

## **University of New York / Tirana Regional Studies: The Middle East**

Instructor: Dr. Dritan EGRO  
Class Time: Wednesday: 17.00 – 20.00  
Office Hours: Wednesday 16.30 - 17.00  
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It is the intention of this course to introduce to you a complex and important subject: *The Middle East*. You will learn about the origin, development, coexistence and clashes of people and religions over centuries in this region. During this course we will see why the history and the content of the Middle East is the history and the content of religions and cultures; how it has changed over time and what internal and external factors have brought about this change.

You will need this type of background to understand the political situation and religious relevance of monotheistic religions in the world today. Many actions taken and decisions made in this region are misunderstood in the West precisely because of a lack of this type of knowledge. Thus, this source will give you insights, which allow you better to interpret the news that you see, read and hear as well as to study further topics relating to conflict in the region of Middle East and Muslim countries.

The course also poses the following questions: what distinguish the region of Middle East from the world's other cultural areas? What is the connection between this region and great monotheistic religions ?

### **Bibliography**

We use the standart textbook for ISLAM:

**Lewis, Bernard, *The Middle East*, Oxford University Press, 1997**

Some copies of the book will be available in the university's library.

During this course I will provide also the relevant pages or chapter-references for each 'topic'.

## Course Requirements and Assessment

The academic assessment of this course will be divided into *four* parts:

- *Presentation*

Students will be required to submit a presentation during the course of the semester. This presentation should be prepared in group. The schedule of presentations is provided in Course Outline (last page). It will account for 20 % of the total final-grade.

**Warning:** *Presentations must not be postponed. Presentations coming later will not be accepted.*

- *Mid-term exam*

During the semester there will be two mid-term exams. Mid-terms will account for 30% (15 x 2) of the final total grade.

- *End of the Term Exam*

**At the end of the semester, there will be a final examination. This will be a 2-hour 'in class' exam. This final exam will account for 30% of the total final – grade.**

- *Attendance*

In addition to these *academic* requirements, the student's final grade will also be assessed according to his or her attendance of class participation in class-based discussion. Attendance and participation will account for 20% of the total final-grade.

- *Grades*

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In this course will use the catalogue grade scale below:

A	96-100	C	73-76
A-	90-95	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0 - 59

Course Outline

## Classes

## Topic

1 <sup>st</sup> class	Introduction to civilization/s and Middle East
2 <sup>nd</sup> “	Pre-Christian and Pre-Islamic Middle East
3 <sup>rd</sup> “	Islam and Middle East / Abbasid Empire and the Steppe Peoples (The Mongol Aftermath)
4 <sup>th</sup> “	The Middle East and the Ottoman Empire
5 <sup>th</sup> “	The Middle East and Modernity (the 20 <sup>th</sup> cent.)
6 <sup>th</sup> “	Why is difficult to establish peace in this region? (Recent Events in the Middle East)
7 <sup>th</sup> “	<b><i>Mid-Term Exam</i></b>
8 <sup>th</sup> “	Religion and Law
9 <sup>th</sup> “	Nation and Country
10 <sup>th</sup> “	State and Economy
11 <sup>th</sup> “	<b><i>In-Class Test</i></b>
12 <sup>th</sup> “	Race, Language and Culture / <i>Presentations</i>
13 <sup>th</sup> “	Commonality / Aliens and Simbols / <i>Presentations</i>
14 <sup>th</sup> “	New Ideas and Aspirations (Review for Final Examination) / <i>Presentations</i>
15 <sup>th</sup> “	<b><i>Final Examination</i></b>