UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS  

Economics 490  

Economies of the Middle East and North Africa  

Spring 2017  

Time: MW 3:30-4:50pm  
Place: 215B David Kinley Hall  
Professor: Hadi Salehi Esfahani  
Office: 210 DKH, Phone: 333-2681  
E-Mail: Esfahani@illinois.edu  
Office Hours: TuTh 5:00-5:50 p.m.  

Course Description:  
This course provides students with an understanding the business and economic conditions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The course is primarily intended to serve advanced undergraduate and master’s-level students who are interested in knowing about the MENA region. The aim is to enable the students to analyze the current business and economic conditions in MENA countries for academic and professional purposes. In addition, the students are expect to expand their knowledge of microeconomic, macroeconomics, and economic development theories and to apply them to concrete cases in the MENA region. The instruction will assume that the students have an introductory knowledge of economics.  

Learning Tools:  
Besides lectures, we will maintain discussion on issues of MENA economies outside class through the Compass website for the course. The Compass site provides reading material and day-to-day information about the course. The students are encouraged to use the discussion boards on Compass for questions and messages at any time. The instructor will be checking Compass frequently to offer quick responses to student messages. However, in case an urgent problem arises, the students should not hesitate to also send a regular email or call the instructor’s office to make sure no time is wasted.  

Part of the reading material for the course is mostly provided through Compass and web links. However, there are two textbooks that the students need to buy:  


For learning and evaluation purposes, there will be a series of in-class quizzes, a data assignment, a class presentation, and two exams. The quizzes are designed to help the students remain engaged and learn the material more thoroughly during the class sessions. The data assignment guides the students to collect background information about MENA countries and become familiar with their economic histories. The class presentation provides an opportunity for each student to learn about the economic development and political and social change in a particular country and share his/her knowledge with the rest of the class. Finally, the two exams, a midterm and a final, are designed to help students review and confirm their
understanding of the material discussed in class and in the reading assignments. The purpose of all these assignments is to help the students master the material more effectively and receive fast and frequent feedback on their learning.

Grading:
The grade in this course will be based on the results of in-class quizzes, exams, data assignment, and presentation. The weights of various activities in the total score are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Best In-Class Quizzes</td>
<td>10% of total grade (1% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Assignment</td>
<td>18% of total grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>20% of total grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20% of total grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>24% of total grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Evaluation</td>
<td>8% of total grade</td>
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Exams:
Midterm Exam: Wednesday, March 15; 3:30-5:00 p.m.; Room 215B DKH.
Final Exam: Monday, May 8; 8:00-11:00 a.m.; Room 215B DKH.

Academic Integrity:
According to the University policy, violation of academic integrity is a serious offense. In the context of assignments, term papers, and exams of this course, violating academic integrity is copying of answers from other students or any other source, rather than authoring them. Quoting from other sources with proper citation is permitted, but that cannot be the entire answer. Quotations could be only part of a discussion and must be merely for clarification or documentation purposes. Your answers must show that you have understood the material and can argue the case on your own. Anyone found in violation of academic integrity in this course will be subject to the penalties discussed in the Student Code. These penalties include, among others, failure for the course or dismissal from the University.

Useful Websites and Data Sources
Arab Monetary Fund: [www.amf.org.ae/pages/page.aspx](http://www.amf.org.ae/pages/page.aspx)
Economist Intelligence Unit: [www.eiu.com](http://www.eiu.com) (Country Profiles, Reports, and Business Middle East)
International Monetary Fund: [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org)
Middle East Review of International Affairs: [http://meria.idc.ac.il](http://meria.idc.ac.il)
World Bank’s Doing Business Project: www.doingbusiness.org/economyrankings/
World Bank’s Website on The Middle East and North Africa
World Bank. World Development Indicators

Useful Sources for Regular Information on MENA Economies
Al-Bab Website, www.al-bab.com
Al-Jazeera, www.aljazeera.com
Al-Monitor, www.al-monitor.com
Informed Comment, www.juancole.com
Jadaliyya, www.jadaliyya.com
Middle East Economic Survey (MEES): www.mees.com
Middle East Economic Digest: www.meed.com
The Economist, www.economist.com
Wall Street Journal, online.wsj.com/public/us
Zawya, Website Address: www.zawya.com

Relevant Journals:
International Journal for Middle East Studies: journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=MES
Middle East Development Journal: http://www.worldscinet.com/medi/
Middle East Journal: http://www.mei.edu/Publications/TheMiddleEastJournal.aspx
Middle East Report: http://www.merip.org/
Review of Middle East Economics and Finance: http://www.bepress.com/rmeef/

Topics and Readings

1. Introduction

Required:
Cammett et al., Chapter 1 (up to “A Political Economy Framework”)
2. MENA Background: Geography, Resources, and History

**Required:**

Cammett et al., Chapter 3 (section on “The Historical Foundations of State-Building in the Middle East”)

Issawi, All chapters except 7 and 12.


**Recommended:**


Occasional Papers, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.


### 3. Theoretical Framework: The Political Economy of Development

**Required:**

Cammett et al., Chapter 1 (from “A Political Economy Framework” to the end)


**Recommended:**


4. Political Regimes and State Capacity in MENA

*Required:*

Cammett et al., Chapter 3 (except the section on “The Historical Foundations of State-Building in the Middle East”)


*Recommended:*


5. Socio-Economic Development of MENA Countries since Early 20th Century

*Required:*

Cammett et al., Chapter 2


**Recommended:**


**6. Demographic Change and Gender Issues**

**Required:**

Cammett et al., Chapters 4 and 5


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7. Natural Resources and Development in MENA Region

**Required:**

Cammett et al., Chapter 9


*Recommended:*


8. **Conflict and Security in MENA**

*Required:*

Cammett et al., Chapters 6 and 10


The Economist. 2015. “The other jihadist playground: Libya’s civil war has allowed Islamic State to consolidate its position there,” November 18th.


*Recommended:*


9. **Social and Political Movements in MENA**

*Required:*

Cammett et al., Chapter 11


*Middle East Development Journal*. 2013. *Special Issue on Transformations in the Arab World*, 5.1:

Diwan, Ishac. 2013. “Understanding Revolution In The Middle East: The Central Role Of The Middle Class”


Recommended:


10. International Trade and Globalization in the MENA Region

Required:

Cammett et al., Chapter 13


Recommended:


11. Public Sector, Privatization, and the Role of Government

Required:

Cammett et al., Chapters 7 and 8


Recommended:


Sekkat, Khalid. 2010. “Market Dynamics and Productivity in Developing Countries: Economic Reforms in the Middle East and North Africa,” The International Development Research Center, Ottawa, ON, CA.


12. Foreign Investment


13. Financial Markets


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