SA.860 (MIDDLE EAST STUDIES)

SA.860.702. States & Societies of the Middle East and North Africa. 4 Credits.
Reviews the integration of the Middle East and North Africa in a Western-dominated world-system. Examines the effect of the legacy of imperialism on the political economy of colonized societies, focusing on the pathologies developed by post-colonial states in the Middle East and Africa. Discusses state failures, rentier-state pathologies and authoritarian states and weak states in the context of regional states and societies. Case studies include discussions of Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. <a href="http://www.sais-jhu.edu/resources/administrative-offices/how-access-course-syllabi-and-evaluations" target="_blank">Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios</a>

SA.860.707. The Israel-Palestine Conflict. 4 Credits.
SA.860.708. Political Leadership in the Middle East. 4 Credits.
Change in the Middle East has often been attributed to charismatic and powerful leaders, whose influence has been magnified by crisis, wars, and authoritarian traditions. This course combines biography with politics to ask whether, how, and in which circumstances, individual leaders have changed the course of modern Middle Eastern history. Special attention is paid to the interaction of leaders and mass movements, and leadership dynamics in the unfolding "Arab Spring."<a href="http://www.sais-jhu.edu/courses/middle_east_studies.html#MES860708" target="_blank">Click here to see evaluations, syllabi, and faculty bios</a>

SA.860.719. Washington, Israel and the Arabs. 4 Credits.
Explores history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its evolution. Looks at the trajectory of Arab-Israeli diplomacy, its practice and history. Examines the role of outside powers, with case studies selectively chosen: the Egypt-Israel and Jordan-Israel peace treaties, the aborted Syria peace track and the Israel-Palestine process, from Madrid and Oslo to the present. Examines the role of unilateralism and impact of recent regional Arab upheaval on Israeli-Palestine. Discusses the achievements and limitations of diplomatic settlements with implications for the future.

SA.860.726. U.S. Foreign Policy and Relations with the Arab World. 4 Credits.
Arab commentators have called the United States both a liberator and an imperialist power in the Middle East – its values and freedoms coveted and demonized, its culture admired and reviled, its government blamed for failed revolutions and successful ones – a schizophrenic relationship at worst – an intimate source of opposition and inspiration at best. As ISIS attempts to capture the Middle East, a refugee crisis grows, and democratic hopes hang on by a thread, the U.S. witnesses a burgeoning liberal culture, political Islam, and democracy and human rights. The course will conclude with a discussion of the Arab uprisings and their outcome, along with the implications for the politics and international relations of the MENA region.

SA.860.727. Europe and the Middle East. 4 Credits.
This course aims to study the multfaceted and complex relationship between Europe/the European Union and the states of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Starting with the history of European colonialism in the Middle East, the course will examine the post-colonial policies of single European states towards the region, together with the declarations, policies and practices of the European Community, and later European Union, from the 1970s onwards. Suggesting a widely overlooked degree of interconnectedness between Europe and the Middle East, special attention will be paid to Europe-Middle East relations in the realms of trade, migration and border control, security cooperation and democracy promotion. The conceptualisation of the policies of the EU and of single MENA states, together with questions pertaining to power relations, interdependence and leverage in Europe-Middle East relations will also be discussed

SA.860.730. Great Powers of the Middle East and North Africa. 4 Credits.
How have Great Powers shaped the history and politics of states in the Middle East and North Africa? For over a century, Great Powers have been extensively involved in the region: they established colonies, protectorates, and mandates during colonial period; afterward, they employed military force to constrain and shape regimes. Focusing primarily on Great Britain, France, and the United States, this course examines the causes and consequences of foreign military intervention from colonial conquest through the post-colonial period. Students will critically assess claims that link Great Power actions to current-day conditions in the region through evaluating contemporary scholarship and analyzing the history of selected cases.

