID-19 or to someone with a positive COVID- 19 test and you are:

- Boosted, or have become fully vaccinated within the last 6 months (Moderna or Pfizer vaccine) or within the last 2 months (J&J vaccine)
 - You do not need to quarantine at home and may come to class.
 - You should wear a mask around others for 10 days.
 - If possible, get tested on day 5.
 - If you develop symptoms, get tested and isolate at home until test results are received, then proceed in accordance with the test results.
- Unvaccinated, or became fully vaccinated more than 6 months ago (Moderna or Pfizer vaccine) or more than 2 months ago (J&J vaccine) and have not received a booster:
 - You must quarantine at home for 5 days. After that you may return to class but continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
 - If possible, get tested on day 5.
 - If you develop symptoms, get tested and isolate at home until test results are received, then proceed in accordance with the test results.

** "Masked-to-masked" encounters are not currently considered an exposure; this type of interaction would not warrant quarantine.

You should report the need to quarantine on DawgCheck (<https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>), and communicate directly with your faculty to coordinate your coursework while in quarantine. If you need additional help, reach out to Student Care and Outreach (sco@uga.edu) for assistance.

Well-being, mental health, and student support

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services. UGA has several resources to support your well-being and mental health: <https://well-being.uga.edu/>

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) is your go-to, on-campus resource for emotional, social and behavioral-health support: <https://caps.uga.edu/>, TAO Online Support (<https://caps.uga.edu/tao/>), 24/7 support at 706-542-2273. For crisis support: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu/emergencies/>.

The University Health Center offers FREE workshops, classes, mentoring and health coaching led by licensed clinicians or health educators: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu/bewelluga/>

Monitoring conditions:

Note that the guidance referenced in this syllabus is subject to change based on recommendations from the Georgia Department of Public Health, the University System of Georgia, or the Governor's Office. For the latest on UGA policy, you can visit coronavirus.uga.edu.