

HI 381/Near & Middle East
UNC-Greensboro
Office Hours: By Appointment
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Overview of the course:

Through lectures, readings, a few videos, and class discussions, we will strive to develop a historical understanding of the social, cultural, political, religious, and economic history of the Middle East starting with World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire. We will also consider and develop a deeper knowledge and awareness of present-day events in the Middle East and the roots of those events in the past.

The purpose of this class is to provide a study of the modern region of the Middle East. Although the religion of Islam and the language of Arabic are the dominant forces in the area, there are many important minority groups that must be considered to have a more well-rounded understanding of the area. In order to better understand the history of the Middle East (broadly defined as the region between Morocco and Iran), we will begin with a basic understanding of Islam, discuss Western influences through colonialism and the mandate system, and the conflicts over resources in the region—oil and water. We will then discuss Lebanon, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and so-called “Islamic fundamentalism.” The second half of the course will cover Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran. The last two weeks will entail discussions of women’s issues and modern Middle Eastern culture—literature, architecture, music, art, etc.

Attendance is crucial for success in this course. Discussion is an important component of this course; obviously, you cannot benefit from that aspect of the course if you are not here. Much of the information discussed in class lecture is not necessarily in the textbooks; therefore, reading the texts is **not** a suitable substitution for coming to class. **I will take attendance every class period; because the class only meets once a week, only one unexcused absence (for whatever reason) is allowed.** In addition, **do your best to be on time.** Occasionally being late cannot be helped, but repetitive tardiness disrupts the class and annoys your professor. Multiple absences and/or tardiness will affect borderline grades at the end of the semester.

There will be a mid-term and a non-cumulative final exam (each worth 100 points), three short reports of three pages on a choice of topics (50 points each), and a five-page book review (100 points). In addition, a possible 50 points is included for class attendance and participation for a total of 500 points possible for the course. Exams will be short answers and essays. Make-up exams will be entirely essay and must be done within one week of the original exam (no exceptions!).

The short report consists of a three-page report that considers any of the below-listed issues from a variety of perspectives, not just what is normally given in the mainstream American media. It is a comparison/contrast study in how a particular topic or event is

portrayed by each side involved. For instance, with the current war between Israel and Hezbollah, you would find sources that talk about the conflict from both perspectives. Go on the Internet (although be careful and document thoroughly!!) to look for articles or websites and look for differences in emphasis, vocabulary, etc., that demonstrate the multiple perspectives involved in the event. The topics to choose from include: the Arab-Israeli conflict, the war in Lebanon, topics on religion (Islam, Christianity, or Judaism), the war in Iraq or Afghanistan, Iran, women or other social issues, human rights issues, etc. This list is not all-inclusive, so if there is a particular topic that you are interested in that is not listed here, just check with me. There is a lot of flexibility here.

A 5-page, typed book review is due at the end of the semester on **November 27th**. Choose a history book (not fiction!) that deals with any topic within the scope of this class (from the end of World War I to the present). **All books must be OK'd by me in advance.**

Ramadan, the month of fasting in the Islamic calendar, will be starting about September 24 this year. We will be having an *iftar*, the traditional meal for Muslims to break the fast each day at sundown, at a Greensboro-area Middle Eastern restaurant. Further information about this event will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.

Turn off all cell phones during class time.

Required textbooks:

Ochsenwald, William, and Sydney Fisher, *The Middle East, A History*, 6th ed.

Smith, Charles. *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, A History w/ Documents*, 5th ed.

Optional textbooks:

Ali, Tariq. *The Clash of Fundamentalisms, Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*.

Yergin, Daniel. *The Prize, The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power*.

Arslan, Reza. *No god but God, The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*.

Lumbard, Joseph, ed. *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition, Essays by Western Muslim Scholars*.

Various other required readings will be included on E-Reserves throughout the semester.

Class schedule:

August	14	Introduction to Course Islam 101 Ochsenwald, Chs. 3-7
	21	Colonialism and the Mandate System Ochsenwald, Chs. 31, 35
	28	The Struggle for Resources—Oil and Water Ochsenwald, Ch. 49 Yergin, Prologue, Chs. 9, 15, 21, 29

September	4	Labor Day—No Class
	11	Lebanon Ochsenwald, Chs. 37, 45 1st Short Paper Due
	18	Arab-Israeli Conflict to 1967 Smith, Chs. 1-7
	25	Arab-Israeli Conflict after 1967 Ramadan begins this week Smith, Chs. 8-12
October	2	Islamic “Fundamentalism” Ali, Chs. 20-21 (E-Reserve) Lumbard, Chs. 3, 5-6 (E-Reserve) Lawrence, Chs. 6-8 (E-Reserve)
	9	Fall Break—No Class
	16	Mid-Term Exam
	23	Afghanistan Ramadan ends this week Ochsenwald, Ch. 40 2nd Short Paper Due
	30	Iraq to 1968 Ochsenwald, Chs. 35, 46
November	6	Iraq after 1968 3rd Short Paper Due
	13	Iran to 1953 Ochsenwald, Chs. 29-30, 33, 39 Yergin, Ch. 23 (E-Reserve)
	20	Iran after 1953 Ochsenwald, Ch. 40
	27	Women and Other Social Issues Ochsenwald, Ch. 10 Abdo, Ch. 6 (E-Reserve)
December	4	Cultural Considerations of the Middle East Ochsenwald, Ch. 9

Useful Internet Links and Websites:

Newspapers

From Egypt:

www.egyptiancastle.com/live/newspapers/main.htm

www.ahram.org.eg

www.elakhbar.org.eg

www.algomhuria.net.eg

From Jordan:

www.addustour.com

From Qatar:

www.aljazeera.net

From Kuwait:

www.alseyassah.com

From Lebanon:

www.assafir.com

www.annaharonline.com

www.almustaqbal.com

www.daralhayat.com

www.alanwar.com

www.aliwaa.com

www.dailystar.com.lb

www.naharnet.com

From Syria:

www.syrialive.net/Media/Newspapers/national/NewsPapers.htm

www.teshreen.com

www.thawra.com

www.sana.org

Portals:

www.cyberus.ca/~baker/pal4g.htm

Israeli Peace Movement websites:

www.icahdusa.org (Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions)

<http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en>

<http://otherisrael.home.igc.org>

www.tikkun.org

www.nkusa.org

<http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/index.htm>

Miscellaneous websites:

www.csis.org/mideast/menc.cfm

www.futuretvnetwork.com

www.lebanon.com/radio

www.almubarak.net

www.salmiya.net

www.bbc.co.uk

www.arabtimes.com

www.alquds.com

www.memritv.org

www.lifebehindthewall.com/index.htm