SA.860.735. History and Politics of the Middle East and North Africa. 4 Credits.
The course aims at introducing students to the history and politics of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), with a focus on the Mediterranean Middle East/Mashreq and Maghreb. Starting with the exploration of the emergence of the modern state system in the region, the course will examine the post-colonial politics of MENA countries and the current state of affairs. In this context, a number of key issues will be addressed, such as state-society relations, authoritarianism and reform, the role of the military, regional dynamics, conflicts, the strategic importance of the region, political Islam, and democracy and human rights. The course will conclude with a discussion of the Arab uprisings and their outcome, along with the implications for the politics and international relations of the MENA region.

SA.860.753. Media Wars. 4 Credits.
Is social media making our politics more extreme? How does the circulation of “fake news” differ from propaganda efforts in the pre-digital age? Does it affect our politics in the long-term? How are states using media today not only to inform their own citizens, but as a weapon in larger geo-political contests? Are algorithms racists, and what does that say about the future we are building? This course will take a critical look at the production, circulation, and consumption of media in the contemporary world. We'll particularly focus on the development of technology, surveillance, cyberwar, militarized media, social movements, and the social life of algorithms. We will explore cases through the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Africa.
SA.860.755. The Iranian Revolution at 40. 4 Credits.
The Iranian Revolution of 1979 marked a watershed moment in world politics. Coined "the last great revolution," the mass movements of the late 1970s led to the toppling of the U.S.' greatest ally in the region, Mohammad Reza Shah, and the birth of the first modern Islamic Republic. In essence, the events of 1979 in Iran shifted the global geopolitical terrain, which have had profound repercussions to this day. In this course, we will consider the factors that led to the Revolution and study how the political struggles after the fall of the Shah played out. We will delve into the dynamic political formations of the Islamic Republic and the emergence of the regime's political economy in both the war and post-war years. We will study the impact of the Iran-Iraq war on Iranian domestic and foreign relations and will read and discuss the suppression of opposition groups in the 1980s, looking at how oppositional politics reemerged from the foreign control after the ceasefire in Iran in 1988. We will cover the women's movement, the labor movement, the teacher's movement, and the student movement, in an effort to more fully understand state-society relations in contemporary Iran. Along this vein, we will carefully examine social developments in urban and non-urban centers of the country. Throughout the course, we focus on how the Iranian Revolution has been framed in the past four decades, especially in the west, and what this framing either elucidates or obfuscates in regards to politics, social organization, citizenship, identity, nationalism, and religion.

SA.860.759. Political Economy of the Middle East. 4 Credits.

SA.860.761. Energy Markets in the Middle East and Central Asia. 4 Credits.
The course covers in details the energy markets of the major producers of natural gas and oil in the Arab-Persian Gulf [Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, UAE, etc.] and in the Central Asian states [Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, etc.]. The class will also discuss the strategic implications of the rise of the Far Eastern consumers as well as the decline of demand from the Western countries. The class is taught by two instructors with long experience in the energy markets and politics of these regions. The instructors will engage the students extensively and will cap the course with a simulation of a International Energy Forum meeting of consumers and producers.

SA.860.765. The Politics of Disaster in the Middle East and Beyond. 4 Credits.
This course examines the politics of natural and man-made disasters, including war, forced migration, drought, famine, earthquakes, tsunamis, storms, and epidemics. Focusing on the Middle East, it also presents comparative cases from Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and North America. In doing so, the class will examine the unique ways that different types of disasters interact with governance structures; social and economic inequalities; medical infrastructure; gender; race and ethnicity; and political cleavages. Throughout the course, students will learn basic elements of research design and methods in addition to welcoming experienced disaster response and analysis practitioners to class. Finally, the Politics of Disaster in the Middle East and Beyond addresses some of the philosophical aspects of working in and studying disaster-affected contexts, bringing an ethical sensibility to policy-relevant analysis.

SA.860.774. Twin Pillars Of The Gulf. 4 Credits.

SA.860.775. Ethnographic Research Methods. 4 Credits.
This course teaches students how to do field research. We will explore various field methods, including participant-observation, formal and informal interviews, network mapping, and ethnographic photography and video. In addition to weekly readings, students will immerse themselves in the actual doing of fieldwork by carrying out a mini field project during the semester in DC. Examples of field sites students can explore for their projects can include: courts, community organizations, religious institutions, activist networks, newsrooms, political institutions.

