

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
POLITICAL SCIENCE 365.01§
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST
FALL 2022

Instructor: Dr./Professor Dan Brown (He/Him/His)

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Virtual Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 2:00 – 4:00 by appointment on Zoom. Must make an appointment here: <https://calendly.com/danbrownphd>

CATALOG DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to provide an understanding of the places the Middle East has occupied in international relations over time and it seeks to pose competing explanations for why the region has occupied those spaces and roles in world politics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

In this course, students will be provided with a structured approach to the study of the Middle East and North Africa in the subfield of International Relations. Students can expect to encounter the primary theoretical frameworks (realism, liberalism, and constructivism) of International Relations and their application to the study of the foreign and domestic policies of state and nonstate actors in the region. The lasting legacies of European colonialism that continue to shape the prerogatives and possibilities in the region, the influence of resource wealth, identity, and ideology, and the interplay between regional and global power centers will be examined from the perspective of international relations. How the region presents a challenge for traditional area studies as and IR scholars will be a recurring feature in the course.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will gain a stronger and more informed perspective on where the region called the “Middle East” has fit into the dynamics of contemporary international relations
- Students will emerge with a stronger foundation in international relations theory and appreciate how different theories posit explanations for the events and interactions states in this region have had with the rest of the world
- Students will learn how to apply theories of international relations and/or foreign policy to an issue related to the region’s international relations of particular interest to them
- Students will develop effective, concise writing and critical analysis skills

REQUIRED TEXT(S):

The following materials are required for this course. Paperback and Ebook versions for each are available and are equally acceptable. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you’re having trouble finding a copy of the book.

§ **MODIFICATIONS TO COURSE OR SYLLABUS:** This syllabus is a very broad outline for the course. Its purpose is to let you know what is expected and how to be successful in the course. It represents a contractual arrangement between instructor and student to accomplish our educational objectives. The instructor retains the right to modify the course materials and this syllabus as required to better attain course expectations. Remaining in this course constitutes tacit consent of the contractual obligations set forth within the syllabus and/or the classroom.

[Hinnebusch, R. A., & Ehteshami, A., Eds. \(2014\). *The foreign policies of Middle East states* \(2nd ed.\). Lynne Rienner.](#)

This course relies heavily on both text and audio-visual and interactive resources. I will provide access to resources online at the course's OAKS webpage. Please see the course schedule at the end of the syllabus for when you should read the book chapters and additional articles. Other resources to be used in the class will be announced as necessary throughout the semester. Please keep a close eye on OAKS for updated readings.

Required Software

- You should make use of the free grammar and spellchecking capabilities both on word processing programs (Word, LibreOffice, GoogleDocs, etc) and [Grammarly](#).
 - If you turn in a written assignment that clearly has not been spelling and grammar-checked and/or has serious deficiencies in citations and quotations, I will return it to you ungraded until the problems are fixed.

You should also make your life easier by using a reference management software. The following are free (or come with free-versions), open-source, and have browser plug-ins or desktop software.

- [Zotero](#)
- [Mendeley](#)

CURRENT EVENTS:

The Middle East is a highly dynamic region. Students are highly encouraged, though not required, to follow day-to-day regional events and analysis throughout the semester. The following sources are indispensable:

- *Al-Monitor* <https://www.al-monitor.com/>
 - Sign up for at least the "Security Briefing" newsletter at <https://www.al-monitor.com/newsletter/subscribe>
- For more detailed analysis from leading experts, the *Jadaliyya* ("dialectics") ezine: <http://www.jadaliyya.com/>
- BBC Middle East and North Africa Page: http://www.bbc.com/news/world/middle_east/
- New York Times Middle East page: <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>
- Al-Jazeera English Middle East & North Africa page: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/>
- *Foreign Policy* Magazine Middle East Channel: <http://foreignpolicy.com/channel/middle-east-africa/>
- *Foreign Affairs* Middle East page: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/regions/Middle%20East>
- *Middle East Research and Information Project* (MERIP): <http://www.merip.org/>
- *Sada* – صدی ("Echo") – Middle East Analysis from The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: <http://carnegieendowment.org/sada?lang=en>

NOTE: Unfortunately, there is a wide array of misinformation and disinformation about the Middle East out there. Many think tanks and their research output are funded by Israel (Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP)) and countries in the Gulf (Middle East Institute) and often influenced by those regimes' prerogatives. These think tanks can put out good material, but sometimes show distinct bias. The usual caveat about always checking sources is doubly the case when studying the Middle East. When in doubt,

please ask the instructor about a source. If you're using a clearly biased source, rest assured I will let you know.

