

## INTA 3260 - MIDDLE EAST POLITICS

Spring 2025

Thursdays 5:00-7:45pm

LOCATION: Instructional Center, Room 105

There are no prerequisites for this course

### **Instructor: Rana Shabb, Ph.D.**

Email: rshabb3@gatech.edu

Office Hours: By appointment only, please email me to schedule a time

Note: emails will be answered within 48 hours on weekdays.

### **Course Description**

This course is an in-depth introduction to the study of the politics of the Middle East. The course is divided into several thematic interrelated parts. First, an overview of International Relations theory will guide the analysis and approaches used to understand and analyse various dynamics in the Middle East. After understanding the theoretical underpinnings, the class will be divided into several general themes that are important to understand the Middle East's current affairs, priorities, and issues inclusive of (1) the emergence of the state system, (2) the role of non-state actors, (3) the evolution of governance and revolutions, (4) Arab-Israeli relations, (5) the Israeli Palestinian conflict, amongst other issues. Further, discussions in International Relations theory will help us understand the region and its place in the global political system. Based on the historical and theoretical background provided, students will engage in an indepth research project to further their knowledge in an area of their choosing.

### **Learning Objectives:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- demonstrate the ability to analyze social and political issues in the Middle East (Research on the Middle East)
- grasp the nature of the interplay between international, regional, and local dynamics to explain middle east politics (International Relations theory and the Middle East), and
- understand the implications of the pressing issues in the Middle East for the global political system (Globalizations and trade of the Middle East).

### **General Notes:**

- **This class will be held in-person weekly, unless otherwise notified.**
- This syllabus is subject to change. Please check the latest version on Canvas for updates and changes.
- *For the latest readings, please check the syllabus posted on Canvas, weekly.*

### **Course Materials & Readings**

- A History of the Modern Middle East 7th Edition by William L. Cleveland

- International Relations of the Middle East 4th Edition by Louise **Fawcett** (978-0198708742).
- Additional materials (such as journal articles and current analysis) will be assigned during the semester, so **please check the syllabus posted on Canvas weekly for the latest readings**

### **Grading, Assignments, and Requirements**

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Share of total</b>
Attendance and Class participation	20%
In class presentations, worksheets, and quizzes	25%
Midterm	25%
Final Research Project and Presentation	30%
Total	100%

#### **Attendance and Class participation (20%)**

Attendance is required and students must complete the assigned readings before class in order to participate in class activities. Absences will count against students' participation score. The class participation mark will be based on attendance AND the quality of your in-class oral comments as well as on the quality of your performance on written exercises that will be handed to you in class.

**Religious Holy Days:** Students who anticipate being absent from classes or miss the assignment deadlines due to religious observance should inform me by the end of the second week. Please note that assignment dates are fixed and no make-ups will be offered without an official/medical letter explaining your situation. For all other missed deadlines, I reserve the right to penalize your grades by 10% a day.

#### **In class presentations, worksheets, and quizzes (25%)**

Worksheets: Throughout the course, students will participate in different in- class activities, including discussions, small group projects and case analyses. In some of those activities, students will be required to complete written worksheets. There are three possible grades for the worksheets: check plus, check minus and 0. The lowest worksheet score will be dropped.

Quizzes: Students might be asked to complete several quizzes throughout the course. These short quizzes will have two short answer questions related to the readings for the class.

Presentation: Students will be asked to sign up for at least one class, for which they will present an analysis of the readings at the beginning of the class. They will present for 10 minutes and guide a 20 minute discussion following their presentation.

### **Midterm Exam 1 (25%)**

This midterm exam will take place on **February 20, 2025**. More details will be provided before the exam.

**Final Research Project and Presentation: (20%+10%)**: Research project aims to train students for a successful career in academia, journalism, and policy circles. The project involves students working on a topic involving a country of their choosing. Each student is required to do 1) an extensive literature study/analysis of a previously approved questions or issue (20%) and 2) present it (10%) in the latter part of the semester (Weeks 10-15). You must get a confirmation from me for your country case, research question, literature research and presentation date no later than the third week of the course. I will give more details on the research project in the class.

**Grading Scale:** 100-90 A | 89-80 B | 79-70 C | 69-60 D | 59-0 F

### **Grade Change Policy**

Legitimate requests for grade changes are welcome. However, you should resist the temptation to file a frivolous request just hoping to “get lucky”. Simple computational or clerical errors should be brought to the professor’s attention immediately. Otherwise requests for grade changes must: i) be submitted in writing either electronically or in hard copy, ii) be submitted within 7 days of receiving the graded assignment, and iii) be no longer than 600 words and no shorter than 150 words. Requests for grade changes should identify what was required in the assignment, describe precisely how these requirements were fulfilled at a level above the received grade and address any relevant comments written by the professor on the graded assignment (if applicable) and explain why they do not apply. Note that grade changes requests can result in re-grades both up or down (or left unchanged). That is, if the greater scrutiny demanded by a grade change request reveals your assignment to deserve a lower grade than previously awarded, then the lower grade may be assigned.

