

Course Syllabus

Instructor



Above are pictures of me, me and my wife on vacation, and me and my daughters on a day out. I'm married for almost twelve years and my wife and my daughters are the center of my life. Some fun facts about me: I use an electric scooter to commute to BYU most days, so you might see me going to or from KMBL tower on my Ninebot G30LP. I started wearing hats during the pandemic because I didn't want to brush my hair, and now it is my thing. I love to read fantasy novels and spend time in the outdoors.

- David Romney
- david.romney@byu.edu
- 734 KMBL
- Office hours are Mo: 9–10am, Tu: 3–4pm, Th: 10–11am, Fr: 3–4pm
- Work phone 801-422-0364 (email is generally better)

Teaching Assistant

- Robert Cherrington - the best way to reach me is at my email:
- rcherrington737@gmail.com
- Office Hours: Monday 12:30-2:00pm, Wednesday 11:00-12:00pm in the TA Lab on the 8th floor of the SWKT. If those times don't work for you, email me and we can arrange to meet another time.

Course Purpose

At the end of this course, you will:

- Gain greater respect and awe for the people and cultures of the MENA region
- Be able to recount important, foundational facts about the politics of the countries of the MENA region
- Be able to argue for or against explanations for the current political and developmental state of the countries of the MENA region in both oral and written form
- Be able to communicate in simple terms with a non-scientific audience about the Middle East

Student Success

I believe that every student can succeed in this course! If you want to succeed, attend and participate. Do the assignments without worrying about perfection—this is not the only thing in your life, and I don't expect assignments to take forever. Don't worry if there are mistakes, just do the readings (even skimming) and turn things in.

Most, if not all, students need help to succeed. For instance, as a BYU student over a decade ago, I had periods where I went to CAPS to receive counseling help. This is normal! Getting help is a proactive step you can take to help yourself grow and reach your full potential. BYU has many resources—UAC, CAPS, FHSS Writing Center, etc.—that you can use to reach your full potential.

I generally try to provide as much flexibility as I can. But, I also need communication from you—if you don't tell me what your needs are, or don't find ways to fulfill them, then it is harder to do my job. So, if something comes up during the semester, or you're having a difficult time, please just reach out. I'm always willing to chat and find a way for us to help manage the course around anything that is going on in your life.

Expectations

Because I don't want to incentivize you to come in sick, I am recording my classes on Zoom, and you can watch either live (if you want to be counted as attending) or at your convenience later. Zoom recording will start on the second day of class. If you are sick, or have a health condition that makes attendance difficult, speak with me and you can obtain full credit for live virtual attendance; if you are not sick, please come in-person. Note that attendance starts on the second day of class. Additionally, note that I drop two attendance grades regardless.

Late assignments will automatically be given a 25% deduction, and I will not accept any late assignments past Dec 16 at 11:59pm. However, both of these policies can have exceptions if there are extenuating circumstances or university-approved absences. If you have something you think qualifies, please let me know "ahead of time" so that we can work something out! Again—I understand you have lives outside of this class and I will try to work with you, I just want advance notice.

I am okay with the use of laptops during class, but please turn phones/tablets/laptops to the "do not disturb" setting. If I notice a consistent lack of engagement because of electronic devices or for other reasons, I reserve the right to deduct your attendance point for that day.

I have office hours (noted above), but if those do not work for you and you want to come in and talk to me, then you can reach out.

Note that all aspects of this syllabus are subject to change as the semester progresses.

Materials

All readings are provided on Canvas, except for readings from the main textbook (listed below). Even for the main textbook, I provide PDFs of chapters for the first few weeks so that you have time to pick up a copy.

James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*, 5th edition, Oxford, 2020.

Ellen Lust, ed. *The Middle East*, 15th edition. Sage, 2019.

Marc Lynch, *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East*. Public Affairs, 2017.

Assessments

You will have six different types of assessments in this course: Attendance (25 - 2 free days = 23 points, ~7%), Readings Assessments (69 - 2 free days = 63 points, ~17%), Reflections (10 points, ~3%), Pictures of the Middle East (32 points, ~9%), Research Paper (75 points, ~21%), and Quizzes/Exams (152 points, ~42%). More detail on each of these assignments can be found in the "Assignments" tab on Canvas. Note that your two lowest scores for attendance and readings commentaries are dropped automatically.

Grading

Grading will be done on the university's standard grading scale.

I will grade rigorously, particularly on the research paper and exams. If necessary, the course may be curved up at the end of the class. I will try to show the grade distribution regularly during class.

