

COURSE SYLLABUS

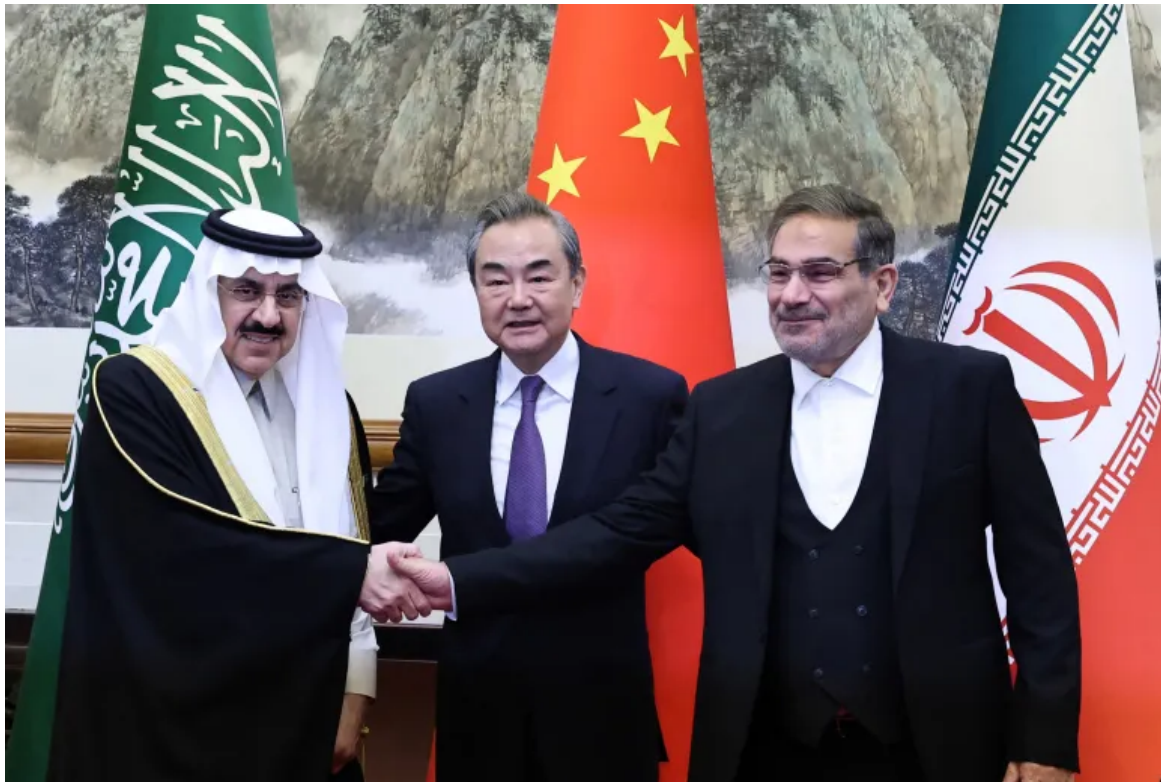
Shifting Global Politics and the Middle East (JTM577)

Charles University Prague

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Fall 2024



Classes: Tuesdays, 12.30-13.50– Room: B217 Jinonice

6 Credits

Office Hours: Tuesday, 14.30-16.00

Room B226 Jinonice

Course Description

The Middle East is crucial to world affairs due to its abundant natural resources, conflicts that have an impact beyond regional dynamics, and several deeply ingrained security challenges. The region's eminency for the Western world has a long history, and it has been driven by strong military and economic ties, security cooperations, and diplomatic relations in the US and European countries' global policy agenda up to this day. The first two decades in the post-Cold War World were marked by American hegemony influencing the alliance decisions of allies and rivals in the Middle East. Despite the arguments for the US withdrawal from the region and the great power's quest for a multipolar world, no competing power has yet emerged to replace American primacy in the region. The recent debates revolving around the crisis of the liberal international order, the rise of China as a new economic power, and Russia's growing influence in the region after the Arab uprisings raise questions about the role of the Middle East in the changing dynamics of global politics. How does the global great power competition manifest itself in the Middle East? How do regional actors and issues influence the dynamics of the competition between the USA, China, and Russia in the 21st century? How has Middle East politics been impacted by this apparent shift in the global order? The course is designated to reflect on how Middle Eastern politics are shaped by the changing dynamics in world politics, utilizing a variety of theoretical perspectives of international relations and political science.

