

History 139: Introduction to the Modern Middle East

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Fall 2021

Lecture meetings: M/W Sewell Hall r. 6203; Fri. online
Section meetings: Th, time/location varies by section

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Traces the formation of the states and societies that compose the contemporary Middle East. How have global phenomena, including two world wars, the Cold War, women's movements, and modern science, technology, and fossil fuels, affected the politics, culture, and daily lives of Middle Eastern people? What is Islamism, and how should we explain its influence? Why has the United States had such a troubled relationship with this part of the world? Balances a generally thematic approach with several weeks of country-specific studies, including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Course Overview

Course Requisite: None

Course Designations, Attributes, and Mode of Instruction:

Level – Elementary

Breadth – Humanities or Social Science

Mode – Face-to-Face

Explanation of credit hours

This 4-credit course meets as a group for 4 hours per week. The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, and preparing for discussions.

Learning Outcomes

Students completing this course will be able to:

- Identify the origins of the Middle East nation-states;
- Compare the larger Middle East nation-states in terms of politics, economy, and society;
- Analyze trends in the development of U.S. relations with the Middle East;
- Explain the modern Middle East in terms of global processes of change;
- Use *primary sources* to support all of the above.

Course Materials

You will access course readings and other materials in the following ways:

- Buy, rent, or borrow: James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 5th ed. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020). ISBN 978-0190074067
 - Available from many booksellers and on reserve in College Library.
 - **New this year:** I encourage you to use the **fifth edition** of Gelvin's textbook (2020). The fourth edition (2016), which this course used in previous years, is still acceptable. However, if you are using a fourth edition copy, please note that page numbers sometimes vary slightly from the page numbers on the syllabus, and the final two chapters differ substantively.
- Find on Canvas, in weekly modules: all other assigned readings, assigned films, and supplementary materials. Note: you may purchase a course packet with the additional readings if you prefer to have them in hard copy. The course packet is available from the L&S Copy Center, Sewell Hall Room 6120, 1180 Observatory Dr.
- *All assignments will be posted and turned in on Canvas.*

Office Hours

We welcome your questions and ideas about course content and assignments. We are also glad to speak to you about your broader interests in the Middle East or in History. Office hours are also a good time to discuss any challenges you are facing in the course.

PROF. STOLZ: Fridays 9-11am, on Zoom (link on Canvas). In person by appointment.

TA ANDREW KELLY: Mondays 2-4pm, on Zoom (link on Canvas). In person by appointment.

Assessment

Components of Course Grade

Orientation quiz (3%): Complete by 11:59pm on Monday 9/13. Covers course expectations. You may retake for full credit if desired.

Participation in lecture meetings (10%): contribute to class learning through critical analysis of course materials and respectful, productive engagement with other students' views. (See participation rubric below). Your completion of the weekly "exit responses" count toward one-half of this grade, i.e. 5% of your course grade.

Participation in discussion section (20%): contribute to class learning through critical analysis of course materials and respectful, productive engagement with other students' views; complete preparation for section discussions as directed by TA. (See participation rubric below.)

"Closer Look" Essays (8x4%=32%): a series of one-page responses to questions about an assigned reading or film. Complete 8 out of 9, or complete all 9 and drop your low grade. This assignment recurs from weeks 2 to 11, except in week 6 (when the midterm essay is due).

Midterm Essay, due Sunday 10/19 at 11:59pm (10%): a two-page essay answering a question about a primary source, which you will select from a list of options to be made available on October 5th.

Timeline Editor Assignment (10%): due once during the semester, at a time for which you will sign up. For more details, see "Timeline Assignment" materials on Canvas.

Timeline Essay (15%): due Monday, 12/20, 11:59pm. A four-page essay that makes an argument interpreting your section's timeline of Middle East history. For more details, see "Timeline Assignment" materials on Canvas.

Honors Assignment: if you registered for the honors option in this course, please discuss an honors assignment with Prof. Stolz by Nov. 1st. Honors assignments are due Dec. 15th.

