STRUCTURE & SCOPE

Welcome! This course is centered on two key questions: how did relations between the Middle East and the United States, which were largely peripheral to each other’s interests and concerns at the end of the 18th century, change to become so important and intertwined in the present, and what have been the consequences of this process of interaction and change? While the questions are simple, the answers are rich and complex.

While learning about these topics, you will also consider the different broad structures which potentially shape foreign relations for both state and non-state/transnational actors. Arguments about the role of military and geopolitical power, economic interests, culture, religion, ideology, transnational communities, and historical memory in shaping opinions, actions, and outcomes will all be covered. You will be asked to analyze the significance of these different factors and the interplay between them.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

There are five books assigned to everyone for the course. Books with a “***” after them are available for free as ebooks through the UNCG library. The books can also be purchased at the University Bookstore. There are also five assigned articles/chapters on Canvas listed below and two brief web pieces with links listed further down in the weekly assignments assigned to everyone.

Additionally, for those enrolled in 424, you and an assigned classmate are required to divide the readings of one week’s primary source option (from the Foreign Relations of the United States series, listed with weblinks provided under Class Topics & Assignments) and then present on the materials to the class. For those enrolled in 524, you are required to read eight of the eleven books listed as secondary source options, and at least two of them must be from week 6 or earlier (listed under Class Topics & Assignments, some online as ebooks).

Assigned Books


**Articles/Chapters on Canvas**


Zeledon, Jason. “‘As Proud as Lucifer’: A Tunisian Diplomat in Thomas Jefferson’s America.” *Diplomatic History* 41, no. 1 (January 2017), 152-182.

**GRADING**

Your final grade will be comprised of the following:

- **Discussion** 30%
- **Presentation** 20%
- **Take Home Midterm** 20%
- **Take Home Final** 30%

Grading will be on the following scale: A = 94 and up; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87 to 89; B = 84-86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73; D+ = 67-69; D = 64-66; D- = 60-63; F = <60

**DISCUSSION**

Daily class attendance is mandatory. About half of the classes are listed as discussion days. For these days, you will be required to discuss the assigned readings for that week. If you arrive late,
leave early, or are absent, your discussion grade for that day may be half or zero credit. You will be given one excused absence for any reason (i.e. your lowest discussion score will be dropped), but no more, so plan accordingly.

You are required to complete the readings listed for a discussion day before arriving to class. The entirety of that class will be devoted to you and your fellow colleagues discussing the readings for that day and how they relate to course themes, so if you do not read beforehand, you will not be able to engage in discussion with your colleagues or me in a meaningful way. Furthermore, you will not receive full discussion credit without regularly and thoughtfully participating in discussions about the readings in class. The aim is to have a discussion of ideas occur between your classmates, with limited guidance from me. Discussion dates and readings are listed at the end of this syllabus under the heading “Class Topics & Assignments.”

Common sense respect (not texting or surfing the web or listening to headphones during class, etc.) is required. Likewise, when discussing ideas, you are required to be respectful of other people’s arguments. Critiques and disagreements over the ideas we discuss are expected and even encouraged, but this does not permit anyone to be offensive or abusive toward others. I reserve the right to remove anyone from class for disrespectful behavior.

PRESENTATION

For students enrolled in 424, you and a partner will collaboratively research the primary source option (each containing roughly 100 pages; note that some weeks are broken into multiple weblinks) and then give a joint presentation on the assigned week. Your presentation should begin with a thesis that is then developed with supporting examples and analysis.

For students enrolled in 524, you will give a presentation on one of the additional books (secondary source options) you read. You will summarize the main arguments of the book, where it fits within the larger historiography, the types of evidence and logic used, and your assessment of the effectiveness of the author in defending their claims.

Presentations will be twelve to fifteen minutes long and will utilize PowerPoint. Presentations will be graded on the thoroughness of the reading and the skillfulness of the transmission of information. Detailed instructions and grading criteria will be provided.

TAKE HOME MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

History is primarily a written craft, and writing is a distinct process of obtaining and relating knowledge. One of my goals is to improve your ability to write a clear argument with the use of evidence, a skill that will benefit you in almost any field or occupation.