SA.860.777. Military Organizations in the Middle East and North Africa. 4 Credits.
This course familiarizes students with politics, economics, strategies, and cultures of military organizations in the MENA region. Each week has a thematic and a geographic focus. Students will be asked to evaluate theories of military behavior through deep readings of individual or paired cases. Topics include military cohesion and fragmentation, coup proofing, political economy, and state-building, gender based and sexual violence, military discipline, civilian targeting, militias, and rebel governance. Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.860.782(C)

SA.860.781. States, Revolutionaries & Terrorism. 4 Credits.
Looks at the evolution of terrorism as a tool of political expression and conquest of power. Surveys doctrines and actions of anarchists, Russian Nihilists, Social Revolutionaries, as well as nationalists and fascist movements. Reviews Leninist and Maoist models of political subversion and their avatars in the national liberation movements and urban guerrillas of the 1960s and 1970s. Draws on cases from the Middle East and North Africa, including Irgun, Lehi, EOKA, FLN, Fatah, PFLP, ANO and ASALA.

SA.860.783. The Middle East, Emerging Markets, and Global Transformation. 2 Credits.
Amid a global transformation driven by the rise of emerging markets, rapid urbanization, unprecedented technological and physical connectivity, and growing global middle classes, where does the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region fit into these powerful drivers of the future? This course will "locate" several MENA countries, cities, and companies in the broader emerging markets debate, with a particular emphasis on the leading private sector companies and business leaders shaping the region, as well as the region's inter-connectivity with Asia and Africa. The course will urge students to "disrupt" traditional geopolitical paradigmatic thinking in favor of a more geo-commercial look at the region. The course will also take a deep dive into the hub city of Dubai as an emerging "Hong Kong of South Asia", and "Miami of Africa", and explore the role of hub cities more broadly. Course lectures and guest speakers will focus on high growth, consumer-facing sectors in the region, including aviation, telecommunications, media, retail, food, banking and technology start-ups. Students will emerge from the course with a broad understanding of the geo-commercial "location" of the MENA region globally and a familiarity with the leading commercial enterprises and actors. Guest speakers will be senior practitioners from the private and public sectors with broad regional experience, as well as entrepreneurs and thought leaders.
SA.860.784. Behavioral Sociology of Conflict. 4 Credits.
This course combines approaches from social psychology and social
textbook on the side of behavioral and social forces. It explores
and academic settings. Challenging the assumption of rationality in human behavior, it explores
the role of autonomous agents, culture, religion, beliefs and identity
as well as the impact of the European Enlightenment on the Arab world. The course will also discuss the
impact of the Arab Spring on the Arab world and its implications for the future of the region.

SA.860.790. Powers of the Middle East: The Gulf States. 2 Credits.
This course attempts to provide students with an understanding of the
socio-political structures of the smaller Arab States of the Gulf Cooperation Council: Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE and Oman. These
states have much in common, in terms of political systems and economic
base, but with very important idiosyncratic nature, which may explain the
relationship they have with each other, their powerful neighbor-
Saudi Arabia, and the rest of the world. All of these states are very
dependent on foreign labor and hydrocarbon resources and deal with
their dependency in different manners. Some, like Bahrain, are already
seeing a decline in their resources and all of them are striving to establish post-oil/gas economies. The class will discuss in detail the particularities
of each of the countries. It will seek to explain how the differences in
culture and society mold their different approach to international affairs
and their economic development. The class will also discuss the
prospects of these states in light of the great tensions between each other and with their large neighbors, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. It will
also look at the role of these states in the strategic interests of the US,
China and Russia, as well as of those of other strong economies like the
EU, Japan and Korea.