FHSS Writing Lab

You may wish to get help writing the research paper for this course. One resource you can use—which is available to help with your paper's organization, structure, focus, citation style, and grammar at any stage of your writing process—is the FHSS Writing Lab in 1175 JFSB. You can just drop by or sign up on their website at <http://fhsswriting.byu.edu> to meet one-on-one with a peer advisor. All advisors are students from the FHSS college and are trained in APA, Turabian, MLA, and ASA styles.

Hours for Winter 2022 Semester: Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Closed for Devotionals.)

To prepare for an appointment:

- Make an appointment either online at <http://fhsswriting.byu.edu>, via phone, or in-person in 1175 JFSB.
 - Please include all required information to be put on the schedule.
- Consider preparing a list of questions and concerns you have about your paper.
- If you are taking a Canvas/online course or are otherwise unable to attend in person, please email us at fhss-writing@byu.edu, and we will make accommodations.
- We also take walk-ins, time permitting.

University Learning Outcomes

These are the learning outcomes that the university and department have assigned to this course. These are very similar to my own desired learning outcomes that I have defined above, but I include the university/department ones here so you know what is expected out of this course.

- Political Process, Theory, and Thought
 - The class is designed to help the student gain a basic knowledge of Middle Eastern politics and the social pressures that underlie political forces, to study several countries in depth and to gain an understanding of the culturally-based and traditional political structures and forces that operate in these governmental systems.
 - We will study the conflicts of political legitimacy and Islamic activism.
 - Possess a factual and theoretical knowledge of countries, political processes, political theories, and political thought.
- Politics, International Relations, and Political Philosophy
 - Demonstrate a familiarity with each of the four major subfields of political science: American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and political philosophy.
 - We will concentrate on problems of political development, leadership, political institutions and religion
- Critical Thinking and Analysis
 - Students will develop analytical and logical writing abilities with an emphasis on critical reading and writing skills.
 - Think critically, analytically, and synthetically.

University Policies

Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and every instructor's expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing Sexual Misconduct

Brigham Young University prohibits all forms of sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking on the basis of sex—by its personnel and students and in all its education programs or activities. University policy requires all faculty members to promptly report incidents of sexual harassment that come to their attention in any way and encourages reports by students who experience or become aware of sexual harassment. Incidents should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at t9coordinator@byu.edu or (801) 422-8692 or 1085 WSC. Reports may also be submitted online at <https://titleix.byu.edu/report> or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours a day). BYU offers a number of resources and services for those affected by sexual harassment, including the university's confidential Sexual Assault Survivor Advocate. Additional information about sexual harassment, the university's Sexual Harassment Policy, reporting requirements, and resources can be found in the University Catalog, by visiting <http://titleix.byu.edu>, or by contacting the university's Title IX Coordinator.

Student Disability

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Whether an impairment is substantially limiting depends on its nature and severity, its duration or expected duration, and its permanent or expected permanent or long-term impact. Examples include vision or hearing impairments, physical disabilities, chronic illnesses, emotional disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety), learning disorders, and attention disorders (e.g., ADHD). If you have a disability which impairs your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (UAC), 2170 WSC or 801-422-2767 to request a reasonable accommodation. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. If you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, please contact the Equal Opportunity Office at 801-422-5895, eo_manager@byu.edu, or visit <https://hrs.byu.edu/equal-opportunity> for help.

Academic Honesty

The first injunction of the Honor Code is the call to "be honest." Students come to the university not only to improve their minds, gain knowledge, and develop skills that will assist them in their life's work, but also to build character. "President David O. McKay taught that character is the highest aim of education" (The Aims of a BYU Education, p.6). It is the purpose of the BYU Academic Honesty Policy to assist in fulfilling that aim. BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct.

Covid 19 Statement

While COVID 19 conditions persist and until further notice, students and faculty are required to wear face coverings at all times during class; faculty are not at liberty to waive this expectation. Students who feel sick, including exhibiting symptoms commonly associated with COVID 19 (fever; cough; shortness of breath/difficulty breathing; chills; muscle pain; sore throat; new loss of taste or smell; etc.) should not attend class and should work with their instructor to develop a study plan for the duration of the illness.