This course is graded on an A, AB, B, BC, C, D, F scale:

- A = 93-100
- AB = 88-92
- B = 82-87
- BC = 77-81
- C = 72-76
- D = 67-71
- F = 66 or below.

Participation Rubric

Excellent (90-100)	Good (80-90)	Competent (70-80)	Inadequate (60-70)	Fail (0-60)
-Mastery over readings and previous discussion -Explores questions rigorously -Comes to class with interpretations and questions -Engages others	-Knows readings well -Consistent preparation and involvement -Offers analysis of texts in class	-Basic grasp of reading -Mostly offers facts or surface-level interpretations -Contributes when called upon but not actively engaged	-Insufficient command of reading -Attempts to contribute facts or interpretations when called but unable to offer substance	-Uninvolved -Unexcused -Disruptive

Late Policy

Late work will lose one third of a letter grade for each day past the deadline. However, for the midterm essay, OR for one of the “closer look” assignments, you may hand in work late for “passing” (70%) credit until Study Day, which is Thursday, December 16th, at 11:59pm. Due to the need to submit course grades promptly at the end of the semester, we cannot accept any work other than the final assignments after December 16th, and we cannot grant any extensions on the final assignments. Students who experience emergencies at the end of the semester may be eligible for an incomplete.

Special Note on Accommodations for Sick or Quarantined Students

If your semester is disrupted due to exposure to or diagnosis with COVID-19 (or another health crisis), the TA and I will offer you reasonable accommodations to continue your progress in this course without penalty. Please note that the success of this process depends on your timely communication with us. For more details, see “University Policies Relating to COVID-19,” on page 6.

Learning Support

Accommodations

You are welcome to discuss your learning needs with me and/or the TA. If you plan to request disability accommodations in this course, please register with the McBurney Disability Resource Center as soon as possible.

Writing Support: The History Lab

The History Lab is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process — choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, revising your drafts — the History Lab can help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Go to: <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/the-history-lab/>

Digital Assignment Support: Design Lab – Located in College Library, Design Lab provides one-on-one help for students working on digital assignments. By appointment. <https://designlab.wisc.edu/> Note: our TAs in the History Lab can sometimes help with digital history assignments as well.

General Tech Support

The DoIT help desk offers general tech support for Canvas, BBCollaborate, and others platforms supported by UW. They can also direct you to resources for dealing with bandwidth problems. <https://it.wisc.edu/services/help-desk/>.

Academic Integrity

You are responsible for knowing and following the university’s policies on academic integrity, which can be found here:

<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>

In general, work that you turn in for this course should be yours alone. For the final essay, it is understood that you will reference your classmates’ contributions to your section timeline. For more details, see timeline assignment materials on Canvas.

Course Modality and Rhythm

This course is offered in a “blended” modality. Most meetings are in-person; some synchronous meetings and asynchronous activities take place online. The blended format promotes learning by offering students additional methods of engagement with the material, with each other, and with the instructors. To take advantage of this opportunity, many students find it useful to think of the course as having a “rhythm,” by which certain tasks repeat during the week and across the semester. Understanding the course rhythm helps you structure your time and keep up with the course at a manageable pace.

Note: a visualization of the course rhythm is available on Canvas, under the welcome module.

Each week of the course includes the following components:

Monday and Wednesday 11:00-11:50am: In-Person Lectures with Professor Stolz.

These lectures introduce the main topics of the week. They complement and do **not** replicate the textbook readings for the week. In addition, many of these meetings include discussion of a short reading from beyond the textbook—often a primary source. Please complete these readings for the meeting under which they appear on the syllabus. (For details, see schedule of meetings below.)

Thursday: In-Person Discussion Section. Led by TA Andrew Kelly, who is a History PhD student, these sections meet in person at a time for which you have registered. Prepare for discussion section by completing weekly readings and/or films, and by synthesizing these materials with the lectures. More information on preparing for section will be provided by your TA.