COURSE CONTENT & ETIQUETTE NOTE - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

POTENTIALLY DISTURBING CONTENT

The history and politics of the Middle East are contentious topics. At times in this course we will be reading, watching, and discussing historical events or political themes and topics that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, I would be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with me individually, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork.

The reality is that the Middle East is in a period of volatile (occasionally violent) upheaval and dramatic sociopolitical and economic flux. This reality is unavoidable in the study of the history and politics of the region. Turning away from violence and injustice is a privilege that we frequently overlook or downplay in "the West". The human beings living in the countries and societies we will study often do not have that same luxury. I consider it a central part of your job as students in this class and certainly a part of my job as an expert, to not look away. Nevertheless, if you ever feel the need to take a break during a class discussion or put off a discussion or assignment you may always do so without academic penalty. If you decide to do so, the default expectation is that you will make up the material later, as soon as possible or we will work together to find a suitable substitute. As always, you will be responsible for any material you miss.

ETIQUETTE

Your actions in the virtual "classroom" should take others into consideration. A major part of this course involves interaction amongst each other through discussions. Particularly in view of our social-media dominated, so-called "post-truth" world, the following is particularly important to understand.

If nowhere else, students will engage with difficult topics and respect differing opinions and the lived experiences and diversity of their fellow human beings in my classroom.

Middle East politics can be a contentious or controversial topic. I encourage spirited debate and discussion on the forums and do not believe that any substantive and serious speech should be censored without legitimate cause. I assume that this course can be conducted in the spirit of full academic freedom with civility and courtesy. Any member of this course may express any serious idea, point of view, and/or partake in a serious learning environment without disrespect. But this is not a comment thread on Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter. Explicitly racist, sexist, ethnocentric, and other rude behavior are not acceptable in the classroom. And, no, a loophole in this policy is not "serious" expressions of racism/ethnocentrism/sexism. Students who exhibit rude and/or unacceptable behavior will be removed by the instructor, to be reinstated only after meeting with the instructor to discuss and amend their inappropriate behavior.

I likewise do not censor legitimate and good-faith criticism of any state, people, conflict, etc. If you suspect you may be unable to entertain or engage in academic criticism of the United States, Israel, or any other state, individual, or their policies, I do not recommend remaining in this course.

TLDR: Avoid language that can be misconstrued as or is explicitly offensive. Discussion forums are not internet comment sections. I do not engage in censorship of serious, substantive, scholarly debate or exchange of such ideas, but I will police non-sequiturs, non-germane, offensive, or other negative commentary in discussions.

***The “Unforgivable Transgression”** If, at any point, I discover that any of you have purchased or – worse yet – consumed inventive “artisanal” hummus, including but not limited to the following, I will give you an immediate and highly judgmental ‘F’ for the course.[§] If you’ve read this far, you should email me to confess.*

- “Brownie Batter Hummus”
- “Vanilla Bean Hummus”
- “Buffalo”/ “Buffalo Wing Hummus”

COURSE REQUIREMENT AND GRADING POLICY

Students will be evaluated based on their performance on

- Quizzes & Exams (40% of total grade)
 - 1 Map Quiz
 - 1 Midterm Exam
 - 1 Final exam (non-comprehensive)
- 11 Flipgrid video discussion assignments and associated responses (20% with the lowest dropped), and
- An individual research project focused on a country and/or issue and how it affects the international relations of the region. (40% of total grade). This is comprised of 4 components distributed throughout the semester.

Though not graded, participation is desired and highly encouraged. Detailed guidelines and rubrics for assignments will be provided on OAKS.

OAKS, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted. OAKS is the College of Charleston’s learning management system. To access OAKS go to <http://my.cofc.edu> and login to My Charleston. The OAKS icon is the acorn located in the upper righthand corner of the screen.

