



Name	:	Maction Komwa, PhD
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Credit hours	:	3.00

Virtual Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm or by appointment.

The Instructor will be available via WebEx Conference Call; Blackboard Collaborate, and e-mail to students during the above listed Virtual Office Hours.

Please read the following course guidelines carefully & completely.

Course Dates: August 24 – December 16, 2020

Course Description

The course covers, environmental, economic, and social factors of differentiation of regional structure and distribution of resources in North African and Middle Eastern countries.

Recommended Prerequisite: 6 credits of Geography or courses related to Middle East, or permission of instructor.

Course Overview

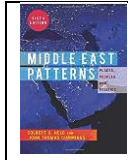
This course provides an overview of the dynamic region known as the “Middle East and North Africa.” Considering the extensive media coverage and ongoing interest (military and otherwise) in the region, we will consider mainly the environmental, economic, political, and social elements. We begin by examining the very definition of the region as a coherent unit, as well as its physical and cultural landscapes. Then we explore the economic, political, social, and environmental processes underpinning change and conflict in the region. This course is designed to give you an overview of a geographical approach to studying the Middle East and North Africa. Although this is a course in regional geography, it is not possible to examine every country nor to exhaustively cover every issue facing the region; therefore, we will take a thematic approach and incorporate different places into the discussion of various spatial processes. We will examine these themes through readings, films, short response papers, and a final research project.

Course Objectives:

Upon course completion, you will be able to:

- identify and describe various geographic features of the Middle East and North Africa
- compare patterns of human activity and human-environment relations.
- critically analyze economic & political dynamics across the region of the Middle East & North Africa.
- examine economic, social, and environmental consequences of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization in Middle East and North Africa.
- develop an understanding of the diversity of the Middle East.
- critically examine what you hear about the Middle East and understand some of the many perspectives that exist on the region so that you can critically evaluate what you hear.
- develop your critical thinking skills through reading, discussion, and writing.

Required Textbook and Instructional Materials



Middle East Patterns: Places, Peoples, and Politics
By Colbert C. Held, John Thomas Cummings
ISBN-10: 0813348773
ISBN-13: 9780813348773
Publisher: Westview Press; 6 Edition (2013)

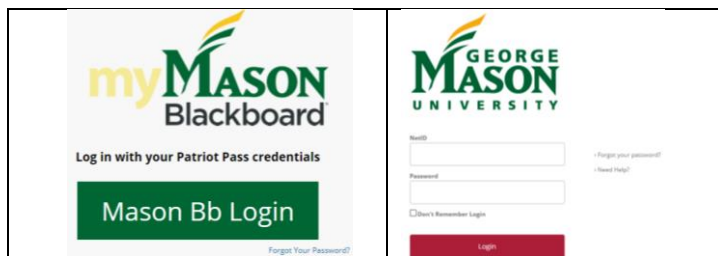
Additional readings and lecture notes and videos will be posted via the Blackboard. For full details on how to access the Blackboard please, read Technology Requirement Section below:

Instructional Methodology

- This is an asynchronous -fully online course that will be delivered entirely online through the course management system, thus Blackboard site. The course will be offered to both Graduate and Undergraduate Students.

Technology Requirements

- As a student participating in this “Distance Learning” course, or considering taking this type of course, it is expected that you have the following:
 - Internet Connection
 - Access to high speed connection such as Cable, DSL, or Satellite is recommended
 - Internet Browser Support include:
 - Internet Explorer latest version
 - Safari version latest version
 - Google Chrome latest version and Firefox latest version
 - Learning Management Systems
 - Blackboard is our course management system which provides access to course materials, assignments, and class discussions. You will log in to Blackboard using your George Mason username and password through this link:
<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>



- If you have computer problems, please contact ITS Support Center
<http://itservices.gmu.edu>; Email: support@gmu.edu; | Phone: 703-993-8870.
- Access to software
 - You will need to have access to the most up to date:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader. [https://get.adobe.com/reader/;](https://get.adobe.com/reader/)
 - Windows Media Player:
<https://windows.microsoft.com/enus/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/
 - MS Word, Excel, etc.
 - Self-direction, motivation, time management and online communication skills.
 - Participate in online course discussion during the week throughout the semester.
- If you do not have the above basic requirements of skills, your success in this course may be impacted.
- Required equipment necessary for this course thus including hardware and software (e.g. MS word, etc.), speakers, microphones, or webcams, etc. are the responsibility of the student.

