

History 366 801 - The Middle East Since Muhammad

Summer Online Sample Syllabus

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Course Goals and Class Format

People who live in the United States today tend to have many misconceptions about the Middle East and Muslims. The main goal of this course is to expand your knowledge of Middle Eastern history “from Muhammad to Mubarak.” However, to accomplish this you will also have to gain a general understanding about how some of our misconceptions originated. You will have to become familiar with the basic problems in the Western historiography of the Middle East.

In this course you will learn about Middle Eastern cultures, think critically, communicate effectively, and be encouraged to show respect for diversity among people.

This is a semester long course that is condensed into four weeks. You should expect to do a great deal of reading and writing.

History Department Learning Outcomes

This course addresses the following history department learning outcomes:

- Analyze diverse experiences of or viewpoints on past events or historical developments.
- Recognize both continuity and change over time and describe their consequences.
- Construct arguments that explain how history can inform the present.

Required Readings

Michael Cook, *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2000).

Michael Cook, *Muhammad* (Oxford, 1983).

Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islam: A Thousand Years of Faith and Power* (Yale, 2002).

al-Ghazali's Path to Sufism, trans. R.J. McCarthy (Fons Vitae, 2000).

James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford 2008).

Naguib Mahfouz, *Palace Walk* (Anchor, 1991).

Course Requirements

• Reading and Participation in Class Discussions

You must make an heroic effort to complete reading assignments in a timely manner and you must participate in online discussions as directed in D2L. Your discussion grade for each section of the course will be based on how well you use material assigned for the

course to support your answers, clarity of logic, and your ability to engage in productive d
If you have any questions while you are reading, please ask them.

• Quizzes

There will be quizzes on the readings as indicated in D2L. These quizzes are designed to make sure that you are keeping up with the reading and remembering the people, places, and ideas that are most important in Middle Eastern history.

• Papers

You will be required to submit papers as indicated on D2L. These will be essays in response to a question or book reviews. These papers are designed to let you practice reading and thinking critically, building an argument, supporting your points with textual evidence, and writing. (In other words, they are designed to let you practice “being an historian.”). **ESSAYS MUST BE TYPED DOUBLE SPACED.** I will grade your essays based upon both content and style using the “grading checklist” I have posted on D2L in the “Setting the Ground Rules” section of the course.

Grades

Grades will be based upon:

• Participation in class discussions	25 points per section = 100
• Quizzes	10 points each = 100
• Papers	20 points each = <u>100</u>
TOTAL	= 300

279+=A, 270-278=A-, 261-269=B+, 249-260=B, 240-248=B-, 231-239=C+, 219-230=C, 210-218=C-, 201-209=D+, 189-200=D, 180-188=D-, below 180=F

Course Calendar

Week One – June 9 through 13

Day 1 - Introductions

Please go to the course and complete the “Introductions” section.

- 1. Listen to my introduction.** Then go to the discussion area and tell the class something about yourself and why you are taking the course. If you are comfortable posting a photo, you may do that, too.
- 2. Read about and help to set the ground rules.** Review the rubric and style check I use to grade writing assignments and ask if you have questions. Look at the model book review. Go to the discussion area and let the class know what you consider to be proper netiquette. Note that there is an “Ask the Class” discussion in the event you have questions about the material or the course.
- 3. Learn what Islam means.**
- 4. Participate in the “Where is the Middle East?” discussion.**
- 5. Read the powerpoint slides on “Middle East History and Historiography,” then participate in the discussion that follows.**

6. Watch the video on “Common Assumptions People in the U.S. make about Muslims,” then participate in the discussion on that topic.
7. Start reading about the Prophet Muhammad and the Koran. Start reading *Palace Walk*.

Days 2-5 - Part I - The Prophet Muhammad and the Koran

In this section of the course we will consider the following questions: Who was the Prophet Muhammad? What was the world in which he lived like? What is the Koran like? What has been the impact of the Prophet Muhammad’s mission?