GRADING COMPONENTS	
Component/Deliverable	Weight
Quizzes and Exams	40%
Flipgrid Discussions	20%
Country/Issue Project	40%
TOTAL	100%

Quick Reference Assignment and Quiz Schedule

[§] This is a joke, of course, but I will never let you live it down.

- Flipgrid #1 Due 11:59 PM, September 2
- Map Quiz Due 11:59 PM, September 9
- **Country/Issue Proposal Due 11:59 PM, September 15**
- Flipgrid # 2 Due 11:59 PM September 16
- Flipgrid # 3 Due 11:59 PM, September 23
- Flipgrid # 4 Due 11:59 PM September 30
- Flipgrid # 5 Due 11:59 PM October 7
- **Midterm Exam Due 11:59 PM, October 11 (Opens October 4)**
- **Country/Issue Submission 1 Due 11:59 PM, October 13**
- Flipgrid # 6 Due 11:59 PM October 14
- Flipgrid # 7 Due 11:59 PM October 28
- Flipgrid # 8 Due 11:59 PM November 4
- **Country/Issue Submission 2 Due 11:59 PM, November 10**
- Flipgrid # 9 Due 11:59 PM November 11
- Flipgrid # 10 Due 11:59 PM November 18
- **Country/Issue Submission Final Draft Due 11:59 PM, December 1**
- Flipgrid # 11 Due 11:59 PM, December 2
- **Final Exam Due 11:59 PM Thursday, December 8**

No early exams will be given. Make-up exams are allowed only in cases of documented emergencies. **Documentation for an absence and resulting missed exam is due within one day of the absence and prior to the make-up exam. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to make up an exam.** If you do not notify me prior to the scheduled exam period that you will not make it to the exam, you may not be able to make up the exam. Even an email or call prior to the exam is sufficient, if you present documentation to legitimize the absence prior to sitting for the make-up exam.

GRADE SCHEME

- For ease and speed of grading, Flipgrid assignments will be given a grade of either 100 (superior work), 90 (excellent work with few errors), 80 (a good-faith effort with some errors), 70 (little effort and/or several errors), 60 (insufficient effort and/or numerous errors).
- A 0/100 will be given only if the work is plagiarized or demonstrates a concerted failure to do the work.

GRADING SCALE

A	93 - 100	A-	90 - 92	B+	88 - 89	B	83 - 87
B-	80 - 82	C+	78 - 79	C	73 - 77	C-	70 - 72
D+	68 - 69	D	63 - 67	D-	60 - 62	F	Below 60

COURSE FORMAT:

At time of writing, this course is expected to be delivered and meet in-person. I will record and post a recording of each Zoom lecture for those who cannot or choose not to attend. If any of that changes due to unforeseen circumstances, I will announce those changes via email.

Recording of Classes (via ZOOM)

Class sessions will be recorded via both audio and video recording. By attending and remaining in this class, the student consents to being recorded. Recorded class sessions are for instructional use only and may not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class.

TECHNOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 1) A computer with Internet access, sound card, microphone, and speakers. You must have a reliable Internet connection. Having to rely on the public library or Starbucks, for example, will likely make it challenging to have a consistent presence inside OAKS. If you are concerned, please contact me within the first week so we can discuss how to make this course manageable for you.
- 2) OAKS, VoiceThread and Zoom proficiency. This course is administered through OAKS, so students must have a thorough working knowledge of the platform. Please spend some time educating yourself about its organization and use. Tutorials are available here: <http://blogs.cofc.edu/oaks/students/tutorials/>

EMAIL & COMPUTERS:

Email and Me:

- All inquiries to me should be made via email or via the OAKS “FAQ” Discussion Board and I will make every effort to respond to email promptly. I check my email at least twice daily. You can expect a reply from me within 24 hours for emails received between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM on Monday through Friday.
- I do not check or answer emails on the weekends.

