

SYLLABUS

History 2990: History of the Middle East
Dr. Wolar
Fall, 2005
T/Th 1 2:15 p.m.
Room 145

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Arthur Goldschmidt, Jr., A Concise History of the Middle East. Eighth Edition.
(Boulder: Westview Press, 2006).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An introduction to the history of the Middle East from approximately the 7th century to contemporary times, focusing primarily on the region encompassing Asia Minor, the Arabian Peninsula, the Nile River area, Eastern Mediterranean, Tigris/Euphrates River area, and Iran.

Prerequisite: Prior earned credits in a college-level Western Civilization course is highly recommended.

OBJECTIVES:

To critically analyze the geographical, political, social, economic, intellectual/religious, and cultural issues attending the history of the Middle East since approximately the seventh century.

OUTCOMES:

The student will be intellectually exposed to a variety of cultural values, institutions, and traditions within the context of southwest Asia as a region. The student will demonstrate historical knowledge and critical thinking skills in preparation for transfer to a four-year college or university. Additionally, the student will acquire rudimentary library skills and apply effective writing skills in pursuance of the above-stated objectives.

READING SCHEDULE:

Week of August 22: Introduction; and, The Middle East Before Muhammad.

Week of August 29: The Prophet of Mecca; and, What is Islam?

Week of September 5: The Early Arab Conquests.

Week of September 12: The High Caliphate.

Week of September 19: Shi is' and Turks, Crusaders and Mongols.

Week of September 26: Islamic Civilization.

Week of October 3: Firearms, Slaves, and Empires; and, European Interests and Imperialism.

- October 6: Faculty Work Day: No classes.

Week of October 10: Westernizing Reform in the Nineteenth Century.

Week of October 17: The Rise of Nationalism; and, The Roots of Arab Bitterness.

Week of October 24: Modernizing Rulers in the Independent States.

Week of October 31: Egypt s' Struggle for Independence.

Week of November 7: The Contest for Palestine; and, Israel s' Rebirth and the Rise of Arab Nationalism.

Week of November 14: War and the Quest for Peace.

Week of November 21: The Reassertion of Islamic Power.

- November 24: Thanksgiving holiday.

Week of November 28: The Gulf War and the Peace Process.

Week of December 5: The War on Terrorism.

Week of December 12: Final Examination.

EXAMINATION/CRITICAL REVIEW SCHEDULE:

Midterm Examination: October 11

Critical Book Review: November 15

Final Examination: Week of December 12

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

The course will be conducted predominantly in a readings-based discussion format, with occasional lecturing by the instructor. Use will likely be made of computer-assisted materials, handouts, and maps.

EVALUATION:

The midterm examination is worth 20% of the course grade. Discussion participation is worth 20% of the course grade. The critical book review is worth 20% of the course grade. The final examination is worth 40% of the course grade.

The midterm examination, written in an examination blue book, will consist of identification of names/terms/places/interpretive perspectives in the form of short paragraphs that detail the historical significance of the identified items and/or a critical thinking exercise. The final examination, comprehensive in nature, will be written on examination blue books on sale at the campus bookstore.

The critical book review will consist of a scholarly monograph pertinent to the subject matter and chronology of this course. An appropriate book may be chosen from: 1) the reading list located on the instructor's website; and, 2) the suggested readings within the Goldschmidt text. The instructor is also available to advise the student on an appropriate monograph for completion of this requirement. Prior approval of your book choice must be obtained from the instructor.

Students will receive an appropriate form to effectuate the critical book review. The form will serve to focus the student's attention on pertinent critical issues germane to the book reviewed. The book reviews should not be more than eight double-spaced pages in length.

All critical book reviews are to be turned in during the class period of the appropriate deadline date, unless alternatively advised by the instructor.