Aim of the Course

The course aims to foster students' knowledge of Middle Eastern international relations by focusing on the interactions between Middle Eastern actors and great powers in the changing landscape of global policy dynamics. In line with this aim, the students will be encouraged to use and evaluate arguments about the topic and identify, analyze, and deploy a range of primary and secondary sources to support these arguments. Another goal of the course is to familiarize students with the relevant media and other sources and develop skills for researching the current developments related to the subject.

Course Requirements

1. Participation: Students will be required to attend classes regularly, read assigned texts, and actively discuss material. Each week two students will present news related to the current developments in the context of the class topic (see section on "Other Course Materials" below). This will constitute **20 points** of the final grade.

2. Midterm paper: Students will prepare a **1200 – 1500-word essay** on a topic related to recent or earlier developments in the Middle East in the context of shifting global politics using AI. Students must devise a prompt and submit it to an AI model of their choice. They will then critically evaluate the model's answer to the prompt, examining its factual validity, logical coherence, and overall relevance, developing the feed into an essay with further discussion, references, tables, or graphs. The prompt and AI-generated text is not part of the word count. This activity will constitute **30 points** of the final grade and will be due on **5.11.2024**.

Examples of prompts:

What are the primary drivers behind the perception of the U.S.'s strategic retreat or rebalancing in the Middle East, and how has this perception evolved across recent administrations?

Why did China choose a non-interventionist policy in the Middle East during the Arab uprisings, and what were the implications of this choice?

3. Final Exam: At the end of the semester, students will complete a **final test** with multiple choice and open-ended questions based on readings, lectures, and in-class discussions - this will constitute 50 % of the overall grade.

Students need to gain **at least 50% in each assignment** to pass the course.

Grading:

100 - 91 points: A

90 - 81 points: B

80 - 71 points: C

70 - 61 points: D

60 - 50 points: E

less than 50 points: F (fail)

If student fails to meet deadline of midterm paper, each day of late submission means -2 points off final grade.

Paper submission:

Students will submit papers through the Turnitin system:
<https://library.cuni.cz/services/turnitin/> Class ID: **45545508**

Enrollment key: **JTM577**

Class Ethics

(A) Any use of quoted texts in midterm papers must be acknowledged. Such use must meet the following conditions:

1. The beginning and end of the quoted passage must be shown with quotation marks
2. When quoting from periodicals or books, the name(s) of author(s), book or article titles, the year of publication, and page from which the passage is quoted must all be stated in footnotes or endnotes;
3. Internet sourcing must include a full web address where the text can be found and the date the author visited the web page.

(B) In case the use of any texts other than those written by the author is established without proper acknowledgement as defined in (A), the paper will be deemed plagiarized and handed over to the Disciplinary Commission of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

Course Schedule

- 1. Meeting, course introduction, and requirements (1.10.2024)**
- 2. Different theoretical approaches to Middle East Politics (8.10.2024)**

Discussion: *Which theoretical approach is more suitable to understand the role of the Middle East in global politics?*

Compulsory Readings:

- Halliday F., International Relations theory and the Middle East. In: *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics and Ideology. The Contemporary Middle East*. Cambridge University Press; 2005:21-40.
- Shifting Alliances and Shifting Theories in the Middle East - Curtis R. Ryan, Appalachian State University <https://pomeps.org/shifting-alliances-and-shifting-theories-in-the-middle-east>

Recommended Readings:

- International Relations: One World, Many Theories, Stephen M. Walt [*Foreign Policy*](#), No. 110, Special Edition: Frontiers of Knowledge (Spring, 1998), pp. 29-46.
- Snyder, J. (2004). *One World, Rival Theories*. *Foreign Policy*, 145, 53–62.

- Glossary of Key International Relations Terms (Recommended readings of the first week are for students who are not familiar with IR theory and terminology)

https://www.e-ir.info/2022/05/15/glossary-of-key-international-relations-terms/#google_vignette

3. Identity, Security, and Alliances (15.10.2024)

Discussion: Identity or threat: What are the main drivers of alliance formation in the Middle East?