SA.860.791. Powers of the Middle East: Iran. 2 Credits.
More than three decades have passed since a mass political movement
toppled Iran's monarchy and scuttled a set of assumptions about religion,
modernity, and political development. The establishment of the Islamic
Republic of Iran dramatically transformed the nation's internal politics,
economy, and society, and its impact echoed well beyond Iran's borders
to reconfigure the geopolitical balance in the Middle East. Over the
course of the next 33 years, Iran's revolutionary theocracy has been at
the center of what former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski
has described as "the arc of crisis" that spans North Africa to South
Asia. As the heavyweight power in a crucial region, with unique religious
and cultural sway, situated at the crux of global energy resources and transportation routes, Iran would inevitably rank high on the American
security agenda irrespective of its leadership. That importance is
magnified by the persistence of antagonism between Tehran and
Washington as well as by the Islamic Republic's contentious role in the
region. Once again, Iran once again finds itself in history's spotlight,
thanks to negotiations over Tehran's nuclear ambitions that have yielded
the first sign of diplomatic progress in a decade-long impasse. What
happens next in Iran's always compelling narrative will have dramatic
repercussions not only for its 70 million citizens, but for its neighbors, the
world economy, and American interests in the Middle East. This course is
intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the forces shaping
Iran's domestic political evolution and its international relations.
The course will examine six key critical junctures in post-revolutionary Iranian
history, integrating a discussion of political dynamics, economic forces,
and international policies and challenges.

SA.860.792. Powers of the Middle East: Egypt, From Revolution to
Revolution. 2 Credits.
The course will survey political and economic developments in Egypt
from 1952 to the aftermath of the 2011 revolution. The new chapter in
Egyptian history that opened on the 23rd of July 1952, when a group of
military officers overthrew the monarchy, saw not only political change
but changes in economic structures and policies, the social order, and
Egypt's foreign policy. From 1952, Egypt witnessed several reversals
of policies as well as continuations of structures under its successive
presidents Nasser, Sadat, Mubarak, Morsi and finally Sisi. This course will
delve into these changes looking at the basis of the political order,
its mode of political organization, economic outlook, social and foreign
policies with a focus on both the common themes running through these
different regimes as well as their divergences.

SA.860.793. Islam and Politics: Religion and Power in World Affairs. 2
Credits.
Islamic ideas and actors play an important part in global politics today.
Their impact on political change, international security, and economic
and social trends has shaped international relations in recent years.
The rise of Islamist activism has been central to this development. This
course will examine the role that Islamism plays in politics in Muslim
countries; trace the origins and development of its formative ideas;
introduce the key forces that represent it; and analyze its development
and conception of politics and international relations. The Course
will introduce the foundational ideas of Islamism, examine the life
and works of key thinkers and leaders, and trace the development of
leading movements and ideological trends in the context of political and
international developments of the past three decades. It will trace the
evolution of Islamist thinking from the colonial era through periods of
state formation to current debates over future of the Muslim world. The
course will discuss continuity and change in Islamist thinking, and the
different paths the Islamist discourse has evolved along. The course will
rely on theoretical literature and analyses of Islamist movements along
with examination of case studies of relations between states and Islamic
movements to provide students with both intimate knowledge of the
subject and a framework of analysis for understanding Islamic activism
in the context of comparative politics and global affairs.

SA.860.794. Arab Political Thought in the Age of Modernity. 2 Credits.
For centuries, the Arab world had been isolated from political and
economic developments in Europe and reassured of the worldly
successes of Islam by Ottoman victories. Modernity visited the Arab
world at the hands of a young French officer, Napoleon Bonaparte, with
dreams of building an Empire in the East. This first shock was followed
by growing Western military and economic presence in the Middle East,
and shook the foundations of the Arabs' political order. For the Arab
world, the crisis of modernity had a dual manifestation: the discovery
of European technological, material and military superiority, and at the
same time the challenge to the very foundations of the political order
in the world of Islam, as a result of modernization efforts by rulers and
foreign occupiers. The gap grew between the Islamic worldview and
the reality in which Muslims lived. This course will look at Arab responses to the crisis of modernity
from attempts by rulers to modernize their countries and their militaries,
the calls for religious and political reform by intellectuals, the birth of
the question of nationalism, the rise and fall of Arab nationalism and the
Islamist response. Readings will examine the underlying themes related
to the view and relationship with the West, attempts at modernization,
and definitions of identity and nationalism.
Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have
already received credit for SA.860.718[C]