Friday 11:00-11:50am: Online Meetings/Activities with Prof. Stolz. Most Friday meetings will include a synchronous lecture, typically shorter than the M/W lectures. These online meetings will include time for students to complete a very brief “exit slip” assignment in which you summarize your learning from the week in 2-3 sentences, to which Prof. Stolz will respond. Some online meetings will be used to introduce the TimelineJS tool with which you will be working throughout the semester, and to develop your facility with this storytelling technology.

A “closer look” assignment: most weeks of the course (weeks 3-11, except week 6) include a “closer look” reading, which provides in-depth exploration of a specific topic. A one-page response to a question about this reading is due at the end of the day on Sunday. You do **NOT** need to prepare to discuss these readings in class.

In addition to its weekly components, the course also includes the following occasional assignments: an orientation quiz, one “timeline editor” assignment during a week of your choosing, one midterm essay, and two final assignments.

More information on assignments appears under “Assessment,” on pages 2-3.

University Policies Relating to COVID-19

For the latest campus policies related to the pandemic, please go to <https://covidresponse.wisc.edu>

Here are a few highlights:

- All students, employees and visitors to campus are required to wear face masks when inside campus buildings.
- Effective August 30, employees and students who have not shared proof of COVID-19 vaccination with UHS will be required to test weekly on campus. Those who are required to test weekly but fail to do so will be held accountable.
- Individual students unable to attend in-person class meetings for COVID-19-related reasons (or for any reason) should contact their instructor to discuss options for access to course materials and activities. Instructors are encouraged to be flexible and supportive of all students in such circumstances. Students who must miss multiple class sessions should talk with their instructor and with their academic advisor about the best course of action.
- If multiple students in a course section must miss in-person class meetings for COVID-19-related reasons, every effort should be made to avoid a disruption of in-person instruction. Instructors should work with their department, school and college to explore ways to provide students who cannot attend in-person sessions access to course materials and activities.

In any situation where accommodations are required, students should initiate timely and regular communication with their instructors.



"Are you talking about the new normal of an hour ago, or is there a new new normal right now?"

Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

Note: this schedule does not include the Thursday section meetings. Your TA will provide you with a separate syllabus for your section. For most weeks, however, the readings and films to prepare for section are the ones already listed under the lecture meetings below.

PART 1: MODERN STATE AND SOCIETY TAKE SHAPE IN THE 19TH CENTURY

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS

W 9.8: ONLINE/ASYNCHRONOUS: What makes a region? Intro to Middle East geography. *This meeting has been moved to the online/async format due to the coincidence of the first day of class with the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah.*

F 9.10: Where and how did the Ottomans Rule? *Online synchronous lecture & response.*

Optional reading: Gelvin, pp. 9-55 (surveys Mideast and Islamic history prior to course coverage).

WEEK 2: ARMIES AND EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF REFORM

M 9.13: The Crises of the Ottoman Empire

Read: Gelvin, pp. 72-88, "Defensive Developmentalism."

W 9.15: Egypt under Mehmet Ali Pasha: Reform by Force

Read: Tahtawi, "An Imam in Paris," pp. 205-209 (on Canvas); Reynolds, "The Autobiography of Ali Mubarak," selections from pp. 224-250 (on Canvas).

F 9.17: The Tanzimat: Late Ottoman Reform in Rhetoric and Practice. *Online/synchronous.*

Due Sunday 9.19: "Closer look" response to Wishnitzer, "On Time for School," p. 93-123.

WEEK 3: PEASANTS AND WORKERS IN THE FIRST AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

M 9.20: Globalization in the Countryside

Read: Owen, "The Expansion of Trade with Europe, 1800-1850," pp. 83-99 (on Canvas); Khater and Khater, "Assaf: A Peasant of Mount Lebanon," pp. 35-47 (on Canvas).

W 9.22: Foreign Capital and Middle East Labor

Read: Khater (ed.), "A Coal Miner's Life During the Late Ottoman Empire," pp. 47-56 (on Canvas).

F 9.24: Middle East Cities in the First Age of Globalization. *Online synchronous lecture and "tour."*

Due Sunday 9.26: "Closer Look" response to Khuri-Makdisi, "Theater and Radical Politics in Beirut, Cairo, and Alexandria, 1860-1914," pp. 60-93 (on Canvas).

