MODERN MIDDLE EAST STUDIES (MMES)

MMES 121a / PLSC 121a, International Relations of the Middle East  Nicholas Lotito
This course explores the multiple causes of insecurity in the Middle East and North Africa, a region of paramount geostrategic interest, whose populations have suffered from armed conflicts both within and across national borders. The first half of the course interrogates traditional security concepts like war, terrorism, and revolution, as well as the political, economic, and social contexts which give rise to these phenomena. The course then turns to foreign policy analysis in case studies of the region’s major states. Previous coursework in international relations and/or Middle East politics or history recommended but not required.  

* MMES 126b / ARCH 271b / HSER 260b / SAST 266b, Introduction to Islamic Architecture  Kishwar Rizvi
Introduction to the architecture of the Islamic world from the seventh century to the present, encompassing regions of Asia, North Africa, and Europe. A variety of sources and media, from architecture to urbanism and from travelogues to paintings, are used in an attempt to understand the diversity and richness of Islamic architecture. Field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.  

* MMES 140a / ARBC 131a, Intermediate Levantine Arabic I  Sarah Al Ani
This course develops and enhances Arabic language skills using Levantine Arabic. By implementing an interactive student-centered approach, students attain mastery of the essential modes of communicative (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational). Relevant cultural aspects and values in the Arab world are introduced and discussed using multi-modal authentic materials, especially but not limited to those that are reflected in the usage and structure of the language. Grammar is viewed from a functionality perspective as a tool that serves the main objective of the course.  

Prerequisites: ARBC 110, ARBC 120, equivalent or permission of instructor. 1½ Course cr

* MMES 141b / ARBC 141b, Intermediate Levantine Arabic II  Sarah Al Ani
Continuation of ARBC 131. This course develops and enhances Arabic language skills using Levantine Arabic in the intermediate level with the goal or reaching Intermediate High to Advanced Low Level (ACTFL standards). By implementing an interactive student-centered approach, students attain mastery of the essential modes of communicative (interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational). Relevant cultural aspects and values in the Arab world are introduced and discussed using multi-modal authentic materials, especially but not limited to those that are reflected in the usage and structure of the language. Grammar is viewed from a functionality perspective as a tool that serves the main objective of the course.  

Prerequisites: at least 3 Arabic courses, ARBC 110, 120, 130, 131, or equivalent or permission of instructor. 1½ Course cr

* MMES 144a / HIST 346a, Making of Modern Iran  Abbas Amanat
This course examines political, social and cultural history of Iran from the turn of the 19th century to the present with greater emphasis on the latter part of the 20th century aiming to explain how secular Iran became an Islamic Republic and why it is matter in today’s world. Beginning with an overview, it covers encounter with European empires (Russia and Britain), Shi’ism and clerical establishment, reform trends and search for democracy, discovery of oil and Iran in the Cold War and troubled relations with the United States, in the Persian Gulf and clash with Arab nationalism; the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and its global impact, repression and human rights, women, gender and minorities under the Islamic Republic; the 2009 Green Movement, the “Nuclear Deal” and Iran as a regional and global power.  

* MMES 148b / HIST 345b / JDST 265b / RLST 202b, Jews in Muslim Lands from the Seventh to the Sixteenth Centuries  Ivan Marcus
Jewish culture and society in Muslim lands from the time of the Prophet Muhammad to that of Suleiman the Magnificent. Topics include Islam and Judaism; Jerusalem as a holy site; rabbinic leadership and literature in Baghdad; Jewish courtiers, poets, and philosophers in Muslim Spain; and the Jews in the Ottoman Empire.  

* MMES 149a / ER&M 219a / HIST 219a / JDST 200a / RLST 148a, Jewish History and Thought to Early Modern Times  Ivan Marcus
A broad introduction to the history of the Jews from biblical beginnings until the European Reformation and the Ottoman Empire. Focus on the formative period of classical rabbinic Judaism and on the symbiotic relationships among Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Jewish society and culture in its biblical, rabbinic, and medieval settings. Counts toward either European or non-Western distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.  