Deliberation Guidelines

To facilitate productive and open discussions about sensitive topics about which there are differing opinions, members of the BYU community should: (1) Remember that we are each responsible for enabling a productive, respectful dialogue. (2) To enable time for everyone to speak, strive to be concise with your thoughts. (3) Respect all speakers by listening actively. (4) Treat others with the respect that you would like them to treat you with, regardless of your differences. (5) Do not interrupt others. (6) Always try to understand what is being said before you respond. (7) Ask for clarification instead of making assumptions. (8) When countering an idea, or making one initially, demonstrate that you are listening to what is being said by others. Try to validate other positions as you assert your own, which aids in dialogue, versus attack. (9) Under no circumstances should an argument continue out of the classroom when someone does not want it to. Extending these conversations beyond class can be productive, but we must agree to do so respectfully, ethically, and with attention to individuals' requests for confidentiality and discretion. (10) Remember that exposing yourself to different perspectives helps you to evaluate your own beliefs more clearly and learn new information. (11) Remember that just because you do not agree with a person's statements, it does not mean that you cannot get along with that person. (12) Speak with your professor privately if you feel that the classroom environment has become hostile, biased, or intimidating. Adapted from the [Deliberation Guidelines](#) published by The Center for Democratic Deliberation.

Diversity and Inclusion in the Classroom

"Because we feel the depth of God's love for His children, we care deeply about every child of God, regardless of age, personal circumstances, gender, sexual orientation, or other unique challenges" (President Russell M. Nelson, "The Love and Laws of God," September 2019). As a university community we strive to foster an educational environment that promotes the personal dignity of every student and accept individual responsibility to eliminate racism, sexism, and nationalism. Our course participation reflects our understanding that every individual is a child of Heavenly Parents. We create learning environments in which every individual is motivated to express their opinions and perspectives and ask questions to augment discussions and learning. We listen to, learn from, and strive to consider thoughtfully the opinions of others. We use language that is polite, considerate, and courteous—even when we strongly disagree.

Inappropriate Use of Course Materials

All course materials (e.g., outlines, handouts, syllabi, exams, quizzes, PowerPoint presentations, lectures, audio and video recordings, etc.) are proprietary. Students are prohibited from posting or selling any such course materials without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course. To do so is a violation of the Brigham Young University Honor Code.

Mental Health

Mental health concerns and stressful life events can affect students' academic performance and quality of life. BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS, 1500 WSC, 801-422-3035, caps.byu.edu) provides individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as stress management services. These services are confidential and are provided by the university at no cost for full-time students. For general information please visit <https://caps.byu.edu>; for more immediate concerns please visit <http://help.byu.edu>.

Plagiarism

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as the Honor Code. Such plagiarism may subject the student to appropriate disciplinary action administered through the university Honor Code Office, in addition to academic sanctions that may be applied by an instructor. Inadvertent plagiarism, which may not be a violation of the Honor Code, is nevertheless a form of intellectual carelessness that is unacceptable in the academic community. Plagiarism of any kind is completely contrary to the established practices of higher education where all members of the university are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others that is included in their own work. In some cases, plagiarism may also involve violations of copyright law. Intentional Plagiarism-Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as one's own without providing proper attribution to the author through quotation, reference, or footnote. Inadvertent Plagiarism-Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but non-deliberate, use of another's words, ideas, or data without proper attribution. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from an ignorant failure to follow established rules for documenting sources or from simply not being sufficiently careful in research and writing. Although not a violation of the Honor Code, inadvertent plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct for which an instructor can impose appropriate academic sanctions. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper attribution have the responsibility to consult with their instructor and obtain guidance. Examples of plagiarism include: Direct Plagiarism-The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source. Paraphrased Plagiarism-The paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for the author's own. Plagiarism Mosaic-The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one's own without acknowledging the source. Insufficient Acknowledgement-The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source. Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.

Respectful Environment

"Sadly, from time to time, we do hear reports of those who are at best insensitive and at worst insulting in their comments to and about others... We hear derogatory and sometimes even defamatory comments about those with different political, athletic, or ethnic views or experiences. Such behavior is completely out of place at BYU, and I enlist the aid of all to monitor carefully and, if necessary, correct any such that might occur here, however inadvertent or unintentional. "I worry particularly about demeaning comments made about the career or major choices of women or men either directly or about members of the BYU community generally. We must remember that personal agency is a fundamental principle and that none of us has the right or option to criticize the lawful choices of another." President Cecil O. Samuelson, Annual University Conference, August 24, 2010 "Occasionally, we ... hear reports that our female faculty feel disrespected, especially by students, for choosing to work at BYU, even though each one has been approved by the BYU Board of Trustees. Brothers and sisters, these things ought not to be. Not here. Not at a university that shares a constitution with the School of the Prophets." Vice President John S. Tanner, Annual University Conference, August 24, 2010