Course Communication

- Students are required to regularly check their George Mason email/Blackboard for announcements or updates related to the course.
- All students are expected to use their George Mason email account for all course communication. I will not acknowledge any email that is sent through other platforms.
- You should feel free to send me email if you have any questions regarding something that you do not understand. Although I will not instantly answer your e-mail, I will reply to your e-mail within 24-48 hours and if you don't get my response please feel free to remind me or ask to confirm if I have received your email.
- Please do not wait until the day of the work is due to ask questions.

Course Assignments and Grading Breakdown

Students are expected to submit high quality assignments during this course via the Blackboard. All assignments are to be completed according the dates outlined in the syllabus.

Description	% grade
<p>Reaction and Analysis short papers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (These papers will consist of reaction to topics discussed in class, series of movies, and documentaries). • In these reaction papers, you will submit a short paper, no more than two pages summarizing the real and ethical issues directly from unfiltered voices of the people. • Some of the issues regarding the documentaries, movies would be posted first on the blackboard for a moderate online discussion which you should all participate. This could also help you hear voices of your classmates before you analyze and submit your reaction paper. 	15%
<p>Map Quiz</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will build your map literacy and ability to analyze spatial information through these assignments. Knowing geographical location, place, regions, movement of objects from one location to another, etc. are part of the geography themes that you will learn from these activities. • You will then be able to understand the spatial nature of geography and how each place, or region is examined, analyzed, and compared with other places or regions. 	10%
<p>Discussion Forum Posts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a discussion forum beginning week 1 – through week # 13. I will lead the discussion by posting a topic related to the concepts and weekly reading(s) or assigned documentary/movie. • You should demonstrate engagement with course readings by your own contribution through this participation /discussion forum. • You will satisfy the discussion if you first post your own thoughts about the subject then respond to the viewpoints of other classmates. Your contribution will be rated according to the content, critical thinking and concept application based on the criteria outlined in the grading rubric. All discussion postings (initial and response to classmates) will be graded on a 5-point scale, 5 being excellent (Total of 10 points). To earn possible full points, you will need follow the instructions and grading rubric and submit your post on time. • Through these online discussions, you will have the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of another person's perspective on the subject matter being discussed for that specific week. 	5%

<p>Review of Current Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are expected to be familiar with current events for the region related to the topics being discussed. Students are encouraged to check out world news such as The New York Times; The Washington Post; The Christian Science Monitor; The Wall Street Journal; The Christian Science Monitor; The Financial Times; The International Herald Tribune; The BBC; The Guardian; al Arabiya; al Jazeera among many other news outlets. • Students are then expected to evaluate the news source critically by asking additional questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What news stories tend to dominate the headlines? Who is the intended audience of the source? Are the sources bias in reporting? Give evidence. Are there any other sources that might be read to complement your news source to gain a balanced perspective on issues in the region? Are there any implications that you foresee for such kind of writing or reporting? 	5%
<p>Exams [% will vary see below]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be three non-cumulative, <i>closed book</i>) for undergraduates and 2 Exams for graduate students (NO FINALS for Grads). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Each exam will contain objective (multiple-choice) and short-answer questions, Fill-in the blank questions for GGS 325 students. Grad Students will take short-answer and essay type questions.</i> ○ EXAM I [10%]; EXAM II [15%]; FINLA EXAM 25% - GGS 325 Students ○ EXAM I [10%] EXAM II [15%] GGS 518 Students Only 	
<p>Selected end of Chapter Quizzes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some of the Chapters will be selected for formative assessment. Quizzes are designed to ensure that students have read and understood the readings, practice and prepare you for exams, and help you revise the key points from the chapter. ○ The quizzes will focus on the material only from that chapter. A chapter Quiz will open at 12:01 am each Monday and will close at 11:59 pm the following Sunday. ○ You will get only one attempt for each chapter Quiz. ○ Plan your time accordingly since there is no option for make-up. Once the quiz is closed, it is closed for that week and for the rest of the semester. 	10%
<p>Project Presentation for GGS 323 Students Only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Profile Research Project – you will demonstrate your understanding and application of key concepts discussed in this course. Country Profile Research Paper that is presented as a recitation of encyclopedic facts will get a zero grade. You will choose your topic that relates to the general discussion of that country's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Population Geography ○ Cultural Geography ○ Economic Geography ○ Urban/Environmental Geography 	10%
<p>Project Research Paper for Graduate Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate students will demonstrate their writing skills through a research paper. Research paper will address any topic dealing with domestic political issues in MENA or any issue that has been discussed in class and the student would like to extensively expand beyond the readings and the textbook. Detailed info will be posted through the Blackboard. The research paper will have 12-15 pages with 10 peer-reviewed articles; double-spacing in APA format. 	25%
<p>Project Presentation for Graduate Students</p>	10%