Email and You (at least in this course):

- **Please check your email at least once daily.** Most of us now carry the equivalent of supercomputers in our pockets; there is no excuse for not checking and receiving your email when you have a device in your pocket with more computing power than those that landed human beings on the moon. Note that **it is your responsibility to forward mail from your Gmail account to whichever account you check most frequently: Do this right away.**
- I will use email to communicate with you individually and collectively from time to time. Also, check the course OAKS page daily to download course content and other materials, and to see announcements or assignments. To say that you didn’t realize an assignment was due at a certain time because you did not check your email or did not receive my email is not a valid excuse. ***People have failed my course before because they didn’t check their email every day. Don’t be one of these people.***
- **It is likewise your responsibility to ensure that you have a working computer and internet connection.** There should be enough flexibility built into the course to deal with any unforeseen circumstances and problems that may occur, but make sure you have a backup plan. Note that “My computer crashed” = “My dog ate my homework.”

FURTHER POLICIES OF INTEREST

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply for services at the [Center for Disability Services/SNAP](#) located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for

notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed.

ACCOMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

The College of Charleston community is enriched by students of many faiths that have various religious observances, practices, and beliefs. We value student rights and freedoms, including the right of each student to adhere to individual systems of religion. The College prohibits discrimination against any student because of such student's religious belief or any absence thereof.

The College acknowledges that religious practices differ from tradition to tradition and that the demands of religious observances in some traditions may cause conflicts with student schedules. In affirming this diversity, like many other colleges and universities, the College supports the concept of "reasonable accommodation for religious observance" in regard to class attendance, and the scheduling of examinations and other academic work requirements, unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship on the College. Faculty are required, as part of their responsibility to students and the College, to ascribe to this policy and to ensure its fair and full implementation.

The accommodation request imposes responsibilities and obligations on both the individual requesting the accommodation and the College. Faculty members are expected to reasonably accommodate individual religious practices. Examples of reasonable accommodations for student absences might include: rescheduling of an exam or giving a make-up exam for the student in question; altering the time of a student's presentation; allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work or arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment dates. Regardless of any accommodation that may be granted, students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives, requirements and prerequisites as defined by the instructor and by the College.

2022 – 2023 Religious Holidays¹

September 26 – October 4, 2022	Navratri	Hindu	
September 26 – September 27, 2022	Rosh Hashanah ²	Jewish	
October 4 – October 5, 2022	Yom Kippur ²	Jewish	
October 10 – October 16, 2022	Sukkot ²	Jewish	
October 17 – October 18, 2022	Shemini Atzeret ²	Jewish	
October 24, 2022	Diwali	Hindu	
February 22, 2023	Ash Wednesday (Beginning of Lent)	Christian	
February 27, 2023	Eastern Orthodox (Beginning of Lent)	Orthodox Christian	
March 21, 2023	Naw-Rúz	Baha'i	
March 23 – April 20, 2023	Ramadan	Muslim	
April 6 – April 13, 2023	Passover ²	Jewish	
April 7, 2023	Good Friday	Christian	
April 14, 2023	Good Friday (Orthodox) ³	Orthodox Christian	
April 21 – 22, 2023	Eid al – Fitr	Islamic	

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

In an ideal world, science would be objective. However, much of science is subjective and is historically built on a small subset of privileged voices. In this class, we will make an effort to read works from a diverse group of scholars but limits still exist on this diversity. I acknowledge that it is possible that there may be both overt and covert biases in the material due to the lens with which it was written, even though the material is primarily of a scientific or social scientific nature. Integrating a diverse set of experiences is important for a more comprehensive understanding of social science. I may choose to discuss issues of diversity in political science as part of the course from time to time.

Please contact me (in person or electronically) or submit anonymous feedback if you have any suggestions to improve the quality of the course materials.

Furthermore, I would like to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) To help accomplish this:

- If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official CofC records, please let me know.
- If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you. Remember that you can also submit anonymous feedback (which will lead to me making a general announcement to the class, if necessary, to address your concerns). If you prefer to speak with someone outside of the course, the [Office of Institutional Diversity](#) is an excellent resource.
- I (like many people) am still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to me about it. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option.)
- As a participant in course discussions, you should also strive to honor the diversity of your classmates.

HONOR CODE & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

<http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/honor-system/pdf/honor-code-sample-language-for-syllabi.pdf>

“Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed both by the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student's file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student's transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>.”

