
SITUATING THE MIDDLE EAST I in Fall 2018 (ME2010)

Course Code	ME2010	Professor(s)	Ziad Majed
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G205
Class Schedule	TF: 10:35-11:55 in C-505	Office Hours	By appointment
Credits	4	Email	zmajed@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2018	Office Tel. Ext.	0140620685

Course Description

The Middle East is a region of great diversity with different histories, cultures, languages and populations. It constitutes nevertheless a systematic entity, with close interrelations, and many common political, cultural and socio-economic challenges. The course introduces most important Middle Eastern social and political characteristics and modern evolutions.

Course Learning Outcomes

The course explores the cultural, political, ethnic and geographical realities of the region (historically and in the present).

It presents the ongoing debates and themes in major political and cultural circles.

Students are encouraged to read, discuss, question the information and work in small groups to present case studies.

General Education

Course Outline

Week I

A. The historical development of the concepts of Orient, Near East, Middle East as a

geographical, geocultural and geopolitical unit.

- B. The geography of the region and the geography of each country: the topography, the borders and their impact on life and the interaction between neighboring countries.
- C. The natural endowments and resources of the region: Are they a source of tensions and conflicts?

Week II

The demographics of the Middle East: characteristics, ethnicities, religions, tribes, majorities and minorities.

Week III

- A) The tradition of political systems: From emperors, satraps, caliphs, shahs to monarchs and presidents.
- B) Is it true that the Middle East is more “inclined to despotism and violence” than any other geographical entity in the world?

Week IV

Middle East Economy: An overview of the different systems, of socio-economic indicators (GDP/capita, wealth, growth rates, unemployment), of the characteristics of rentier economies, and of openness to world trade and tourism.

Week V

Film screening and discussion.

Visit in Paris.

Week VI

Current conflicts in the Middle East and the refugee crisis: How does this affect the world's stability?

Week VII

Film Screening and discussion.

Midterm

Week VIII

Social media, politics and arts (mapping of the new trends in individual expression: blogs, street arts, graffiti, music and videos): each student will choose one site, video, etc... and present/evaluate it.

Week IX

Visit in Paris.

Poetry and Literature in Arab societies: what experiences do they echo?

Week IX

Feminism and women causes in the Middle East

Think tanks, institutions and the Middle East: a survey

Week XI, XII

All students will present Case studies

Weeks XIII

Review, Questions and Conclusion

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Midterm 20 %

Final Exam 30 %

Case studies 20%

Class participation 30%

Other