Day 2

1. Reflect on what you learned last week and post your thoughts on D2L.
2. Review the goals for this section of the course on D2L.
3. Read Cook’s *Muhammad*.
4. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 3

1. Take the Quiz on Cook’s *Muhammad*.
2. Participate in the discussions on the Prophet Muhammad.
3. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 4

1. Look at Sultan Baybars’ Koran on *Turning the Pages* and participate in the discussion.
2. Read *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction*.
3. Take the Koran Quiz.
4. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 5

1. Participate in the discussion based on Michael Cook’s *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction*.
2. Write your paper on the Koran and submit it to the dropbox.
3. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Week Two – June 16-20

Days 6-10 - Part II – The expansion of the Islamic World

In this section of the course we will examine how Islam spread. We will try to figure out when, where, and how it became the basis of the culture of a major world empire. We will explore how this empire impacted world history.

Day 6

1. Reflect on what you learned last week and post your thoughts on D2L.
2. Review the goals for this section of the course on D2L. Then discuss al-Idrisi’s map and listen to Afghan Music.

3. Read Bloom and Blair's *Islam*, pp. 35-75.
4. Take the Quiz on this reading.
5. Participate in the discussion.
6. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 7

1. Read Bloom and Blair's *Islam*, pp. 77-117.
2. Take the Quiz on this reading.
3. Participate in the discussion.
4. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 8

1. Read Bloom and Blair's *Islam*, pp. 119-155.
2. Take the Quiz on this reading.
3. Participate in the discussion.
4. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 9

1. Read *al-Ghazali's Path to Sufism*.
2. Write the paper on this book.
3. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 10

1. Complete and submit your paper on *al-Ghazali's Path to Sufism*.
2. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Week Three (sort of) – June 23-26

Days 11-14 – Part Three – Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires

In this section of the course we will explore how these empires emerged out of the various states that became independent with the devolution of the Abbasid Empire and following the Mongol invasions. We will examine how Persian and Turkish traditions became central to Islamic culture.

Day 11

1. Reflect on what you learned last week and post your thoughts on D2L.
2. Participate in the discussion comparing the minaret to the ziggurat.
3. Review the goals for this section of the course on D2L and participate in the discussions on the Birth of Krishna and Afghan music.
4. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 12

4. Participate in the discussion about Sunni and Shii Islam.
5. Participate in the discussion about the caliphate
6. Participate in the discussion about Abbasid power.

Day 13

1. Read Bloom and Blair's *Islam*, pp. 160-219.
2. Keep reading *Palace Walk*.

Day 14

1. Take the Quiz on the reading you did yesterday.
2. Write the paper on Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires.
3. Finish reading *Palace Walk*.

Week Four (sort of) – June 27-July 3*Days 15- 19 – Part Four – The Modern Middle East*

In this section of the course we will explore the beginnings of the Modern Middle East paying special attention to imperialism and national movements. We will try to figure out what stayed the same in Middle Eastern societies in the modern period and what changed. You will also be asked to write an editorial regarding a current issue in the region once you complete Gelvin's book.

Day 15

1. Reflect on what you learned last week and post your thoughts on D2L.
2. Review the goals for this section of the course on D2L.
3. Read Gelvin's *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 69-110.
4. Take the quiz on this reading.
5. Participate in the discussion on this reading.
6. Begin writing your paper on *Palace Walk*.

Day 16

1. Read Gelvin's *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 111-169.
2. Take the quiz on this reading.
3. Participate in the discussion on this reading.

Day 17

1. Read Gelvin's *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 171-221.
2. Take the quiz on this reading.
3. Participate in the discussion on this reading.
4. Begin writing your editorial.

Day 18

1. Read Gelvin's *The Modern Middle East*, pp. 223-270.
2. Take the quiz on this reading.
3. Participate in the discussion on this reading.
4. Finish writing your paper on *Palace Walk*. It is due first thing tomorrow morning.
5. Finish writing your editorial. It is due first thing tomorrow morning.

Day 19

- 1. Submit your editorial and paper on *Palace Walk*, then take part in the discussion on the book.**
- 2. Reflect on what you have learned and say goodbye.**