SA.860.795. Arab Political Thought in the Age of Modernity. 2 Credits.
For centuries, the Arab world had been isolated from political and
economic developments in Europe and reassured of the worldly
successes of Islam by Ottoman victories. Modernity visited the Arab
world at the hands of a young French officer, Napoleon Bonaparte, with
dreams of building an Empire in the East. This first shock was followed
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the question of nationalism, the rise and fall of Arab nationalism and the
Islamist response. Readings will examine the underlying themes related
to the view and relationship with the West, attempts at modernization,
and definitions of identity and nationalism.
Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have
already received credit for SA.860.718[C]
SA.860.796. The New Turkey (2-credit). 2 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.710.740[C]

SA.860.797. Powers of the Middle East: Saudi Arabia. 2 Credits.
This course attempts to provide students with a good understanding of the socio-political structures of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has been remarkable for its political stability in the past 80 years. It has weathered the cold war, the Arab Spring and numerous economic world crisis. On the other hand, it is presently faced with a daunting environment. The country is incurring large budget deficits due to the low oil prices of the past 3 years. It is de facto at war with Iran through proxies in Syria and Yemen, even to a lesser instance in Iraq. It is party to a major dispute with Qatar, one of its most stable neighbors. It is also faced with the coming of age of a large population of young people, who want to take over the reins of the economy and political power. The course will try to address in some detail the current political transition and the structure of the economy and will seek to obtain the students’ views on the risks and potential of the challenges presently faced by Saudi Arabia.

SA.860.798. Energy, Business & Politics in the Arab Gulf. 4 Credits.
The course will focus on the Arab States of the Arab/Persian Gulf. It will study the oil and gas industry there, how it funds the States and how the money is funneled on to the societal actors to maintain political stability. It will evaluate the modernization and development plans put forth by the leaderships of the Gulf, such as Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia. The class will analyze the rift between Qatar and the other members of the GCC. It will also discuss the issues related to the massive reliance on imported labor in the entire region.
Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.860.761[C] OR SA.860.790[C]

SA.860.799. Autocracy & Contentious Politics. 2 Credits.
Authoritarian regimes wield a variety of tools to suppress dissent and maintain compliance. Yet resistance, including institutional challenges, peaceful protest, and violent rebellion, occurs periodically within most autocratic regimes. This course examines conflict between states and societal actors, raising a number of questions: how do regimes seek to maintain order? What conditions facilitate popular protest? What triggers violent rebellion? How do identities such as gender, religion, and region affect contentious politics? Course readings will include studies of North Africa before, during, and after the Arab Spring, providing a regional context in which to examine these questions. Students will also have to opportunity to investigate other cases in readings and assignments.

SA.860.817. Current Issues of the Middle East: Israel and the Arabs. 2 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.860.719[C]

SA.860.818. Islam and Politics: Religion and Power in World Affairs. 4 Credits.
The rise of Islamism and the role Islam has played in politics constitutes one of the most important and consequential developments of our time. In recent decades Islamic ideas have become embedded in society, economics and politics of large numbers of Muslim countries in Asia and Africa but have also become part of domestic politics in the West, China, India and Russia. Since 9/11 Islamic activism has also been integral to discussion of international security, deeply influencing ebbs and flows of global conflict. It has dominated news and foreign policy thinking from one major global event to another over the past four decades. In the process it has posed significant foreign policy challenges, but also raised important questions for historians and political scientists. This course will explain the origins and development of this important historical phenomenon. It will examine how and why Islam has become so politically influential, trace the origins and development of core ideas of Islamism, and how it has shaped global politics in recent decades. The course will examine the life and works of key thinkers and leaders and discuss those events that have defined Islam's role in politics such as the Iranian Revolution, the Afghan Jihad, and the rise of Al-Qaeda and ISIS.
Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.860.793[C]