WEEK 4: NEW CULTURAL AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

M 9.27: Print and the Arabic *Nahda*

Read: Gelvin, pp. 140-157, "The Life of the Mind" and "Secularism and Modernity"; al-Nadim, "Raillery and Reproach," pp. 104-111 in *The Arabic Renaissance*, ed. El-Ariss (on Canvas).

W 9.29: Muslim Reformists

Read: Muhammad 'Abduh, "The Theology of Unity" (in Gelvin, pp. 179-180).

F 10.1: Debating Women, and Women Debating *Online synchronous lecture and response.*

Read: Bahithat al-Badiya, "A Lecture in the Club of the Umma Party, 1909," 227-238 (on Canvas).

Due Sunday 10.3: "Closer Look" response to Baron, *The Women's Awakening in Egypt*, pp. 38-57 (on Canvas).

WEEK 5: THE OLD ORDER BEGINS TO FALL BEFORE WORLD WAR I

M 10.4: Financial Imperialism? State Bankruptcy and the British Occupation of Egypt

Read: Gelvin, pp. 158-165, "Constitutionalism"; Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, pp. 123-132 (on Canvas).

W 10.6: Iran's Constitutional Movement

Read: "The Supplementary Fundamental Law of 7 October 1907" (in Gelvin, pp. 182-185),

F 10.8: The Young Turk Revolution. *Online synchronous lecture and response.*

Read: Gökalp, *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilization*, excerpts (on Canvas).

Due Sunday 10.10: "Closer Look" response to Lucas, "The Creation of Iranian Music," pp. 143-157 (Canvas).

WEEK 6: WORLD WAR I AND THE POST-OTTOMAN ORDER

M 10.11: The Great War and Ethnic Cleansing in the Middle East

Read: Gelvin, pp. 189-206, "World War I and the Middle East State System," "State-Building by Decree"; and primary source: Letter from an Armenian Refugee (pp. 20-21), in Bryce, *The Treatment of Armenians* (on Canvas).

W 10.13: The Mandate System and the post-Ottoman Political Map

Read: Khater (ed.), the Huseyn-McMahon Correspondence; the Balfour Declaration and related documents, pp. 104-108, 110-112 (on Canvas).

F 10.15: Midterm check-in: *Online synchronous session to review part I of course and workshop skills in TimelineJS.*

Midterm Paper Due Sunday, 10/17, at 11:59pm. No "closer look" assignment this week.

PART 2: NATION-STATES EMERGE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Week 7: EGYPT AND SYRIA: ANTI-COLONIAL NATIONALISM, PAN-ARABISM, AND THE MILITARY REPUBLIC

M 10.18: Egypt: Nasser and the Pan-Arab Dream

Read: Gelvin, pp. 205-229, "State-Building by Revolution and Conquest," "The Invention and Spread of Nationalisms."

W 10.20: Syria: from Mass Politics to Family Rule

Read: Tamer, "Tigers on the Tenth Day" (in Gelvin, pp. 366-68).

F 10.22: The Islamist Critique. *Online synchronous lecture & response.*

Read: Qutb, *Milestones* (in Gelvin, pp. 372-74).

Due Sunday 10.24: "Closer Look" response to film, *Umm Kulthum: A Voice Like Egypt*, dir. Michal Goldman (streaming on Canvas).

WEEK 8: IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA: RELIGIOUS AUTHORITARIANISM, OIL, AND THE COLD WAR

M 11.1: Saudi Arabia: the Wahhabi Mission and the House of Saud

Read: Gelvin, pp. 272-302, "The Autocratic State," "Oil"; and primary source: Reports on the Saudi Vice Squad in Jeddah, 1928-1930 (3 pages, on Canvas).

W 11.3: Iran: from Monarchy to Islamic Republic

Watch *Bashu: The Little Stranger* (streaming on Canvas).

F 11.5: Oil and the Middle Eastern States. *Online synchronous TimelineJS workshop; also watch short asynchronous lecture video*

Due Sunday 11.7: "Closer Look" response to Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran*, pp. 186-194, 248-268, 272-287.