The discussion participation evaluation will focus upon the ability of the student to take responsibility for leading class discussion during the particular class sessions. The instructor will assign a scheduled class session to a student, who will be expected to carefully outline the salient issues/themes within the scheduled reading and generate class discussion accordingly. The instructor will share responsibility with the student by posing questions and raising issues for further discussion during each class session. It is assumed that all students will have completed the reading for each class session and be prepared to discuss the pertinent issues raised by such reading.

It is expected that the instructor will engage in limited lecturing and predominantly serve as a discussion facilitator. It is generally assumed that the student has earned at least three (3) college credits in a Western Civilization course prior to enrolling in this course.

Make-up examinations are NOT given, except under extraordinary circumstances and with the prior approval of the instructor. Late critical book summaries are NOT accepted unless the above-mentioned criteria are met.

For evaluative purposes, the student is accountable for ALL assigned reading and ALL class preparations. Therefore, to maximize your potential in the course, you are strongly advised to regularly attend class.

All electronic recording devices are prohibited in class unless the instructor grants, upon good cause, prior consent for such use. Cell phones are to be turned off during class.

For evaluative purposes, the following grade scale is applicable:

A = 90-100
B = 80-89
C = 70-79
D = 60-69
F = 50-59

The instructor views the above grades as indicative of the following academic standard of achievement:

An **A** grade is an honor grade indicating excellence, and is equivalent to a consistently superior performance in the course. The issuance of an **A** grade reflects the instructor's professional judgment that the student has mastered the essential facts, issues, and themes of the college-level history course and the interconnections between such facts, issues, and themes in proper chronological sequence.

A **B** grade is an honor grade equivalent to a competent performance that is less than the substantive mastery expected for an **A** grade, yet clearly above the average performance expected within the confines of a **C** grade. The issuance of a **B** grade reflects the instructor's professional judgment that the student has a good, but not

superior, grasp of the relevant facts, issues, and themes, as well as the interconnections between such facts, issues, and themes in proper chronological sequence.

A **C** grade is equivalent to an average or satisfactory performance in the course and professionally reflects an adequate comprehension of the essential facts, issues, and themes. The issuance of a **C** grade indicates that the student has exhibited sufficient ability to warrant entering sequential courses in the discipline of history.

A **D** grade is equivalent to a passing, but less than satisfactory, performance in the course and reflects no more than a minimal comprehension of the essential facts, issues, and themes, and no more than a minimal comprehension of the interconnections between such facts, issues, and themes. The issuance of a **D** grade indicates that the student is not likely to be successful in a higher level history course and would not meet prerequisite requirements.

An **F** grade is a failed performance that reflects neither a minimal comprehension of the essential facts, issues, and themes of the course, nor any viable comprehension of the interconnections between such facts, issues, and themes of a college-level history course.

WITHDRAW FROM CLASS PROCEDURE:

If the student fails to attend class, he/she must complete the withdrawal form with the Student Services office. A **W** will appear on the transcript. Students failing to formally withdraw from the course may receive an **F** as a letter grade on the permanent transcript.

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism occurs when a student secures the ideas and/or writings of another without proper attribution to the original author. Plagiarism jeopardizes the integrity of the scholarly experience and is not to be tolerated.

DISABILITIES:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please contact Sherry Mihel, ext. 3710, on the South Campus, or Robin Rankin, ext. 3637, on the North Campus.

DISCLAIMER:

This syllabus is not a contract and the instructor retains the right to make changes in the course s'schedule, policies, and requirements as necessary so long as those changes are consistent with the policies of MPCCA and do not affect transferability.

OFFICE HOURS:

MWF / 10 a.m.

T/Th / 11 a.m.

Room 145A

308-535-3763

wolarg@mpcc.edu

<http://www.geocities.com/gwolar/>

If the above office hours are unsatisfactory, please arrange to meet me at another time. Leave a phone number or email address by which you can be reached. Alternatively, arrange to meet with me immediately prior to, or immediately subsequent to, class. If you are experiencing academic difficulty, do not hesitate to contact me as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

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