* MMES 150a / HEBR 150a / JDST 213a, Advanced Modern Hebrew: Daily Life in Israel  Orit Yetet
An examination of major controversies in Israeli society. Readings include newspaper editorials and academic articles as well as documentary and historical material. Advanced grammatical structures are introduced and practiced. Conducted in Hebrew. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or equivalent. 1½ RP

* MMES 157b / JDST 306b / NELC 157b, Israeli Narratives  Shiri Goren
This course looks at contemporary representations of social, political, and domestic space in Israel through cultural production such as literature, visual work, and art. It focuses on close reading of major Israeli works in translation with attention to how their themes and forms relate to the Israeli condition. Reading and viewing include: Amos Oz’s major novel A Tale of Love and Darkness, Anne Frank: The Graphic Diary, Maya Arad’s novella “The Hebrew Teacher,” TV show Arab Labor and writing by Yehudah Amichai, Etgar Keret, and Sayed Kashua, among others. We discuss topics and theories of personal and collective identity formation, war and peace, ethnicity and race, migration, nationalism, and gender. No knowledge of Hebrew required. WR, HU TR
An advanced Hebrew class focusing on changing ideology and politics in Israel. Topics include right and left wing political discourse, elections, State-Religion dynamics, the Jewish-Arab divide, and demographic changes. Materials include newspapers, publications, online resources, speeches of different political and religious groups, and contemporary and archival footage. Comparisons to American political and ideological discourse. Prerequisite: HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5 RP

Hebrew and Arabic are closely related as sister Semitic languages. They have a great degree of grammatical, morphological, and lexical similarity. Historically, Hebrew and Arabic have been in cultural contact, especially in medieval Spain, the Middle East, and North Africa – as evidenced by the Judeo-Arabic languages. In modern Israel, Arabic is the native tongue of about 20% of its population, yet lack of communication exists today between Hebrew speakers and Arabic speakers for mainly political reasons. This L5 advanced Hebrew class explores cultural and linguistic contacts between the two languages and relationships between the communities, including both Jewish and non-Jewish Arabic speakers and Hebrew speakers. Additionally, students benefit from regular meetings with a parallel L5 Arabic class which discusses similar topics. The shared meetings enable Hebrew learners and Arabic learners to participate together in one class, to promote social interaction based on mutual respect and to focus on cultural and linguistic aspects of the material. L4 Hebrew or equivalent (placement test). L5 TR RP

Examination of major themes in Israeli society through film, with emphasis on language study. Topics include migration, gender and sexuality, Jewish/Israeli identity, and private and collective memory. Readings in Hebrew and English provide a sociohistorical background and bases for class discussion. HEBR 140 or permission of instructor. L5, HU RP

Study of novels and poetry written by modern Arab writers. Such writers include Taha Hussein, Zaid Dammaj, Huda Barakat, Nizar Qabbani, al-Maqalih, and Mostaghanimi. Prerequisite: ARBC 140 or permission of instructor. L5

Introduction to the literature, ideals, concepts, practices, rituals, and institutions of four major world religions as they have appeared in history: Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. A historical survey combined with a phenomenological treatment of principal topics. HU

Exploration of Arabian Nights, a classic of world literature. Topics include antecedents, themes and later prose, and graphic and film adaptations. HU

The emergence of classical Judaism in its historical setting. Jews and Hellenization; varieties of early Judaism; apocalyptic and postapocalyptic responses to suffering and catastrophe; worship and atonement without sacrificial cult; interpretations of scriptures; law and life; the rabbi; the synagogue; faith in reason; Sabbath and festivals; history and its redemption. No prior background in Jewish history assumed. HU

Exploration of the international politics of the Middle East through a framework of analysis that is partly historical and partly thematic. How the international system, as well as social structures and political economy, shape state behavior. Consideration of Arab nationalism; Islamism; the impact of oil; Cold War politics; conflicts; liberalization; the Arab-spring, and the rise of the Islamic State. SO

Study of the politics of modern North Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and to a limited degree, Libya and Mauritania), including colonialism; state-formation and early nationalism; the cultivation of authoritarian regimes; modern authoritarian politics; civil-military relations; democratization; civil society; protest, dissent, social and movement mobilization; oil and rentierism; Islamism and the politics of religion; linkages to the Mashreq; and the dynamics of foreign intervention. Readings and approach to politics are cross-disciplinary, integrating political science, anthropological, historical, religious, as well as gender/race studies

This course overviews how environmental, water, food, energy, and climate change have increasingly become linked to human and national security in the Middle East. It begins by exploring the state of the environment in the region and how the policies of the Middle East governments have lead to serious environmental degradation and subsequent loss of jobs, migration, social tension, violence, and regional conflicts. Drawing on an in-depth analysis of contemporary case/country studies, students learn how these problems can serve as major human and national security threats. This interdisciplinary course is of interest to students with background/interest in environmental science/engineering, ecology, geography, geosciences, social/political sciences, public policy, security and peace building, international relations, diplomacy, and global affairs. SO