Compulsory Readings:

- Stephen Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Cornell, 1990), pp. 262-288.
- Michael Barnett, 'Identity and Alliances in the Middle East', in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (Columbia, 1996), pp. 327-364.

4. From Regional to International (22.10.2024)

Discussion: What are the main dynamics of the Middle Eastern regional system that interact with the international system?

Compulsory Reading:

- Hinnebusch, Raymond. "2 Core and periphery: The international system and the Middle East". *The international politics of the Middle East*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003, pp. 14-53. <https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526137760.00007>

Recommended Reading:

- The Middle East Regional System - Hinnebusch, Raymond and Ehteshami, Anoushiravan. *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*, Boulder, USA: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2014. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781685850715_29-50 29-50

5. Great Power Rivalry in the Middle East during the Cold War (29.10.2024)

Discussion: How was the great power rivalry reflected in the Middle East during the Cold War?

Compulsory Readings:

- The Middle East and external powers: from World War II to Pax Americana, pp. 12-23, In Houghton, B., & Houghton, K.A. (Eds.). (2023). *China, Russia, and the USA in the Middle East: The Contest for Supremacy* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003372011>.
- The Soviet Union and The Middle East: An Overview, pp. 13-20, In *Russia Rising. Putin's Foreign Policy in the Middle East and North Africa* Dimitar Bechev, Nicu Popescu & Stanislav Secieru (eds), London & New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2021.
- Hudson, M. C. (1996). To Play the Hegemon: Fifty Years of US Policy toward the Middle East. *Middle East Journal*, 50(3), 329–343. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4328954>

6. American Hegemony/Unipolarity and the Middle East in the Post-Cold War Period (5.11.2024)

Discussion: What were the main tenets of American policy in the Middle East after the Cold War, and how were they related to the unipolar moment in world politics?

- President George Bush, Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the Persian Gulf Crisis and the Federal Budget Deficit

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/address-before-joint-session-the-congress-the-persian-gulf-crisis-and-the-federal-budget>

- Karsh, Efraim. "Cold War, post-Cold War: does it make a difference for the Middle East?" *Review of International Studies* 23 (1997): 271-291.
- Keddie NR. The End of the Cold War and the Middle East. In: Hogan MJ, ed. *The End of the Cold War: Its Meaning and Implications*. Cambridge University Press; 1992:151-160.

7. September 11 and the War on Terror (12.11.2024)

Discussion: How did September 11 affect US policy towards the Middle East?

- Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People

<https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>

- Jervis, Robert. “Understanding the Bush Doctrine.” *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2003): 365–88. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30035780>.

8. The Arab Uprisings and Changing Dynamics (19.11.2024)

Discussion: What impact have the Arab Uprisings had on world politics?

Compulsory Readings:

- Transcript and word cloud of Obama’s “Moment of Opportunity” #mespeech
<https://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/cityofbrass/2011/05/transcript-and-word-cloud-of-obamas-moment-of-opportunity-mespeech.html>
- Mehran Kamrava, Multipolarity and Instability in the Middle East
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0030438718300632?via%3Dihub> p. 598-616
- The UN and the Arab Uprisings: Reflecting a Confused International Order
<https://pomeps.org/the-un-and-the-arab-uprisings-reflecting-a-confused-international-order>

Recommended Reading:

- Jeffrey Goldberg, The Obama Doctrine
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/#1>

9. Debates around the US withdrawal from the Middle East (26.11.2024)

Discussion: Debates around the US withdrawal from the Middle East

- William F. Wechsler, US Withdrawal from the Middle East: Perceptions and Reality pp.13-38
<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/MENA-Chapter-one.pdf>
- Christopher K. Colley. A Post-American Middle East? US Realities Vs. Chinese and Russian Alternatives. *Middle East Policy*. 2023; 30: 62–82. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12670>

10. Russia in the Middle East (3.12.2024)

Discussion: How is Russia's current global policy agenda reflected in the Middle East?

- Conclusion: Russia in the Middle East and North Africa: A Balance Sheet
Stanislav Secrieru, Dimitar Bechev, In *Russia Rising. Putin's Foreign Policy in the Middle East and North Africa* Dimitar Bechev, Nicu Popescu & Stanislav Secrieru (eds), London & New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2021. pp. 131-136.
- Anna Borshchevskaya- How the Middle East Became an Arena for Putin's Power Struggle with the US

<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/how-middle-east-became-arena-putins-power-struggle-us>

11. China in the Middle East (10.12.2024)

Discussion: How is China's current global policy agenda reflected in the Middle East?