### **Policy on Attendance and Absences**

Attendance is required, although each student can have 1 (one) unexcused absence without penalty. Absences for medical or personal emergencies will be excused upon verification by the Office of the Dean of Student Life. Absences due to participation in Institute activities including school athletics will be excused upon verification by the registrar. Absences due to military service will be handled on a case-by-case basis and subject to verification.

In the event of an unexcused absence, you will NOT be granted any special accommodations including but not limited an opportunity to make up work for in-class exercises. Thus, if you

miss class due to an unexcused absence, you are likely to suffer a grade penalty due to your inability to participate in an in-class exercise or in class discussion. You will also be responsible for any material, assignments, or announcements covered in class that you miss as a result of an unexcused absence.

Course participants will treat each other with respect. Constructive questioning and criticism are welcome, even encouraged. Personal attacks and insults are not. The rule of thumb here is that critical comments and questions should be maturely phrased in a manner that

**Statement on inclusiveness**

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology’s commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

**Academic misconduct**

According to the Georgia Tech honor code,<sup>1</sup> academic misconduct is any act that does or could improperly distort Student grades or other Student academic records. Such acts include:

- Possessing, using or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay, laboratory report, examination, or other assignment included in an academic course;
- Substitution for, or unauthorized collaboration with, a student in the commission of academic requirements;
- Submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or persons, without adequate credit notations indicating authorship (plagiarism).

**Course Outline**

<b>THEME</b>		
Week 1	Thursday, January 9, 2025	Introduction
Week 2	Thursday, January 16, 2025	IR theories and Frameworks
Week 3	Thursday, January 23, 2025	The emergence of the modern states
Week 4	Thursday, January 30, 2025	Political Reform and Uprising in the Middle East

Week 5	Thursday, February 6, 2025	The Rise and fall of State-Led Development
Week 6	Thursday, February 13, 2025	Arab Israeli Relations and the Israeli Palestinian Conflict
Week 7	Thursday, February 20, 2025	<b>MIDTERM</b> The United States and Europe in the Middle East
Week 8	Thursday, February 27, 2025	Security and Civil Conflicts in the Middle East
Week 9	Thursday, March 6, 2025	Individual Research Study
Week 10	Thursday, March 13, 2025	Non-Arab regional centers of power, Iran, turkey
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Thursday, March 20, 2025</b>	<b>NO Class Spring Break</b>
Week 12	Thursday, March 27, 2025	political economy of the Middle East and Oil
Week 13	Thursday, April 3, 2025	Saudi Arabia and Gulf politics
Week 14	Thursday, April 10, 2025	TOPIC TBD
Week 15	Thursday, April 17, 2025	Course Overview & Final Presentations
Week 16	CHECK SCHEDULE	FINAL EXAM

### **Week 1: Introduction**

### **Week 2: International Relations Theory and the Middle East**

- Fawcett Chap 1.
- Davison, Roderic H. 1960. "Where is the Middle East?" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 38, pp. 665
- Nickie Keddie, "Is there a Middle East?" *IJMES* Volume 4, Issue 3 (1973).

### **Week 3: The emergence of the Arab states, colonialism to independence, and the cold war**

- Fawcett Chap 2, The Emergenc of the Middle East into the Modern State System
- Fawcett Chap 3, The Cold War and the Middle East

### **Week 4: Political Reform and Uprising in the Middle East**

- Fawcwtt Chap 6, Chap 15
- Cleveland Chap 26
- Cammett Chap 1 (State Economy and Society)

- CASE STUDY: TBD
- Guest Speaker

**Week 5: The Rise and fall of State-Led Development**

- Cammet CHap 7

**Week 6: Arab Israeli Relations and the Israeli Palestinian Conflict**

- Fawcett Chap 12 the Arab Israeli Conflict; Chap 13 The rise and fall of the Oslo peace process
- Placeholder: Reading on post Oct 7 dynamic, the economist: The year that shattered the middle East. the economist october 5-11.

**Week 7: The United States and Europe in the Middle East**

- Fawcett Chap 16
- Fawcett Chap 17
- Cleveland Chap 25
- Guest speaker: Larry Silverman (TBD)

**Week 8: Security and Civil Conflicts in the Middle East: Conflict and Identities**

- Fawcett Chap 10
- Cleveland Chap 1-3

**Week 9: RESEARCH STUDY**

**Week 10: Non-Arab regional centers of power, Iran, turkey**

- Cleveland Chap 24, Continuity and Change in Turkey, Iran, and Lebanon since 1990

**Week 11: SPRING BREAK NO CLASS**

**Week 12: political economy of the Middle East and Oil**

- Fawcett chapter 5
- Fawcett Chap 9
- Cammett Chapter 9

**Week 13: Saudi Arabia and Gulf politics**

- Cleveland Chap 27
- Fawcett Chap 10, 14

**Week 14: TOPIC TBD**

- Chinese and RUssian interest in the Middle East
- BRICS in the Middle
- Deep dive one case study

## **Week 15: Course Overview & Final Presentations**