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## American Public University System

*The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind*

**School of Security and Global Studies  
IRLS260  
Middle Eastern Culture  
Credit Hours: 3  
Length of Course: 8 Weeks  
Prerequisite: none**

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### Instructor Information

***Instructor:***

**Please contact your instructor through the Messages tab in the classroom.**

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## Course Description (Catalog)

### **IRLS 260 Middle Eastern Culture** (3 hours)

This course aims to survey geography, culture, society, economy, and religions of the major ethnic and linguistic groups in the Middle East. The course will introduce students to important events and developments, such as the changing concepts of politics in Islam; the evolving sociological bases of states and societies in the Middle East; new media and the gender inequality in Islam; and the early impact of Europe on the Middle East through trade and colonialism.

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## Course Scope

This course covers the analyses of major factors that shape the Middle Eastern culture: religion, tribalism, the impact of Western powers, traditions, customs, mores, and media. In this context, it covers socio-cultural motives and values tightly intertwined to create a unique social fabric that prevails in the region for centuries. In so doing, it also focuses on topics like the media and the gender inequality to help students perceive the material and non-material cultural values to be seen in today's Middle Eastern life styles.

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## Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

CO-1: Describe the cultural landscape of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (comprehension)

CO-2: Compare and contrast local political structures with state-centered structures. (comprehension)

CO-3: Apply theories of gender, family, and patriarchy to MENA cultures and

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societies (application)

CO-4: Analyze the relationship between states and societies in the MENA (analysis)

CO-5: Determine the relationship between globalization and MENA societies (application)

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### Course Delivery Method

This course, delivered via distance learning, will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course resources and access to an online learning management system will be available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET and include all written assignments, examinations, and research papers submitted for grading. Weekly Forum questions (accomplished in groups in a Forum) require an initial response by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET, with all other required responses due by Sunday at 11:55 pm ET. The assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

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### Course Resources

- Required Course Textbook: No textbook is required for this class. All readings and resources are provided within the classroom. Various resources from the APUS Library are used. Please visit <http://apus.libguides.com/index.php> to locate the course eReserve.
- External websites and other assigned reading found in the Lessons area of the classroom.
- Weekly Lesson Notes and videos or audio files are found in the Lessons area of the classroom.

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## Evaluation Procedures

### **Forum discussions – 25 percent**

Each week, a discussion question is provided and posts should reflect an assimilation of the readings. Students are required to provide a substantive initial post by Thursday at 11:55 pm ET and respond to 2 or more classmates by Sunday 11:55 pm ET. Forum posts are graded on timeliness, relevance, knowledge of the weekly readings, and the quality of original ideas.

### **Midterm assignment - 25 percent**

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 5 questions, 2 pages total, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

### **Progress assignment - 25 percent**

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 5 questions, 2 pages total, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

### **Final assignment – 25 percent**

This assignment is a take-home essay assignment of 5 questions, 2 pages total, to test knowledge and assimilation of the course objectives. The exclusive use of required texts and readings from this course is mandatory.

<b>Grade Instruments</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Forum Discussions (8)	<b>25</b>
Midterm Assignment	<b>25</b>
Progress Assignment	<b>25</b>
Final Assignment	<b>25</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

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**8 – Week Course Outline**

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Course Objective(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>	<u>Assignment(s)</u>
1	Introduction	<b>CO-1:</b> <b>Describe the cultural landscape of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)</b>	TRADOC: Arab Cultural Awareness  Salzman (2007) Arab Culture and Postcolonial Theory  Suleiman (2003), Arabic language and national identity	Week One Forum Discussion

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2	<b>Tribalism and the State</b>	<b>CO-2: Compare and contrast local political structures with state-centered structures.</b>	Salzman (2008) The Middle East's Tribal DNA  Wimmen (2013) The Rise of Syria's Kurds  Resources in Lessons	Week Two Forum Discussion
3	<b>Religion and Sectarianism</b>	<b>CO-2: Compare and contrast local political structures with state-centered structures.</b>	Nigosian (2004) Islam, its History, Teachings, and Practices  Stewart (2008) Chapter 7 pages 128-139	Week Three Forum Discussion  Midterm Assignment
4	<b>Family, Gender, Patriarchy</b>	<b>CO-3: Apply theories of gender, family, and patriarchy to MENA cultures and societies</b>	Cherif (2010) Culture, Rights, and Norms.  Abu-Magd and Perrier (2006)	Week Four Forum Discussion
5	<b>Political</b>	<b>CO-4:</b>	Ayoob (2009)	Week Five

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	<b>Culture</b>	<b>Analyze the relationship between states and societies in the MENA</b>	Chapter 1  Khoury (2012) The Second Anniversary of the Arab Uprisings  Lee (2009) Chapter 1 and Part 5	Forum Discussion
<b>6</b>	<b>State and Non-state Actors</b>	<b>CO-4: Analyze the relationship between states and societies in the MENA</b>	Abu-Rabi' (2010) pages 218-282 only	Week Six Forum Discussion  Progress Assignment
<b>7</b>	<b>Globalization and Culture</b>	<b>CO-5: Determine the relationship between globalization and MENA societies</b>	Singerman (2009) Introduction only (pages 3-40)  Stewart (2009) chapter 10	Week Seven Forum Discussion
<b>8</b>	<b>Cultural Encounters and Perceptions</b>	<b>CO-5: Determine the relationship between globalization and MENA societies</b>	Scheider and Nelson (2008)  Semati (2010) <i>Islamophobia</i>	Week Eight Forum Discussion  Final Assignment

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## **Policies**

Please see the [Student Handbook](#) to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

[Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)

[Plagiarism Policy](#)

[Extension Process and Policy](#)

[Disability Accommodations](#)

### **Citation and Reference Style**

Attention Please: Students will follow the Turabian/Chicago Style as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University.

See <http://www.apus.edu/Online-Library/tutorials/chicago.htm>.

### **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

### **Netiquette**

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist.



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Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Technology Limitations:** While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The Sakai classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages.
- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add "emoticons" to help alert your readers: ;-), : ), ☺

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## Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to [librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

- **Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan:** The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.
- **Electronic Books:** You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.
- **Electronic Journals:** The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.
- **Tutor.com:** AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutor.com connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to

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be. You get expert tutoring whenever you need help, and you work one-to-one with your tutor in your online classroom on your specific problem until it is done.

### **Request a Library Guide for your course** **(<http://apus.libguides.com/index.php>)**

The AMU/APU Library Guides provide access to collections of trusted sites on the Open Web and licensed resources on the Deep Web. The following are specially tailored for academic research at APUS:

- Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name, or navigate by school.
- Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111), or class name.

If a guide you need is not available yet, please email the APUS Library:  
[librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

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## **Selected Bibliography**

Abu-Rabi', Ibrahim M. 2010. *Contemporary Arab reader on political Islam*. London: Pluto Press.

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