How members of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities thought of and interacted with members of the other two cultures during the Middle Ages. Cultural grids and expectations each imposed on the other; the rhetoric of otherness—humans or devils, purity or
impurity, and animal imagery; and models of religious community and power in dealing with the other when confronted with cultural differences. Counts toward either European or Middle Eastern distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies.  WR, HU

**MMES 364b / PLSC 396b, Politics of the Contemporary Middle East**  Elizabeth Nugent
This course is an overview of contemporary politics of the Middle East, and is organized thematically and (more or less) chronologically. We examine prominent explanations for the democratic deficit in the Middle East, and challenge the notion that the region is completely devoid of competitive and meaningful politics. We also explore the ways in which a variety of factors—including foreign intervention, persistent authoritarianism, oil, and Islam, among others—has affected domestic politics. We consider different aspects of domestic politics, including redistribution, gender politics, and public opinion. We end the course by building on what we learned to make sense of the 2010-2011 'Arab Spring' uprisings, in an effort to understand whether these developments mark change or continuity.  SO

* **MMES 370a / RLST 226a / SOCY 368a, Transnational Islam and Muslim Communities**  Mehmet Kurt
This seminar explores key themes, concepts, and discussions on Islamic movements and Muslim communities living in the West. It examines the relationships between Muslim communities and the state/wider society within global and transnational processes. Students gain a comprehensive understanding of diversity and complexity of transnational Islamic mobilizations through readings and discussions of representative case studies. The seminar begins with a historical and anthropological account of locating Muslim communities in the West and proceeds with the discovery of key themes and debates. Throughout the term, students explore key issues around Islamophobia and radicalization, governance of Muslim practices, ethno-religious and cultural diversity of Muslim communities, gender and sexuality, as well as the ways in which these shape perceptions, policies and public debates in the 'host' countries.  SO

**MMES 379a / HIST 380a, The Making of the Modern Middle East, 1800-1980**  Kevin Gledhill
This course surveys the history of the modern Middle East from the start of the 19th century through the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. Importantly, the course problematizes the idea of 'modernity' in our historical understanding of the region. Using as a general framework the transition from empire to nation-state, it explores several key themes including discourses and practices of colonialism across the region, the creation of ethno-national, sectarian, and religious identities, social and political upheavals wrought by revolts, rebellions, and new state formations, the changing nature of economies and labor, the rise of authoritarian leadership, the ideological spread of Arab socialism, anti-colonialism, pan-Islamism, and other political and social byproducts and consequences of the creation of 'modern' states. Each week we cover the ways these themes impacted the wider Middle East and North Africa. The readings and lectures encourage students to critically examine the historical explanations, definitions, and arguments regarding the impact or the non-impact of modernity as the driving force for transformations and stagnations in society, culture, politics, and state-formation across the Middle East and North Africa. Class materials include a range of primary source materials and documents in English and in translation, secondary sources, and podcasts.  SO

**MMES 391a / RLST 287a, Islamic Theology and Philosophy**  Frank Griffel
Historical survey of major themes in Muslim theology and philosophy, from teachings of the Qur’an to contemporary Muslim thought. The systematic character of Muslim thought and of the arguments given by thinkers; reason vs. revelation; the emergence of Sunniism and Shi’ism; the reaction of Muslim theology (from 1800) to the challenges of the West.  HU

* **MMES 399a and MMES 430a / ANTH 441a / WGSS 430a, Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East**  Eda Pepi
Examination of the gendered and sexual dimensions of war, conflict, and partition, and the codification of modern citizenship in the Middle East—from Syria, to the Middle East conflict, to Western Sahara, among others—this course presents ethnographic, historical, and literary scholarship that theorizes the role of kinship and citizenship in narratives of the nation and sovereignty.  SO

* **MMES 456a / HSAR 456a, Art and Politics in the Modern Middle East**  Kishwar Rizvi
Political ideologies have either unified the modern Middle East, such as Pan-Arabism of the 1960s and Islamism of the 1980s, or caused deep ruptures, such as Zionism and sectarianism. Examination of the art and architectural productions that have gone hand-in-hand with these political developments from the nineteenth century until present day. Poetic, visual, and urban interventions document the profound changes that have defined the countries of this region, while connecting them to political movements throughout the world.  WR, HU