Prerequisites: None.

The objective of this course is to provide a basis for understanding historical processes (both global and local) within the Middle East and North Africa in the modern period (19th-21st century). Focusing on the transformation of state and society under the impact of a changing world economy and European imperialism, this course has four interrelated themes. The first is the transformation of multiethnic world empires in the sixteenth century to nation-states in the 20th century. Second, we trace the transformation of the Middle East economy, once a self-sustaining system at a central node of world trade, into a marginal economic region dubbed part of “the Third World.” Third, we examine the currents of social change wrought by these political and economic transformations, focusing particularly on the rise of new social and political movements and the new sorts of identities, social categories and notions of personhood they were based upon. Fourth, we trace the changing relationship of the Middle East to Europe and later, the United States. At the heart of our discussions will be questions about the nature of the interrelationship between “East” and “West,” Middle East exceptionalism and the political, contested nature of historical sources.

Online Course Platform

This course uses t-square. Most classroom materials, including syllabus, Powerpoint slides, and course schedule (with reading assignments) will be located under the “Resources” tab.

Readings:
James Gelvin: History of the Modern Middle East
Edmund Burke: Struggle and Survival in the Middle East
Marjane Satrapi: Persepolis

Online Lectures

All of the lectures will be recorded and uploaded to T-square. You may watch the lectures via live stream, or you may watch them on video.

Quizzes and Exams

There will be one short map quiz and three exams. The map quiz will require filling in approximately 30 terms on a map of the middle east. The three exams will each consist of 40 multiple choice and fill in the blank questions.
Map Quiz: 5%
Exam 1: 25%
Exam 2: 25%
Exam 3: 25%

Assignments

There will be four short written assignments: Two on primary source readings, one of the documentary “Umm Kulthum: A Voice Like Egypt” and one on the graphic novel Persepolis. They will be from 250-300 words each and they will each be worth 5%

COURSE GRADES will be determined by the following scale:
  A = 90 and above
  B = 80 to 89.99
  C = 70 to 79.99
  D = 60 to 69.99
  F = 0 to 59.99