This course analyzes the international relations of the Middle East from a historical, theoretical, and contemporary perspective. We will examine different theoretical approaches to the Middle East, the history of the region – the formation of the Middle East state system, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arab Cold war, and especially the rise of political Islam – and the current role of Iran, Iraq, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the region, the topics of terrorism and nuclear proliferation, and American policy towards the region.

Some of the questions we will consider are as follows: How has the formation of the Middle East state system affected its later development? Why has the system been so durable? What have been the interests of outside powers in the region? What effect have they had on the region and how has their role changed over time? What has been the role of transnational ideologies and identities in the international relations of the region? Which international relations theories best captures the dynamics of the Middle East, especially why it has been so conflict prone? Is the wave of political Islam receding? What should be the current American policy towards the region, specifically towards Iran, Iraq, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict?

The outline of the course is chronological. One goal of the course is to ground students in the history of the region, as well as the contemporary affairs. But we will also explore (especially in class discussions) how broader conceptual and theoretical issues enlighten events and vice versa.

**Reading**

There are three books to purchase:

1. Bickerton and Klausner, *A History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 6th Edition. (If you purchase the 4th or 5th editions you need to get a hold of the later chapters you are missing)

The rest of the reading material will be posted on the course website.

Note: The reading for this course is demanding, especially given the fast pace of the summer session. It is essential to keep up to date with the assigned reading. The quizzes
are meant to incentivize this behavior. If you are not interested in reading a lot, this is not the course for you.

Assessment

Quizzes (20%): There will be four relatively short in-class quizzes. These will consist of basic questions from the reading.

Position Papers/Debate (25%):

In the sixth and seventh weeks we will debate five issues:

1. Iraq war of 2003
2. Iranian nuclear weapons acquisition
3. Israeli-Palestinian conflict
4. US relationship with Israel
5. The Islamist movements and US counterterrorism policy

Each debate will have two sides. You will sign up for one side in one debate, and as a part of a group of two or three, you will be responsible for defending that position. (As an intellectual exercise, if you have strong views on these matters I suggest you pick the side opposing your own.) Your group will draft a (roughly) five-page paper outlining your position. Three days before we have the debate your group will email your paper to the opposing group and me. Having received the opposing group’s paper, your group will work on a rebuttal.

In class each group will have 15 minutes to present their position and 7 minutes for rebuttal following the opposing presentation. Then we will open it to class discussion. The presentation and papers will be 19% of your course grade. On the days you are not presenting, you must write a one page reaction piece that articulates your position in the debate, which you will hand in the following class period. This will be worth 6% of your grade. I will provide more explicit guidelines for this project in class.

Final (55%): The final exam will cover material from the readings and lectures. The exam will be in the testing center.

Tentative Course Outline

June 21: Introduction to the Course and Region

June 23: Theories of the International Relations of the Middle East

(skim these articles to get the gist of the arguments – we will be returning to them later)
Barnett, “Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Regional Order in Arab Politics”

Miller, “The Balance of Power or the State-to-Nation Balance: Explaining Middle East War-Propensity”

Stolingen, “Pax Asiatica verses Bella Levantina: The foundations of War and Peace in East Asia and the Middle East”

June 23-25: **The Formation of the Modern Middle East**

Rogan, “The Emergence of the Middle East into the Modern State System”

Halliday, “The Modern Middle East: State Formation and World War”

Bickerton and Klausner, *History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pg 1-63

June 28-30: **The Cold War, the Arab Cold War, and the Arab Israeli Conflict**


Gasiorowski, “U.S. Foreign Policy Toward Iran during the Mussadiq Era”

Painter, “Oil, Resources, and the Cold War, 1945-1962”

Mufti, “The US and Nasserist Pan-Arabism”


July 2: **1967 Six Day War**


July 7-9: **Isolation of Egypt and the Emergence of the Gulf**


Gause, *International Relations of the Persian Gulf*, pg 16-44

July 12-16: **The Islamic Revival**


Piscatoro, *Islam in a World of Nation States*, pg 22-39

July 19-21: **American Primacy in the post-Cold War: Gulf Conflict, Peace Process, and Political Islam**

Gause, *International Relations of the Persian Gulf*, pg 88-148

Bickerton and Klausner, *History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 218-332


July 26: **2003 Iraq War and Aftermath**

Gause, *International Relations of the Persian Gulf*, pg 148-240

July 28-30 **Developments in Iran and the Politics of Proliferation**


Sadjadpour, “Reading Khomeini: The World View of Iran’s Most Powerful Leader”

Sagan and Waltz, “A Nuclear Iran: Promoting Stability or Courting Disaster?”

August 2: **Israeli Palestinian Conflict**

Bickerton and Klausner, *History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pg 333-400

August 4: **US relations with Israel**

Mearsheimer and Walt, “The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy”

Mead, “Jerusalem Syndrome: Decoding the Israel Lobby”
Goldberg, “The Usual Suspect”

Bickerton and Klausner, *History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pg 214-216

**August 6: Islamism and US Counterterrorism Policy**

Lewis, “The Roots of Muslim Rage” and “What Went Wrong”

Kepel, *Jihad: The Trial of Political Islam*, pg 361-376

Gause, “Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?”

Dunne, “The Baby, the Bathwater, and the Freedom Agenda in the Middle East”

Betts, “The Soft Underbelly of American Primacy”

**August 9: Review**

(Final Exam will be in the Testing Center)

**Appendix**

Learning Outcomes:
This course is specifically applicable to a number of the learning outcomes of the Political Science major. For information on the goals of a political science education, see: [http://fhssadv.byu.edu/Advisement/polisci1.dhtml](http://fhssadv.byu.edu/Advisement/polisci1.dhtml)

Plagiarism:

While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty are found at [http://honorcode.byu.edu/content/academic-honesty-details](http://honorcode.byu.edu/content/academic-honesty-details).

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.
The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

Discrimination:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Opportunities Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Disabilities:

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.