COURSE DESCRIPTION

While the United States has always played a role in the Middle East, in recent decades that role has taken on increased political, social and moral significance. In this course, we will study the building blocks of American foreign policy and explore how they influence the United States’ interactions in the Middle East. We will consider the importance of strategy, the impact of special interests, the method of terrorism, the influence of oil, and the consequences of war. Using the theoretical standards of experts and the varied cases of history, we will seek to identify potential for stability, security and peace.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to cultivate a deep understanding of the competing elements at work in American foreign policy in order to more effectively analyze developing policy and events.

OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce students to a varied group of theoretical frameworks and empirical studies through which better understanding of the political, social and religious elements of American foreign policy in the Mid-East can be achieved.

2. To equip students to critically analyze area-specific current events and policy decisions according to the frameworks and cases explored.

3. To promote a detailed and compassionate basis for knowledge, in order that students may offer sensitive and knowledgeable analysis, and uphold informed and just policy decisions.

COMPETENCIES

A. The student will be able to respond to past, present and future events in the Mid East by identifying the critical elements of the event, assessing its historical, political and social context, and articulating the appropriate framework for the most comprehensive understanding of its development.

B. The student will be able to persuasively defend or critique political developments in both oral and written form.
C. The student will appreciate the importance of applying a biblical framework to their understanding of the region, and will come to recognize that such a framework demands a commitment to intellectual objectivity.

**EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Grades will be determined based on a division according to the following categories:

**Active and Consistent Participation:** The purpose of this course is to develop students’ understanding of the variegated elements of mid east politics. For this reason, mastery of the assigned readings and active participation in the seminar discussions is essential. It is assumed that students will arrive to class on time, fully versed in the assigned readings for the week, and prepared to ask and answer insightful questions on a variety of topics. In addition to this basic standard of preparedness, students will be responsible for leading up to four seminar discussions throughout the semester. This is a graduate level course, and accordingly, the impetus for high caliber discussion rests on the quality of student involvement. To facilitate this involvement, during the first class meeting students will sign up for four dates on which they are “on call” to lead the class discussion. Students should come to their “on call” dates prepared to present and critique the day’s readings and to engage his fellow students in a stimulating discussion of key points. Discussion leadership will be assessed according to the level of preparedness, the insightfulness of the points made, and the leader’s efforts to engage and sustain the interest of his fellow students for the duration of the meeting.

*Participation will comprise one third of the final grade.*

**Final Research Paper:** The seminal assignment of the semester is an original research paper due no later than April 20th, 2010. The paper must relate to the theme of the seminar, though the methodologies employed will vary from one paper to another. The body of the paper should not exceed 25 pages in length (and should not be less than 22 pages) but appendixes may be used for supplementary material, charts, tables, etc. Late submissions will suffer a deduction of 10 points per day.

*The research paper comprises one third of the final grade.*

**Final Exam:** There will be one exam for the course. The exam will take place on Tuesday, April 20th. The exam will be composed of one or more essay questions on the readings discussed up to this date. **No books or notes are permitted for the exam.**

*This exam is worth one third of the final grade.*

The following criteria will be applied in grading papers, essay answers and oral participation for each of the five primary letter grades indicated:

- **A** An “A” answer identifies correctly and fully all issues and subissues raised by the question. It states all applicable (and potentially applicable) theoretical
frameworks and relevant details of specific cases with precision. It analyzes the themes of the puzzle or event thoroughly in light of the applicable framework, and explores all alternative modes of analysis where appropriate.

**B** This answer presents all four components of a good answer but it does so in a way that could be substantially improved. For example, it may be that not all of the issues have been spotted, or the issues are not presented with complete clarity. The analysis is competent, but lacks subtlety, and may be somewhat simplistic or conclusory in spots.

**C** This is a minimally competent answer. It must contain in some measure all four components of a good answer, but it may not clearly articulate them as separable concepts. Perhaps only one or two main issues have been identified, the others missed. Competing frameworks, while stated, lack in completeness and/or accuracy. The analysis and application may be somewhat shallow and conclusory. Conclusions may be questionable and not well-defended.

**D** This is an answer which lacks one or more of the basic components. It may identify the wrong issues, or articulate none at all. The analysis is conclusory at best, absent at worst. Information learned in the course is never really applied to the facts in any coherent way. Conclusions are unsupported or missing.

**F** The student has written nothing, or has not really tried, or exhibits a complete lack of knowledge of the relevant issues, or demonstrates a near-total inability to engage in critical analysis.

*Please note that all written work submitted to the professor must meet or exceed acceptable graduate level writing standards. Papers must be free from grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes, as such errors will be detrimental to the final grade. If any student is uncertain as to the minimum standards expected, he/she should seek clarification from the professor. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the Regent University Writing Center and the resources therein. Appointments can be schedule over the phone: 757.226.4711 or via email: acadwrit@regent.edu. In some cases, the professor may require students to submit documentation of writing center support.*

**REQUIRED TEXTS**


**Recommended**


Any reputable international newspaper.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Please note that all students are expected to maintain impeccable standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism or cheating of any form will not be tolerated. For a description of Regent University's academic conduct code, see the Student Handbook. ([http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student/student_handbook.pdf](http://www.regent.edu/admin/stusrv/student/student_handbook.pdf))

**INCOMPLETE GRADES**

An incomplete grade will be given in this course only for extraordinary reasons acceptable to the professor.

**STUDENT FEEDBACK**

At the end of each course, students are given an opportunity to comment on the course and the professor's teaching on a written evaluation form. Students are encouraged to meet with the professor at any time throughout the semester.

**BIBLICAL INTEGRATION**

This course is founded on the principles articulated in Colossians 1:16:

> For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth; visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things have been created by Him and for Him.

Accordingly Truth will be vigorously pursued, and the complexities thereof will be respected.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late final papers will be accepted with a 10 point per day deduction, without exception. No other late assignments will be accepted.
OFFICE DATA

Office location: 318 Robertson Hall
Office phone: 352-4694
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Office hours: All days by appointment

The instructor retains the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. It is the student’s responsibility to keep up with any changes that are announced in class or via Blackboard or email.