Grades will be assigned based on the distribution scheme below

Range	Letter Grade	Grade description	Range	Letter Grade	Grade description
93 - 100	A	Excellent	77 - 79	C+	Above satisfactory
90 - 92	A-	Very Good	70 - 76	C	Unsatisfactory
87 - 89	B+	Good with merit	60 - 69	D	Unsatisfactory
83 - 86	B	Good	<60	F	Failure
80 - 82	B-	Above satisfactory			

All students are expected to:

- Review the course material and follow the course calendar.
- Work at full pace to avoid missing class activities.
- Be active participants in discussion forum throughout the course period.
- Communicate with you instructor to ask for help or clarification of an assignment or class activities.
- Respect the privacy of other classmates and the instructor in this virtual classroom.
- Re-read your responses in the discussion forum carefully before postings them.
- Express differences of opinion in a polite and sensible way.
- Keep an open mind to the constructive criticism from classmates and use it to improve your work.
 - We are in this class to share information and learning from each other.
 - By sharing and discussing each other's ideas, you will be able to examine your own thoughts and feelings hence, making the course interesting and enjoyable!
- Use good grammar and spelling in all your assignments and discussions.
- Write your message in formal language

Academic Integrity

George Mason University operates under an honor system, which is published in the University Catalog and deals specifically with cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. You are therefore expected to take this course in adherence to GMU and Department standards for Academic Integrity. Please familiarize yourself with the honor code, especially the statement on plagiarism (<http://www.gmu.edu/org/honorcouncil/guidelines.htm>). I will respond to acts of academic misconduct according to university policy concerning plagiarism. In such cases Plagiarism will result in a failing grade of the assignment in question and/or for the course.

Plagiarism and the Honor Code

It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades: To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University Community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this Honor Code: Student Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at <http://oai.gmu.edu>.

Plagiarism checking services

To guard against plagiarism, written work will be checked against existing published materials. Accordingly, all materials for this course are required to be submitted electronically through Blackboard. Frequently used plagiarism detection services include: SafeAssign. If you have any questions about identifying possible plagiarism in your own work, including proper referencing practice, contact the University Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/> or your Instructor.

Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474.

GMU Nondiscrimination Policy:

George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, pregnancy status, or genetic information. George Mason University shall adhere to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing cde@gmu.edu.

Student Support Services

George Mason University has several academic support and other resources to facilitate your success. Some of these resources are presented below:

- i. Counseling and Psychological Services: <http://caps.gmu.edu/>
- ii. Learning Services, University Career Services: <http://careers.gmu.edu/>
- iii. The Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- iv. University Catalog: <http://catalog.gmu.edu/>
- v. University Policies: <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>

Withdraw from a course

If for some reasons you decide not to continue with this course, students should follow the official GMU procedures and policies of course withdraw. By informing the instructor your intention to withdraw from the course or by just stop attending - “NOT SUFFICIENT” for GMU to accept the withdraw from the course. If your name still appears on the official roster for the class and you have earned a “0” grade, you will get “F” as your final grade.