Compulsory Readings:

- Chaziza, Mordechai. "The US-China Rivalry in the Middle East: Confrontation or Competitive Coexistence." *Contemporary Review of the Middle East* 11 (2024): 231-252.
- Lisa Watanabe, China as a Geo-Economic and Security Actor in the MENA Region, In Zoubir, Y.H. (Ed.). (2023). *Routledge Companion to China and the Middle East and North Africa* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003048404>
- Mohammad Eslami and Maria Papageorgiou, China's Increasing Role in the Middle East: Implications for Regional and International Dynamics
<https://gja.georgetown.edu/2023/06/02/chinas-increasing-role-in-the-middle-east-implications-for-regional-and-international-dynamics/>

Recommended Readings:

- Zeno Leoni, "US-China Rivalry in the MENA region" pp. 89-98 In Zoubir, Y.H. (Ed.). (2023). *Routledge Companion to China and the Middle East and North Africa* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003048404>
- Murphy, D. (2022). Chapter 9: Belt and Road and China's Relations with the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. In *China's Rise in the Global South: The Middle East, Africa, and Beijing's Alternative World Order* (pp. 236-253).

Redwood City: Stanford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503630604-011>

12. Middle East and the debates on the crisis of the Liberal International Order (17.12.2024)

Discussion: What is the role of the Middle Eastern actors in contesting the Liberal International Order?

Compulsory Readings:

- Salem, P. (2018). The Middle East's Troubled Relationship with the Liberal International Order. *The International Spectator*, 53(1), 122–137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2018.1407165>
- Zheng Chen, Hang Yin, China and Russia in R2P debates at the UN Security Council, *International Affairs*, Volume 96, Issue 3, May 2020, Pages 787–805, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiz229>

13. General Debate- Future of the Middle East in Global Politics (7.1.2025)

Becca Wasser et al., Crossroads of Competition: China, Russia, and the United States in the Middle East (pp. 21-66)

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR325-1.html

Other Course Materials

Students can use the following sources to follow the news about regional and international developments each week:

BBC News, New York Times, The Economist, Wall Street Journal

The following are some English-language news outlets based in the region that offer different perspectives (some of them will reflect the official ideology of the regime, like Tasnim) on the news:

Al Abram (Egypt) <https://english.abram.org.eg/>

Al Jazeera English (Qatar) <https://www.aljazeera.com/>

Al Monitor <https://www.al-monitor.com/>

Haaretz <https://www.haaretz.com/>

Iran Primer <https://iranprimer.usip.org/>

The Times of Israel <https://www.timesofisrael.com/>

JPost <https://www.jpost.com/>

Middle East Eye <https://www.middleeasteye.net/>

Tasnim News Agency (Iran) <https://www.tasnimnews.com/en>

The National (UAE) <https://www.thenationalnews.com/>

The New Arab (London) <https://www.newarab.com/>

The Syrian Observer <https://syrianobserver.com/>

In the following sources, students can find reports and newsletters from various think tanks and policy journals:

- [Brookings Center for Middle East Policy](#)
- [Carnegie Middle East](#)
- [CATO Institute: North Africa, Middle East, and Persian Gulf](#)
- [Chatham House \(Middle East and North Africa\)](#)
- [Congressional Research Service Reports on the Middle East and the Arab World](#)
- [CSIS - Center for Strategic & International Studies Middle East Program](#)
- [Foreign Affairs \(Council on Foreign Relations\)](#)
- [Foreign Policy](#)
- [International Crisis Group \(Middle East/North Africa\)](#)
- [Office of The Historian](#)
- [Survival: Global Politics and Strategy](#)
- [The Heritage Foundation: Middle East](#)
- [The Middle East Institute](#)
- [The National Interest \(Center for the National Interest\)](#)
- [The Project on Middle East Political Science \(POMEPS\)](#)
- [The Washington Institute](#)

And here is a list of Podcasts on the Middle East issues and global affairs:

https://podcasts.feedspot.com/middle_east_podcasts/