WEEK 9: IRAQ AND TURKEY: SECULAR AUTHORITARIANISM

M 11.8: Iraq from the Hashemites to Saddam Hussein

W 11.10: Turkey between Republic and Military Rule

Read: primary source: "Speech Delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal," pp. 738-741 (on Canvas);

Watch *Journey to the Sun* (streaming on Canvas).

Instead of F 11.12 meeting: *Online asynchronous lecture on "At the Margins of the Nation-State: the Kurds in Iraq and Turkey: watch before section on Thursday to prepare for discussion of film.*

Due Sunday 11.14: "Closer Look" response to Özdalga, *The Veiling Issue: Official Secularism and Popular Islam in Modern Turkey*, pp. 39-60 (on Canvas).

WEEK 10: ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

M 11.15: One Land, Many National Movements

Read: Gelvin, pp. 232-250 (“The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”); and primary source: Herzl, “A Solution of the Jewish Question” (in Gelvin, pp. 256-257).

W 11.17: The Arab-Israeli Wars: The Conflict in Regional and International Context

Read: Hiltermann, “Abu Jamal: A Palestinian Urban Villager,” pp. 268-280; Neuman, “June Leavitt: A West Bank Settler” (on Canvas).

F 11.19: Hamas, the Settler Movement, and the Two-State Solution. *Online synchronous lecture and response.*

Due Sunday 11.21: “Closer look” response to Shapira and Wiskind-Elper, “Politics and Collective Memory: The Debate over the ‘New Historians’ in Israel.”

WEEK 11 (11.9-11.15): THE U.S. IN THE MIDDLE EAST: FOREIGN POLICY, DOMESTIC POLITICS

M 11.22: From World War II to Camp David: The Cold War and Oil

Read: Gelvin, pp. 303-320 (“The United State and the Middle East”); and primary source: “National Security Council Report... November 4, 1958: U.S. Policy toward the Near East,” in *Foreign Relations of the United States* (on Canvas).

W 11.24: In search of a strategy: from the Peace Process to the Global War on Terror

Due **Wednesday** 11.24: “Closer look” response to George Packer, “An Unfinished War,” pp. 8-38 (on Canvas)

Thanksgiving Break: no section meeting, no Friday meeting this week.

PART 3: “THE PEOPLE WANT THE FALL OF THE REGIME”

WEEK 12: DEBATING ISLAM AND POLITICS

M 11.29: The Islamic Revival

Read: Rock-Singer, “Prayer and the Islamic Revival,” pp. 293-312.

W 12.1: Jihadism in Global Context

Read: Bin Laden, “Messages to the World,” pp. 213-221, 227-232 (on Canvas). Note: additional readings on jihadism may be uploaded to canvas.

F 12.3: Sectarian Politics and the Lebanese Civil War. *Online synchronous lecture and response.*

WEEK 13: REVOLUTION AND COUNTERREVOLUTION: EXPLAINING THE ARAB SPRING

M 12.6: The Uprisings of 2009-2011

Read: Gelvin, pp. 321-347 (“Resistance”)

W 12:8: Egypt: The Endurance of Military Rule

Watch *The Square* (streaming on Canvas, also on Netflix).

F 12:10: Syria's Descent. *Online synchronous lecture and discussion (no response).*

Read: Pearlman, *We Crossed a Bridge and It Trembled: Voices from Syria*, pp. 175-187, 209-215, 225, 230-234 (on Canvas).

WEEK 14: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE AND THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY

M 12:13: The Middle East Political Order in the 21st Century: Lessons from the Rise and Fall of ISIS

Read: Gelvin, p. 348-362 ("A New Middle East?")

W 12:15: History and the Middle East Today (final lecture)

Read: Amira Al-Sharif, "Yemeni Women with Fighting Spirits," pp. 150-165 (on Canvas).

****HONORS OPTION STUDENTS: Honors Assignment due 12/15 at 11:59pm.****

****ALL STUDENTS: Final essay due Monday 12/20 at 11:59pm.****