

**HIST 282 – 001**  
**Survey of Middle East History**

Spring 2023  
TR 10:30-11:45  
Planetary 212

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This course will examine the events, processes, and issues that have shaped the contemporary Middle East. As such the course will examine topics in the society, economy, politics and culture of the region as a whole such as nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, globalization, gender and social change, and the Arab Spring and current conflict in the Palestinian territories of Gaza and the Occupied West Bank, as well as how these topics affected particular nation-states in the region.

Course requirements will consist of weekly readings from both primary and secondary sources, as well as occasional online resources, film and documentary viewings. In addition, students will be required to take a midterm exam, final exam, and to submit two 3-5 page papers on a selected weekly topic.

By the conclusion of the course, students should have a grasp of the major chronology of modern Middle Eastern history, an ability to demonstrate the changes, continuities, and connections between past and present in this region, and the ability to assess and evaluate the sources, both primary and secondary, textual and other, used in providing explanation and interpretation of the dynamics governing events in the Middle East. Students will be expected to demonstrate these outcomes through participation, essay exams, and papers.

This course fulfills a Mason Core requirement. It will complement students' chosen field of study, serve as a means of discovery, provide a foundation for learning and connecting to new areas of interest, and equip students with qualities toward graduating with a George Mason degree. These qualities are identified as: striving to be critical and creative scholars, self-reflective learners, ethical and inquiry-based citizens, and thinkers and problem-solvers. In addition, this course can fulfill requirements for relevant majors and minors such as those in Middle East, Islamic Studies, and Global Affairs.

Required Readings:

Al-Aswani, A., *Yacoubian Building*, Harper Perennial 2006  
Burke, E. ed. *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. UC Press, 2006  
Gelvin, J. *The Modern Middle East*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford Univ. Press, 2020  
Kanafani, G. *Men in the Sun*. Lynne Reiner, 1998  
Scanned readings: designated by #

Grade Distribution:

Participation 10%  
Midterm 25%  
Final 35%  
Papers 15% each

### Important Information:

Attendance and participation are mandatory and a significant portion of your final grade. Electronic devices are only to be used for classwork; otherwise they should be turned off/put away. Students are to complete all the assigned readings for each class before that class. The two exams will involve identifications and essays. Dates for both exams are absolutely non-negotiable; so make sure to plan work, study, and vacations around these dates. There will be no exceptions made for these reasons. The two required papers will be on the texts listed above. Study guides with further instructions for both papers and exams will be provided at the appropriate times.

### Additional Information:

#### Academic Integrity

GMU is an Honor Code university; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

#### GMU Email Accounts

Students must activate their GMU email accounts to receive important University Information, including messages related to this class.

#### Office of Disability Services

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu>

#### Other Useful Campus Resources:

WRITING CENTER: A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES "Ask a Librarian" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>  
COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): (703) 993-2380;  
<http://caps.gmu.edu>.

Add/Drop Period: 1/16-1/30/24

Selective Withdrawal Period – from 1/30/24

## **Tentative Reading and Assignment Schedule:**

### Week 1                    Introduction to the Middle East

T: Introduction to course and listening session on current events  
R: Gelvin, Introduction, Ch. 1

*How has Islam come to characterize the modern Middle East?*

### Week 2                    The Modern Era

T: Gelvin, Ch. 2  
R: Gelvin, Ch. 3

*When did the Middle East become modern?*

### Week 3                    The new world order

T: Gelvin, Ch. 4 and documents.  
R: Gelvin, Ch. 5; Burke, "Textile Weavers in Damascus", "Bibi Maryam"

*Why was the "East" a question?*

### Week 4                    The west and the "rest"

T: Gelvin, Ch. 6; Burke "Izz al-Din al-Qassam"; "The Shaykh and his daughter"  
R: Gelvin, Ch. 7

*How did the "rest" respond to the west?*

### Week 5                    Paradigms shift

T: Gelvin, Ch. 8; # Discourse of the Veil  
R: Gelvin, Ch. 9 and Namik Kemal

*How did people begin to imagine identity in the modern Middle East?*

### Week 6                    Modern States

T: Gelvin, Ch. 10 and Law of 1907  
R: Gelvin, Ch. 11; Burke, "Hagob Hagobian"

*How were states modern in the new Middle East?*

### Week 7                    Nation-States

T: Gelvin, Ch. 12 and Gamal Abd al-Nasser  
R: Gelvin, Ch. 13; Burke, "Naji"

**Paper #1 due.**

**Review for Midterm**

*Who were more important in the contemporary Middle East, nationalists or imperialists?*

### Week 8                    **Spring Break**

Week 9      Nation-State or Colonial State?

T: **MIDTERM EXAM**

R: Gelvin, Ch. 14 Kanafani, ***Men in the Sun***.

*Is Israel a Jewish or Zionist state? Why?*

Week 10      State and Society in the Middle East

T: Gelvin, Ch. 15

R: ***Yacoubian Building***

*What role does the state play in the lives of individuals in the Middle East?*

Week 11      Oil and Water in the Middle East

T: Gelvin, Ch. 16; Burke, "Nasir: Sai'di Youth", "Talal Rizk"

R: Film: ***The Iron Wall***; <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/08/05/the-controversy-over-the-grand-ethiopian-renaissance-dam/>

*Which is more important in the Modern Middle East, Oil or Water?*

Week 12      Resistance

T: Gelvin, Ch. 18

R: Film: ***The Square***

*Was the "Arab Spring" an Islamic Revolution?*

Week 13      Reform

T: #F. Ahmadi, "Islamic Feminism in Iran; Film: ***Ladies First***

R: #Haitami, "Islamist Feminism in Morocco"

*Why and how is "reform" in the Middle East gendered?*

Week 14      New Middle East

T: Gelvin, Ch. 17

R: <https://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre2020121100>

*Is there a new Middle East, or "an old wine in a new bottle"?*

Week 15      Conclusions

T: Gelvin, Conclusion

R: **Paper #2 due, Review for Final Exam**