Course Calendar: *Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.*

Tentative Course Calendar | Weekly Schedule

Week #	Module Description Assignments
MODULE 0: Class Introduction and Familiarization	
Week 0 (Aug 16 – Aug 23)	
Self-introduction	Self-Introduction
Syllabus/Blackboard	Course Familiarization [i.e. Check Blackboard, Syllabus, interact with classmates prior to the start of the semester)
MODULE I: Introduction to the Middle East and North Africa	
Week 1 (Aug 24 – Aug 30)	
Readings	Chapter 1
Discussion	Participation Forum #1
Assignment	Map Quiz #1
MODULE II: Topography & Landforms	
Week 2 (Aug 31 – Sept 6)	
Readings	Chapter 2
Discussion	Participation Forum #2
Assignment	Reflection # 1 End of Chapter Quiz 1
MODULE III: Patterns of Time: Historical-Geographical Foundations	
Week 3 (Sept.7 – Sept. 13)	
Readings	Chapter 3
Assignment	News Events Map Quiz #2 Research Topic
MODULE IV: Patterns of Peoples, Cultures, and Settlements	
Week 4 (Sept 14 – Sept.20)	
Readings	Chapter 4
Assignment	Reflection # 2
EXAM	Exam I
MODULE V: Land Use and Agriculture	
Week 5 (Sept 21 – Sept 27)	
Readings	Chapter 5
Discussion	Participation Forum #3
Assignment	News Events End of Chapter Quiz 2
MODULE VI: Water Issues & Conflict	
Week 6 (Sept 23 – Oct 4)	
Readings	Chapter 2 & 5 and Articles via the Blackboard
Assignment	Reflection # 3 Map Quiz #3
MODULE VII: Political Economy of Oil	
Week 7 (Oct. 5 Oct. 11)	
Readings	Chapter 6
Assignment	News Events
Exam	Mid-Term Exam

Week #	Module Description Assignments
MODULE VIII: Economics of MENA Part II	
Week 8 (Oct. 12 Oct. 18)	
Readings	Chapter 7
Discussion	Participation Forum #4
Assignment	Reflection # 4 Map Exercise #4
MODULE IX: Geopolitics & International Relations Issues Arab Spring –Democratization	
Week 9 (Oct. 19 - Oct. 25)	
Readings	Chapter 7
Assignment	News Events End of Chapter Quiz 3
MODULE X: Geopolitics	
Week 10 (Oct. 26 – Nov 1)	
Readings	Chapter 8
Assignment	Reflection #5
MODULE XI: The Arab-Israeli Problem	
Week 11 (Nov. 2 – Nov 8)	
Readings	Chapter 9
Discussion	Participation Forum #6
Assignment	News Events End of Chapter Quiz 4
MODULE XII: The Role of Women	
Week 12 (Nov 9 – Nov 15)	
Readings	Articles via the Blackboard
Discussion	Participation Forum #7
Assignment	Reflection # 6 Draft – Research Paper for Graduate Students
MODULE XIII: Issue Briefing: The Syrian Crisis and Refugees	
Week 13 (Nov 16 – Nov 22)	
Readings	Chapter 10
Discussion	Participation Forum #7
Assignment	End of Chapter Quiz 5 Peer-Review
MODULE XIII: Issue Briefing: Lebanon and Cyprus	
Week 14 (Nov 23 – Nov 24)	
Readings	Chapter 11 Watch a Documentary
<i>Thanksgiving Recess Nov 25 – Nov 29 No Classes</i>	
MODULE XIII: Issue Briefing - Jordan and Iraq	
Week 15 (Nov 30 – Dec 6)	
Readings	Chapter 12 and Documentary Video via the Blackboard
Presentation	Post your recorded PowerPoint
Research Paper	Final Paper for Graduate Students 12/6
Week 16	Final Exam for GGS 325 Students Only - Dec 9-11

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