California State University, Bakersfield
Economies of the Middle East & North Africa (ECON 312)

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Course Description:
A multidisciplinary study of economic growth and development in the Middle East and North Africa with case studies of Arab countries, as well as Cyprus, Iran, Israel, and Turkey. Topics to be addressed include regional and international economic relations and the effects of natural resources, population, urbanization, education, religion and culture, trade, socio-political stability, and industrialization on economic development and growth. Special emphasis will be placed on exploring policy measures that can lead the region toward long-term interdependence, peace, and development.

Course Objectives:
Upon completion of Economics 312, students should be able to:

1. Geographically identify the Middle Eastern and North African region and explain its strategic importance in facilitating world peace, security, and prosperity.

2. Understand and discuss the principal social, political, and economic problems facing countries in the Middle East and North Africa, how selected countries are striving to solve them, and the degree of success achieved in these endeavors.

3. Compare and contrast countries in the Middle East and North Africa according to economic system and performance, political environment, resource endowment, religious and cultural background, role of the state, role of women, and policies of trade and development.

4. Analyze and discuss the need for increased interdependence, cooperation, understanding, tolerance, and compromise in solving social, political, and economic problems that are peculiar to a region of great ethnic diversity and yet similar historical tradition and cultural heritage.

5. Analyze and discuss the impact of high and rapidly increasing military expenditures on economic growth in most countries of the region, and the human and financial cost of military conflict, revolution, and war.

Reading Materials:
- Instructor’s Lecture Notes
Class Attendance: Students are required to attend all class sessions and actively participate in class discussion. There will be no make-up exams or activities for missed course requirements. Only compelling medical reasons with supporting certification from a medical doctor will be considered. Exams and class presentations cannot be made up for other reasons. If you miss a class activity, your grade will be assigned according to your completed requirements. Incomplete grades will not be assigned. Class attendance and participation will make a difference in the assignment of grades in borderline cases.

Course Requirements: Course requirements and grade distribution are as follows:

- Examinations (mid-term and final) 60%
- Country Study (oral presentation) 10
- Case Study (oral presentation) 5
- Video Quizzes 10
- Research Project (written presentation) 15

Cheating & Plagiarism: I follow the university’s policy on Academic Honesty enumerated in the CSUB Catalog. In particular, identical take-home exams will be subject to the cheating and plagiarism policy.

Grading Policy:
Grades will be determined by total percentage points earned in the course, with the points corresponding to each letter grade to be determined at the end of the term. The grading standard is as follows:

- 95-100 A
- 90-94 A-
- 87-89 B+
- 84-86 B
- 80-83 B-
- 77-79 C+
- 74-76 C
- 70-73 C-
- 65-69 D
- 60-64 D
- 50-59 D-
- 0-50 F

Examinations:
There are two exams in this course: the mid-term and final. They are take-home, essay exams. Each exam will count for 30% of your grade.

Country Study:
(1) Choose one of the following countries to study:

Algeria, Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestinian Authority, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, Yemen, United Arab Emirates


(3) Read the chapter from the textbook for more information. If your country is not presented in the textbook, ask me for a copy of the country study from Global Studies: The Middle East, McGraw-Hill 2003
(4) Construct a PowerPoint slide show to your assignment in the form of a 10-15 minute presentation. In your presentation include information on

History, Geography, People, Government, Economy, Communication & Transportation Systems, Military & Transnational Issues, Prospects of Economic Development (which is your conclusion)

(4) Make a short-essay exam question. Give a typed copy to me and show it to the class in the beginning of your presentation.

Evaluation criteria are content, organization, and presentation.

Case Study
(1) From the following list of articles, choose a case study about a Middle Eastern country. I will provide you with a copy of the case study.

(2) Construct a PowerPoint slide show to summarize the main ideas of the case study in the form of a 5-minute presentation.

(3) Make a short-essay exam question. Give a typed copy to me and show it to the class in the beginning of your presentation.