ATTENDANCE VERIFICATION

Only students officially registered (graded or auditing) for this course may attend class. During the week following the drop/add deadline, the professor will verify student enrollments in this course. Any student appearing on the class roll but determined not to have attended the class even once will be removed.

MENTAL & PHYSICAL WELLBEING:

At the college, we take every students' mental and physical wellbeing seriously. If you find yourself experiencing physical illnesses, please reach out to student health services (843.953.5520). And if you find yourself experiencing any mental health challenges (for example, anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, and/or loneliness/homesickness) please consider contacting either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at <http://counseling.cofc.edu> or 843.953.5640 3rd Robert Scott Small Building) or the Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting "4support" to 839863, visit <http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php>, or meet with them in person 3rd Floor Stern Center). These services are there for you to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

FOOD & HOUSING RESOURCES:

Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support (<http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php>). Also, you can go to <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php> to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2nd floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need. Please also consider reaching out to me if you are comfortable in doing so.

INCLEMENT WEATHER, ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE, ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND, PANDEMIC, OR OTHER SUBSTANTIAL INTERRUPTION OF INSTRUCTION INCLUDING BILL MURRAY CRASHING CLASS MEETINGS

If in-person classes are suspended, faculty will announce to their students a detailed plan for a change in modality to ensure the continuity of learning. All students must have access to a computer equipped with a web camera, microphone, and Internet access. Resources are available to provide students with these essential tools.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late work is severely discouraged and will be penalized after a short grace period of 24 hours past a due date. Work that is turned in after the due date and grace period have expired will lose five points off the total automatically (i.e. a paper with a numerical grade of 75 becomes a 70) and an additional five points will be deleted for every subsequent extra day. Work is considered late (and the clock begins ticking) if it is not handed in within 24 hours of the due date listed in the syllabus/on OAKS. Students with documented, legitimate emergencies should make arrangements

with me. Note that it is your responsibility to contact me if you foresee or experience a problem that will affect an assignment. When in doubt, please reach out! I cannot help you if I do not know you're in need of help!

PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS

As a professor, my primary obligation is always to my students. However, working at academic institutions such as the College of Charleston, we are expected to engage in scholarly research in our fields of expertise and engage in the academic exchange of ideas by sharing this research with other scholars. This is an important obligation that the College takes very seriously, and which will occasionally require me to grade assignments slower than you'd probably prefer to work on my own research and attend academic conferences. I have tried to plan the class schedule around these obligations, but at times my absence or indisposition will be inevitable. I therefore ask for your understanding during times I'm devoted to fulfillment of these obligations.

LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST:

I believe learning is a collaborative enterprise. I learn by teaching you, just as you learn by being taught and testing that knowledge in dialogue with the rest of us in the class. But as a professor, I can be no more than a resource. Whether you effectively learn and grow intellectually through this course depends, ultimately, on your own commitment and efforts. My goal in this class is to provide you with a structure that can help you direct your own learning and to tell you what I've learned. Everything else is up to you.

Course Schedule

NOTE: This is a highly simplified schedule for the course. Please defer to the course OAKS page for details on assignments and readings/media.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
Tues., Aug. 23	Introduction/Syllabus
Aug. 25-30	Theoretical Baselines
Sept. 1-6	MENA and the Regional Power System
Sept. 8-13	The Middle East, the Cold War, and the Great Powers
Sept. 20-22	Pole in the <i>Maghreb</i> : Egypt as Rising and Falling Regional Hegemon
Sept. 27-29	The Gulf and the Iraq Wars: Destabilizing the Center
October 6-11	Saudi Arabia as Regional Hegemon, Oil, and the United States
Oct. 13-18	Regional Triggerpoint: The Arab-Israeli Conflict
October 20-25	Epicenters and Aftershocks: The Arab Uprisings of 2010 – ????

October 27-November 1	Intrastate, Proxy, and Regional: The Syrian War
November 3-10	Gulf Security and the (Re)Emergence of Small States
November 15-22	Israel, the Rapprochement of the Abraham Accords, and the “Threat” of Iran
November 29-December 6	The Dangerous Vacuum in the Levant: Weak States, Failed States(?), and the Emergence of <i>Da’esh</i>
Thursday, December 8	Final Exam Due 11:59 PM