You will have two take home exams, a midterm and a final. Both will have you provide short essay answers to multiple questions. Each exam will require a total of 8-10 double-spaced pages for undergraduates and 12-14 double-spaced pages for graduate students. Each response should
begin with a clear thesis that responds to the prompt and have thoughtful examples and analysis which demonstrate your thesis and synthesize the readings of the course. And do not forget that the key to writing a good essay is reading over it and REVISING it several times!

Essays will be graded by the following criteria:

- **ACCURACY**: Does my paper show that I have thoroughly and accurately examined the assigned materials?
- **CLEAR THESIS**: Does my paper begin with a clear and interesting thesis statement indicating what I am arguing?
- **ARGUMENT**: Have I substantiated my thesis with a clear argument?
- **SYNTAX AND WORDING**: Have I used proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling? Is my writing clear and straightforward, with mostly active voice and active verbs?
- **DIRECTIONS**: Do I follow all of the directions of the assignment?

I encourage you to discuss your ideas and theses, as well as returned exams, during my office hours or by appointment. I am also happy to read an introductory thesis or a single paragraph before the exam is due. Out of fairness, however, I will not read an entire exam draft.

I require that you submit both a hard copy of your exam in class and an electronic version to Canvas by the start of lecture on the day the assignment is due. Late papers (either hard copy, electronic, or both) will be marked down 1% per day late, starting with the day the assignment was due (so if you submit the paper after class on the first day, it will be marked down 1%; the following day marked down 2%, etc.)

**ACADEMIC RESOURCES**

UNCG provides a variety of useful services for you, the student. Check them out!

The UNCG Writing Center ([https://writingcenter.uncg.edu/](https://writingcenter.uncg.edu/)) provides assistance with writing assignments; contact staff members to set an appointment either in person or via instant-messaging.

The UNCG Speaking Center ([https://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/](https://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/)) provides assistance in improving your skill and confidence in public, group, and individual speaking.

If you have any needs or questions related to disability issues, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) ([https://ods.uncg.edu/](https://ods.uncg.edu/)). I prioritize making this course accessible to all of the students in it, and I will work with OARS to accommodate students’ requests. You do not need to disclose details about your disability to me or your TA to receive accommodations.

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1 Paper grading rubric adapted from rubric used by Emily S. Rosenberg
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro prohibits any and all forms of academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to know what constitutes academic integrity and academic dishonesty, and to be familiar with UNCG policies on academic integrity laid out here: https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/. Students who engage in an academically dishonest act (such as plagiarizing part of a paper or cheating during an exam) will receive a grade of “F” in the course and be reported to the Academic Dean for possible additional disciplinary action, including expulsion from the university. Do not attempt it.

CONTACTING ME

I encourage you to meet with me at my office hours or at another arranged time. You can also ask me questions by email. Please allow me a full day to respond (or two on the weekends), but I'll usually reply sooner.

USEFUL WEBSITES

History Department Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/

History Department Website: https://his.uncg.edu/

SYLLABUS MODIFICATIONS

I reserve the right to modify or alter any part of the syllabus as the course progresses. It is your responsibility to keep up with class announcements regarding any alterations.

CLASS TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1

T 8/20 Lecture: Introduction to Course and Major Issues in Middle East-US Relations

R 8/22 Lecture: Early Encounters and Imaginings

WEEK 2

T 8/27 Discussion: Zeldon, “‘As Proud as Lucifer’”

Makdisi, Introduction, Chapter 1
R 8/29 Lecture: Modernity, Growing Ties, and Civil Wars


WEEK 3

T 9/3 Discussion: Walther, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, Accompanying the Annual Message of the President to the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Congress (Part II): Turkey; Egypt* (Documents 203-248)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1866p2

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, Accompanying the Annual Message of the President to the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Congress (Part II): Turkey; Egypt* (Documents 1-12, 66-79)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1867p2

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, Accompanying the Annual Message of the President to the Second Session of the Thirty-ninth Congress (Part II): Turkey; Egypt* (Documents 103-115, 135-142)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1868p2

