

MEREDITH COLLEGE
Political Science/History 282: The Modern Middle East
Spring 2009

Instructor: Jeffrey D. Martinson
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Course Description and Goals:

This course will address cultural, social and political issues in the Middle East from the late 19th century to the present. Topics covered will include imperialism, nationalism, the creation of modern states, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the Iranian Revolution, the politics of oil, US-Mideast relations, and the emergence of activist Islamic groups.

Students will finish the course with a much greater understanding of the forces that have shaped the modern Middle East, if nonetheless leaving them perhaps hungry for more information about additional specific areas of inquiry. As a necessary first step, however, the course will leave students well-prepared to seek those answers in both future coursework and in their lives outside of academia. The course content and objectives are, in this sense, designed to equip students to understand not only the historical but also emerging phenomena of the Middle East and elsewhere.

Educational Outcomes:

By semester-end, students will

- 1) know basic theoretical frameworks within the field of Middle East studies;
- 2) explain scientific discovery and process, and the ability to explain the primary research methods of the field;
- 3) connect primary supporting research with a particular theoretical position in the field;
- 4) apply theoretically-based explanations and solutions to individual behavior or societal phenomena;
- 5) solve problems by analyzing data, thinking critically, and selecting optimal results.

Texts

The following texts are required for this course:

The Modern Middle East: A History

James L. Gelvin (2005)
Oxford U Press
0195167899

The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War

James L. Gelvin (2005)
Cambridge U Press
0521618045

Understanding the War on Terror

James Hoge and Gideon Rose (2005)

Foreign Affairs

0876093470

Finally, other short readings or videos will be assigned by the instructor during the course. These will be provided in electronic or hardcopy format by the instructor.

Requirements

The course is centered on three texts: the first surveys the broad political and social history of the modern Middle East; the second examines a particular subtext in that political and social history, namely the Palestine-Israel conflict; and finally the third examines the United States' role in the modern Middle East, paying particular attention to the War on Terror. All three texts are dense, contain much new and foreign material and require careful attention in order to fully benefit from their contents. The reading of primary materials (which are included as addenda to the required texts) can be especially difficult. We will begin comparatively slowly, with the first couple sessions spent preparing you for these reading tasks, before moving to a more rapid reading schedule in the third week. In addition to the regular readings, weekly reading responses will be required from all students. Finally, students will complete an essay and an exam. Each of these requirements is elaborated in detail below.

The grading weights and the dates when requirements are due are as follows:

Reading Responses	Daily	20%
Essay	4/30	40%
Exam	May 8 at 1 PM	40%

Detailed descriptions of each of these requirements are provided below:

Reading Responses:

Students are expected to come to class prepared. This includes having read the material, having formulated opinions on the material and/or having generated questions regarding unclear aspects of the material. Study guides in the form of glossaries, biographies, suggested readings and timelines are included as a part of each chapter in the text in order to facilitate these tasks.

Reading responses (or outlines) are the "lessons" extracted by students as a result of the process of reading for class. Students will have them completed at the beginning of each week for the instructor to record in the grade book (handwritten summaries are okay, emails are not.) Sometimes the instructor will collect them. However, usually students will keep the responses for the purpose of aiding them in discussion of that week's material. In either case, changes and corrections are encouraged in order to make them as accurate and helpful as possible. Spot quizzes may be given in order to confirm the initial accuracy and

completeness of the reading. Late responses will not be accepted except with a valid excuse. Attendance is also important and every three unexcused absences will result in a letter grade reduction.

Students are encouraged to check with the instructor regularly in order to learn their current reading responses score and (if necessary) ways to improve it.

Exam:

The exam will test the student's comprehensive learning at the end of the semester. It will include multiple choice, short essay and map recognition questions. Study guides and sample questions will be circulated well in advance of the exam. The exam is cumulative in that it covers all material between exam day and the start of class (i.e., not just the material between parts.) Finally, excused absences from the examination can only be obtained in advance or for a medical or other emergency. Such an emergency must be documented to the satisfaction of the instructor. An unexcused absence from the examination will result in a grade of zero.

Essay:

Students will submit an essay of approximately 15 pages in length (12 point font, double-spaced.) The essay is due on the date listed above, by the beginning of class. Email submissions will not be accepted, and late papers will be penalized 10% per day. Further information about the topic of the essay and other details will be forthcoming well in advance of the due date.

Weather

We will follow the college policy on inclement weather.

Technology Use in Classroom

We will follow the History & Political Science departmental guidelines for the use of laptops, cell phones, PDAs and other technologies in the classroom. These guidelines will be provided by the instructor in a separate document.

Final Letter Grades

Final scores are determined using the weights mentioned above and according to the breakdowns listed below:

A: 93-100 B: 84-92 C: 70-83 D: 60-69 F: 0-59

Meredith Code of Honor

We, the Meredith Community, are committed to developing and affirming in each student a sense of personal honor and responsibility. Uncompromising honesty and forthrightness are essential elements of this commitment. The Honor System is a method by which individual honors are protected and maintained. Any dishonorable action will be regarded as a violation of this commitment, and corrective action will be taken. If I am in violation of

the Honor Code, to prevent jeopardizing the Honor System or weakening our system of self-government, I have an obligation to report myself to the proper authorities. If I am aware of a violation of the Honor System by another student, I shall call this matter to the attention of that student as a violation of responsibility to the community. In choosing Meredith College, I am accepting the Honor System as a way of life. As a Meredith student, I am responsible for insuring that the Honor System is at all times carried out.

Students with Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with documented disabilities. In order to receive accommodations, students must go through the Counseling Center/Disability Services Office. Disability Services is located in 106 Carroll Hall and can be reached at 760-8427 or disabilityservices@meredith.edu. For additional information see the website at <http://www.meredith.edu/students/counsel/disability>.

Course Timeline

The following lists the tentative assignments for the semester. Readings are from ***The Modern Middle East*** [henceforth, **Modern**], ***The Israel-Palestine Conflict*** [henceforth, **Conflict**] or ***Understanding the War on Terror*** [henceforth, **Terror**]. Other short readings will be assigned as well.

1/13 –	Intro/ Philosophies of Learning/ How to Read & Write About This Stuff
1/15, 20 & 22 –	Modern Part I
1/27 & 29 –	Modern Part II
2/3 & 5 –	Modern Part III
2/10, 12 & 17–	Modern Part IV
2/19 –	Review/ Mideast in Film/ Discussion
2/24 & 2/26 –	Conflict Chs 1, 2 & 3
3/10, 12 & 17–	Conflict Chs 6, 7 & 8
3/17, 19 & 24 –	Conflict Chs 9, 10 & Epilogue
3/26 & 28 –	Review/ Mideast in Film/ Discussion
3/31 & 4/2 –	Terror Part I: The Enemy
4/7 & 4/9 –	Terror Part I (continued)
4/14 & 4/16 –	Terror Part II: The War
4/21 –	Terror Parts IV & V: Less or More? & The State of the Play
4/28 --	Current events
4/30 –	Review/ ** Essay Due **
5/8 –	** Final Exam (1 PM) **