Global Studies: The Middle East, 8th edition
(1) The Working Class and Peasantry in the ME
(2) Shifting Power in the ME
(3) ME in the 21st Century
(4) The Son Also Rises?
(5) Labor and the Challenge of Economic Reconstruction in Iran
(6) Uncertain Future
(7) Israel at 50: After Zionism
(8) Economics of Palestinian Return Migration
(9) Atlantis of the Sands
(10) Digging the Land Magan
(11) Saudi Arabia: Land of Contrasts
(12) Turkey toward 2000

Global Studies: The Middle East, 9th edition
(12) Why Don’t They Like Us?
(13) The Nature of Succession in the Gulf
(14) The ME Information Revolution
(15) Iran: Came the Revolution
(16) Iraq After Saddam’
(17) Dreaming of Altneuland
(18) The Politics of Holiness in Jerusalem
(19) Israeli Dilemmas
(20) Palestinian Challenges

Global Studies: The Middle East, 7th edition
(21) Islamic and Western Values
(22) Dubai Puts Politics Aside
(23) Cairo’s Poor
(24) The God that Did Fail
(25) Life with the Enemy
(26) Wild Card in the ME: Syria
(27) The Increasing Loneliness of being Turkey

Video Quiz
You will view 10 videotaped presentations. As a classroom activity, you complete a worksheet to answer several questions. You receive credit for attendance and participation.

Research Project
Assume you are hired by the United Nations Development Program as a Middle East/North Africa scholar. Your first assignment is to advise the UNDP on the conditions of a Middle Eastern/North African country, which is faced with serious economic, social, and/or political challenges. In doing your research, you (1) select a country and (2) from the following list, identify a subset of economic, social, and/or political challenges that are applicable to this country:

- Poverty and high infant mortality
- Income and wealth inequality
- Rapid population growth
- Massive rural-urban migration
- Widespread illiteracy and poor health conditions
- Gender inequality and low female labor force participation
- Ethnic and religious discrimination
- Autocracy and violations of the human rights by the state
- Lack of free press and individual freedom
- Lingering legacy of colonialism and imperialism
- Regional conflict and large defense spending
- Lack of industrial production and bad infrastructure
- Production of cash crops and/or minerals for exports
- Unequal international economic and financial relations

(3) Your task is to write a “white paper” (about 10 pages, typed, double-spaced) describing your recommendations for resolving the economic, social, and political challenges you have identified for this country with respect to:

- Type of government and leadership
- Role of religion and culture
- Policies of economic development
- Policies of social development
- Relations with Western countries
- Exemplary countries and leadership role models to consider

Your paper is evaluated for the content, organization, and presentation.
Reading Assignments and Class Activities

Week 1
Introduction
Course Review
Country Study an Case Study Assignments
Regional Characteristics (Notes)
Tri-continental Junction (Ch. 1)
Video Presentation & Quiz

Week 2
Historical & Geopolitical Foundation (Ch.2)
Introduction to Economic Development (Notes)
Islamic Economic Principles (Notes)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz

Week 3
Physical Environment (Ch. 3-5)
Growth and Structural Change (Notes)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz

Week 4
Geopolitics (Ch. 11)
Role of the State (Notes)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz

Week 5
Patterns of Peoples and Cultures (Ch. 6)
Population Growth & Development (Notes)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz

Week 7
Where People Congregate (Ch. 10)
Urbanization & Migration (Notes)
Human Capital Formation (Notes)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz
**Week 8**
Riches Beneath the Earth (Ch. 8)
Oil and Development
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz

**Week 9**
The Desert and the Sown: Land Use (Ch. 7)
International and Inter-regional Trade (Notes)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz

**Week 10**
Manufacturing and Transportation (Ch. 9)
Country Study
Case Study
Video Presentation & Quiz
Course Review

**Dates to Remember**
Mid-term Exam: 3:30-5:35 pm Thursday April 29
Research Project: 3:30-5:35 pm Thursday May 20
Last Day of Class: Thursday June 3
Final Exam: 5:00-7:30 pm Tuesday June 8