American Public University System
The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Security and Global Studies
IRLS662
Middle Eastern Culture
Credit Hours: 3
Length of Course: 8 Weeks
Prerequisite: POLS500

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Instructor Information

Instructor Name: [insert name with credentials]
Biography: [insert link from APUS website]
Please contact me through the “messages” tab in the classroom while our class is in session.
After the course ends, please contact me through the university email system: [insert mycampus address]

Course Description (Catalog)

IRLS 662 Middle Eastern Culture (3 credit hours)
This course covers the 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; and the impact of Europe and the West on the Middle East, and more recent events such as the Arab popular uprisings. Because no event or movement occurs without a context, the course examines the cultural and social frameworks.

Course Scope

As a research seminar, this course focuses on specialized area knowledge and sources in the field. Students will conduct research in preparation for the Capstone project in the Graduate program and will complete a research design statement, a literature review, a preliminary draft, and a final research paper. The readings and research cover the analyses of major factors that shape the Middle Eastern culture: religion, tribalism, the impact of Western powers, traditions, customs, mores, and traditional norms. In this context, the course explores socio-cultural motives and values tightly intertwined to create a unique social fabric prevailing in the region for centuries.

Course Objectives

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

CO-1: Examine the value of culture and cultural identity for understanding Middle Eastern economies, politics, and international relations.
CO-2: Identify and examine the different cultures and identities in the Middle East.
CO-2: Compare and contrast different culture groups in the Middle East.
CO-3: Explore and analyze the impact of history and nationalism on Middle Eastern cultural identities.
CO-4: Identify and analyze external influences on cultural identity in the Middle East, including globalization and social media.
CO-5: Explore and analyze the religions of the Middle East and examine their impact on culture.
CO-6: Conduct a research project on a topic relevant to the course title and objectives.
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This course, delivered via distance learning, will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials 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 Textbooks

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>ISBN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stewart, Dona J.</td>
<td>The Middle East Today: Political, Geographical and Cultural Perspectives- E-book available in the APUS Online Library</td>
<td>Routledge, 2009</td>
<td>9780415772426</td>
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This book is available electronically in the online library via the classroom.

Required Readings

Other readings are available electronically within the classroom.

Additional Resources and Web Sites

Videos and web sites are available within the classroom and through the university electronic library.

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Evaluation Procedures

The course grade is based on the following assessments:

Discussion Forums – 30 percent

Discussion questions will be provided and posts should reflect an assimilation of the readings and respond to the assigned topic(s). Students are required to provide a substantive initial post by Thursday
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at 11:55 pm ET and respond to two 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.

Research Question, Purpose Statement, and Citation Format Exercise – 20 percent

The components of this assignment include a research question and a purpose and design statement. It must contain at least 8 sources, at least 6 of which must be peer-reviewed. The specific research question should relate to a topic covered in the course. Length: 8 pp.

Literature Review—20 percent

This document contains an annotated summary of the major sources that will be used in the research paper, all of which must be peer-reviewed articles or scholarly texts. Students will identify the source, offer a short synopsis of its main argument, and offer a statement of relevance to the research project. Length: 8 pp.

