ECON 4733 Economic Development in the Middle East

Instructor: Firat Demir
Office: Cate Center 1, Room 436; Office Hours: TR 10:30-11:30, Tel. 325-5844, E-mail: fdemir@ou.edu
Class time: TR 09:00-10:15 am. Cate Center 0174

1. Course Objective
This course is an introduction to the existing debates on comparative economic development in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region during the post-independence period. The main objective of the course is to provide the students with a solid background in economic, institutional and historical issues and challenges that have shaped the development trajectories of the MENA countries. Some of the questions that will be addressed include the following: a) What are the sources of current economic challenges in the region including historical, institutional, geographical, and cultural factors? b) How can we reconcile the existence of massive natural resources with the high levels of poverty and underdevelopment throughout the region? c) What is the role of economic globalization in determining the future development paths of countries in the region? d) What are the causes and effects of Arab uprisings?

2. Course Structure
The course is designed around lectures, assigned readings, group work and class discussions and will be conducted in a format closer to that of a seminar. The students are expected to come to each class after having read the assigned readings, and to participate in class discussions. The topics covered in the lectures will overlap the materials found in the readings. However, the lectures and discussions will, on occasion, cover some materials that are not found in the assigned readings. Students will be responsible on examinations for ALL ASSIGNED MATERIALS. All assigned readings, except those from the textbook, are available from Canvas.

Note that all lecture notes and slides are made available in Canvas to allow for more discussion time in class. The lecture notes and slides are NOT substitutes but complements to assigned readings. The seminar format is intended to allow students more time to discuss their own ideas and reflections. Therefore, you are encouraged and expected to question and debate with me and with each other on various topics we cover. This MUST be done in a productive, thoughtful, civil and respective manner. Personal attacks, offensive actions and polemics will not be tolerated.

As a part of your participation, you will also be expected to keep up on developments in the Middle East and to be generally well-informed about what’s going on in the world.

3. Course Requirements
The final grade will be based on your performance from: a) one midterm (25%) and a final exam (25); b) a (3,000-5,000 word) research paper (20%); c) group work (15%), d) quizzes and class participation (15%).

4. Group Work
To analyze problem areas in the Middle East economic development, the students will be divided into groups of 3-4 members for an Oxford style debate. Each group will be charged with the task of a collaborative project involving a choice of hypotheses and your grade score will be strictly collective. Your grade will be determined based on peer evaluations and professor’s observations. Because this is a collaborative exercise, all group members are responsible for the whole project and I will put emphasis on the demonstration of consistent effort by all group members. The assignment will have two parts, an in-class debate and a written report. The in-class presentation will be limited to two minutes for each team member, followed by 10 mnts of questions from the audience.

Together with the in-class debate, each group will submit a policy analysis report: a Word document not more than 10 pages in length (double space, 12-size font), and a PowerPoint presentation, addressing the key questions discussed. The debate and its written report must include primary and secondary qualitative and
quantitative data to support your arguments. We need two groups for each topic, one supporting and one opposing. Possible debate topics include the following:

1. Instead of using industrial policy and/or protectionism, MENA countries need to integrate more fully to the world economy to achieve economic development.
2. Colonial past and foreign interventions, rather than domestic policy failures, are the causes of most development problems in MENA.
3. Oil is responsible for the democracy deficit and economic underdevelopment in MENA.
4. Culture and institutions affect economic development, particularly so in MENA.
5. The US and the EU share responsibility to help resolve the refugee crisis in MENA.
6. Supporting democracy in the Middle East is a good idea.

The debates will take place in class on October 26 and 31st. The written part of the assignment is due in class on October 26th and need to be submitted in print and also online through Canvas. More details on the debate format will be provided in Canvas.

5. Research Paper

The research paper should be on a problem or issue in the historical or contemporary experience of a particular Middle Eastern country or alternatively, it could be comparative. It should be focused, analytic, reflect critical thinking of materials read and must be well-documented with complete references given (at least 10 sources). Internet material should be used with care and very sparingly (Wikipedia is not acceptable). The topic for the term paper must be approved by the instructor in advance. A 1-2 page proposal of your paper is due on September 7 and the final paper is due on November 30. Both the proposal and the final copy of your paper need to be submitted in print and online through Canvas. More details are provided at Canvas.