R 9/5 Lecture: Nation-Building and Immigration


WEEK 4

T 9/10 Discussion: Makdisi, Chapter 2

Walther, Chapters 2, 4

Gualtieri, “Becoming White”

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1904, With the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress: Morocco* (Documents 487-514)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1904

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1905, With the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress: Morocco* (Documents 669-702)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1905

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1906, With the Annual Message of the President Transmitted to Congress, Part II: Morocco; Algeciras Conference* (Documents 261-271, 554-570)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1906p2
R 9/12 Lecture: The Ottoman Empire, the United States, and World War I


WEEK 5

T 9/17 Discussion:  
Walther, Chapters 7, 8, Conclusion  
Makdisi, Chapter 3

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1915, Supplement, The World War: Other Problems and Responsibilities* (Documents 1346-1431)  
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1915Supp/comp4

R 9/19 Lecture: Oil and New Relationships during the Interwar Years


WEEK 6

T 9/24 Discussion:  
Makdisi, Chapter 4 pages 147-180  
McAlister, Prefaces, Introduction

Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1920, Volume II*: Great Britain (Documents 544-559)  
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1920v02
Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1921, Volume II*: Great Britain (Documents 78-106)  
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1921v02
Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922, Volume II*: Great Britain (Documents 222-264)  
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1922v02
Primary Source Option: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923, Volume II*: Great Britain (Documents 144-165)  
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1923v02

R 9/26 Lecture: World War II and the Dawn of the Cold War

WEEK 7

T 10/1 Discussion: Makdisi, Chapter 4 pages 180-204

McAlister, Chapter 1

Primary Source Option: Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, Volume V: Palestine (Documents 796-925)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v05/ch11?start=91

R 10/3 Lecture: The Creation of Israel


WEEK 8

T 10/8 Lecture: From Operation Ajax to the Eisenhower Doctrine

Midterms Due

R 10/10 Discussion Yaqub, Introduction, Chapter 1

WEEK 9

T 10/15 No Class

R 10/17 Discussion: Yaqub, Chapters 2-7

https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v11/ch2

WEEK 10

T 10/22 Lecture: From the New Frontier to the 1967 War


R 10/24 Discussion: Yaqub, Chapter 8, Epilogue

Makdisi, Chapter 5

McAlister, Chapter 2
WEEK 11

T 10/29 Lecture: New Terrors and a New Petrodollar Order


R 10/31 Discussion: Makdisi, Chapter 6

McAlister, Chapters 3-4


https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v19/ch2

WEEK 12

T 11/5 Lecture: Camp David, the Iranian Revolution and the Carter Doctrine


R 11/7 Discussion: Biglari, ““Captive to the Demonology of the Iranian Mobs””

Bacevich, A Note to the Readers, Prologue, Chapter 1

McAlister, Chapter 5


https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1969-76v27

WEEK 13

T 11/12 Lecture: Arms and Hostages

R 11/14 Discussion: Bacevich, Chapters 2-6

Mamdani, “Afghanistan”

Primary Source Option: Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977–1980, Volume XVIII: Middle East Region and the Gulf (Documents 1-98)
https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1977-80v18/ch1?start=1

WEEK 14

T 11/19 Lecture: Intifadas, the Gulf War, and Al-Qaeda


R 11/21 Discussion: Makdisi, Chapter 7

Bacevich, Chapters 7, 8, 11

McAlister, Chapter 6

WEEK 15

T 11/26 Discussion: McAlister, Conclusion

Bacevich, Chapters 12-14

R 11/26 No Class

WEEK 16

T 12/2 Discussion: Makdisi, Epilogue

Oren, “The Ultimate Ally”

Bacevich, Chapters 15-18

Hal Brands, “Why America Can’t Quit the Middle East” (2019)
https://www.hoover.org/research/why-america-cant-quit-middle-east

Seyed Hossein Mousavian and Younes Mahmoudieh, “Trump Has Undone the Years of Progress in US-Iran Relations Achieved under Obama” (2019)
https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2019/01/25/trump-has-undone-the-years-of-progress-in-us-iran-relations-achieved-under-obama/
WEEK 17

R 12/12 – Take Home Final Due by 11:59 PM