Final Paper—30 percent

This is the final paper assignment of the course. It must contain citations in formal style as well as a bibliography. Length: 15 pp.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Design Assignment</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Literature Review Assignment</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<td>Forum Discussions</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
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<td>Research Paper</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100 percent</td>
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Please see the Student Handbook to reference the University’s grading scale.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cultural Geographies in the Middle East</td>
<td>CO-1: Explore and analyze the value of culture and cultural identity for understanding Middle Eastern economies, politics, and international relations&lt;br&gt;LO-1: Examine the cultural landscape of the Middle East</td>
<td>Stewart (2013) Chapters 1 and 2&lt;br&gt;Heiss (2006) <em>Culture and US Relations with the Middle East</em>&lt;br&gt;Held and Cummings (2010) <em>The Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East</em></td>
<td>Week One Forum&lt;br&gt;<em>Discussion Forum 1: Introductions</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Discussion Forum 2: Cultural Geographies in the ME</em>&lt;br&gt;Due Thursday 11:55pm; Responses due Sunday 11:55pm (all times EDT)&lt;br&gt;Lesson Notes&lt;br&gt;Weekly Readings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Course Objectives</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Forum Discussions</td>
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| 2    | States, Nationalisms, and Minorities | CO-2: Compare and contrast different culture groups in the Middle East  
CO-3: Explore and analyze the impact of history and nationalism on Middle Eastern cultural identities  
LO-1: Examine the role of states in the Middle East  
LO-2: Analyze the interactions of nations and minorities  
LO-3: Identify and explore a topic for research | Stewart (2013) Chapters 3 and 7  
Excerpts from Shatzmiller (2005) Nationalism and Minority Identities in the Islamic Societies  
Supplemental:  
Baehr (2009) Tribes and Terror in the Middle East: A Conversation with Philip Carl Salzman  
Bates (2001) Local Organization of Power  
Lewis (2003) Iraqi Assyrians  
Kumaraswamy (2003) Problems of Studying Minorities in the Middle East | Week Two Forum  
**Discussion Forum:** Assessing nations and minorities  
**Research Forum:** What’s your topic?  
Due Thursday 11:55pm; Responses due Sunday 11:55pm  
Lesson Notes  
Weekly Readings |
| 3    | Orientalism and its Respondents | CO-4: Identify and analyze external influences on cultural identity in the Middle East, including globalization and social media  
LO -1: Understand and analyze the concept of orientalism and its critiques  
Salzman (2007) Arab Culture and Post-Colonial Theory | Week Three Forum:  
**Discussion Forum:** What is Orientalism  
Due Thursday 11:55pm; Responses due Sunday 11:55pm  
Assignment  
**Assignment 1:** Research Design  
Due Sunday 11:55pm |
<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Research Method for the Final Paper</th>
<th>Lesson Notes</th>
<th>Weekly Readings</th>
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|  | 4 | CO-2: Identify and examine the different cultures and identities in the Middle East  
CO-2: Compare and contrast different culture groups in the Middle East  
LO-1: Explore and analyze family and community structures in the Middle East  
LO-2: Analyze changes in gender dynamics in the Middle East  
LO-3: Critique and analyze a research source | Abdel-Latif (2008) *In the Shadow of the Brothers: The Women of the Muslim Brotherhood*  
Abu-Lughod (2002) *Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?*  
Crocco et al. (2009) *At the Crossroads of the World: Women of the Middle East*  
Singerman (2006) *Restoring the Family to Civil Society* | Week Four Forum:  
*Discussion Forum: Family, gender, community*  
*Research Forum: Engaging your sources*  
Due Thursday 11:55pm; Responses due Sunday 11:55pm.  
Lesson Notes  
Weekly Readings |
|  | 5 | CO-4: Identify and analyze external influences on cultural identity in the Middle East, including globalization and social media  
LO-1: Explore and analyze the concepts of  
| Stewart (2013) Chapter 5-6  
Little (2008) *American Orientalism* | Week Five Forum:  
*Discussion Forum: Are tradition and modernity opposing forces?*  
Assignment  
Assignment 2: *Literature Review* |
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<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Forum</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Tweeting the Revolution: Culture and the Media in the Middle East</td>
<td>LO-2: Construct a review of literature on a research topic</td>
<td>Stewart (2013) Chapter 11</td>
<td>Week Six Forum:</td>
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<td>Khondker (2011) <em>The Role of Media in the Arab Spring</em></td>
<td><em>Discussion Forum:</em></td>
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<td>York (2011) <em>Free Speech in the Age of Twitter</em></td>
<td>Media and technology</td>
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<td>Recommended: Allen (2011) <em>Connected in Cairo</em></td>
<td><em>Research Forum:</em></td>
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<td>Gaps in your research review</td>
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<td>Due Thursday 11:55pm; Responses due Sunday 11:55pm</td>
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<td>Lesson Notes</td>
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<td>Weekly Readings</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in Middle Eastern Cultures</td>
<td>LO-1: Explore and analyze the religions of the Middle East and examine their impact on culture</td>
<td>Deeb (2006) <em>The Visibility of Religion in Daily Life</em> (excerpt from An Enchanted Modern)</td>
<td>Week Seven Forum:</td>
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<td><em>Discussion Forum:</em></td>
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<td>Religion and culture</td>
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<td><em>Research Forum:</em></td>
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<td>Portion of Paper</td>
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<td>Due Thursday</td>
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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, I understand 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. 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
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.

- **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.


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.

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**Turnitin.com**

Faculty may require assignments be submitted to Turnitin.com. Turnitin.com will analyze a paper and report instances of potential plagiarism for the student to edit before submitting it for a grade. In some cases professors may require students to use Turnitin.com. Typically the course professor will establish a Turnitin.com access code for his/her classes. If the code has not been established, those who wish to use Turnitin.com may ask their professor to establish the code. Please see the Turnitin instructions in the Week One Forum for more details.

**Selected Bibliography**


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