6. Policy on Make-up Exam

There is no make-up for the midterm exam. If you miss the exam because of a valid reason the weight of the final exam will be increased accordingly. Otherwise you will obtain a score equal to zero.

7. Textbook and Additional Readings

Required Text


Suggested Readings

8. Academic Ethics
Cheating on assignments and exams, or plagiarizing is penalized by the University of Oklahoma. A student found in such a situation will be given an F and be brought to University of Oklahoma Honor Council for further penalties as defined under Academic Misconduct. For further information, refer to http://www.ou.edu/honorcouncil/index.html

9. Students with Disabilities
Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. For details refer to http://drc.ou.edu/

10. Religious Holidays
“It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances.”

11. Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.5-100</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.5-79.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-97.49</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>72.5-77.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-94.49</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.5-89.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67.5-69.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.5-87.49</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>62.5-67.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.49</td>
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<td>60-62.49</td>
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<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
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Your final grade will follow the University of Oklahoma’s grading scale, that is A, B, C, D, and F without the intermediate grades on the left.

I reserve the right to adjust this schedule of grade equivalents in the student's favor.
12. Tentative Course Outline and Reading Assignments (* refers to optional readings)

1. Introduction
   a. The post WWII evolution of development thinking
      • Lecture Notes Part 1
      • Political Economy of the Middle East, Ch. 2 (pp. 36-37/Box 2.1).
   b. Middle East defined
   c. Overview and basic data

2. Historical Origins of the Modern Middle East
   • Owen and Pamuk, Introduction to Part 1.
   • Political Economy of the Middle East, Ch. 3.

3. Industrialization, State-led Development and the Logic of Developmental State
   • Lecture Notes Part 3
   • Political Economy of Middle East, Chs. 2 (pp.46-49), 7 (233-258).
   • Owen and Pamuk, Introduction to Part 2.
   • *Chang: Kicking Away the Ladder, Ch.2, pp.13-68.
   • *Bonine, M., Amanat, A., and Gasper, M. 2011. Is there a Middle East, Ch. 9

4. The End of Developmental State
   • Political Economy of Middle East, Chs. 2, 7 (258-271).

5. Neoliberalism in the Middle East
   • Political Economy of Middle East, Ch. 8 (273-287, 316-317).


Exam 1: October 12

6. Oil and the Price of Wealth

• Political Economy of Middle East, Ch. 2 (p.45), 9, *10.

• Owen, E.R. 2008. One Hundred Years of Middle Eastern Oil. Middle East Brief, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, Brandeis University.


7. Development Fault Lines

   a. Institutions

• Chang, Bad Samaritans, Ch. 9. pp. 167-188.


   b. Human capital, labor markets, gender and demographical challenges

• Political Economy of Middle East, Chs. 4-5.


  c. Environmental issues, food and water security

• Political Economy of Middle East, Ch. 6.


• Political Economy of Middle East, Chs. 1, 14.


Final Exam: December 15, 8:00 – 10:00 am.
### Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/22</td>
<td>1. Introduction 1a: Lecture notes 1</td>
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<td>8/24</td>
<td>Continued</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>Owen, R. 2006. “Ch.1.; Political Economy of the Middle East, Ch. 3.</td>
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<td>9/12</td>
<td>3. State-led Development and the Logic of Developmental State: Lecture notes 3; Political Economy of the Middle East, Chs. 2 (pp.46-49), 7 (233-258); Owen and Pamuk, Introduction to Part 2.</td>
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<td>9/28</td>
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<td>10/12</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>6. Oil and the Price of Wealth: Political Economy of Middle East, Ch. 2 (p.45), 9, *10. Owen, E.R. 2008. One Hundred Years of Middle Eastern Oil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/26</td>
<td>Group projects</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>10/31</td>
<td>Group projects</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11/2</td>
<td>7. Development fault lines, a: Institutions: Chang, Bad Samaritans, Ch. 9. pp. 167-188</td>
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<td>11/9</td>
<td>b: Human Capital, Labor Markets, Gender and Demographical Challenges: Political Economy of Middle East, Chs. 4-5.</td>
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<td>11/21</td>
<td>c: Environmental issues and Water: Political Economy of Middle East, Ch. 6</td>
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<td>11/23</td>
<td>Thanksgiving holiday</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>11/28</td>
<td>8. The Arab Uprisings: Political Economy of Middle East, Chs. 1, 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>12/15</td>
<td>Final exam, 8:00-10:00</td>
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