

## 1. BASIC INFORMATION

Course	Middle East and Maghreb
Degree program	Global Degree in International Relations
School	School of Social Sciences
Year	Fourth Year
ECTS	6 ECTS
Credit type	Elective
Language(s)	English
Delivery mode	Face-to-face
Semester	First Semester
Academic year	2025/2026
Coordinating professor	PhD. Thomas Kruiper

## 2. PRESENTATION

This course is designed to present students with a deeper understanding of the domestic and international politics of the Middle East and the Maghreb region. This region ranges from Morocco in the West to Pakistan in the East, and from Turkey in the North to Sudan in the South. Most countries in the region are predominantly Muslim, and most countries form part of the Arabic world, with Turkey and Iran as the most notable exceptions. The region has a rich history, as it is home to several of the world's first civilizations. Most countries however also have a colonial history, resulting in unnatural borders and several countries that speak French or English as a second language.

Another common denominator among many countries in the Middle East and Maghreb region is that they are rich in oil and gas deposits. Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Kuwait belong to the world's top 10 of biggest oil exporters, while Algeria and Qatar are major exporters of natural gas. This oil wealth has made citizens in some countries extremely rich, while in other countries it is rather associated with the Natural Resource Curse (NRC), corruption, economic volatility, and inequality.

Many countries in the Middle East and Maghreb are known for their political volatility. Since the 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, the Middle East has been at the heart of the international war on terror, with military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, most notably, leading to the overthrow of the Taliban regime and Saddam Hussein, respectively. These interventions however only aggravated the rise of Islamic extremism, leading terrorist groups from Indonesia to Nigeria to pledge allegiance to Al-Qaida.

Until the 2011 Arab Spring movements, practically all countries in the region were controlled by autocratic regimes, some of which were informed by Islamist ideologies, while others were informed by Baathism (Arab Nationalism). In 2011, long-reigning dictators such as Hosni Mubarak (Egypt) and Muamar Gadhafi (Libya) were overthrown in popular uprisings, in the case of Libya with support from NATO forces. But rather than being replaced by liberal democratic ideas, dictators were replaced by Islamist politics (Egypt)

or by tribalism (Libya). In Syria and Iraq, the power vacuum created by the civil wars gave rise to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), a Sunni extremist group that split from Al-Qaida with the objective to establish a worldwide Islamic Caliphate.

Finally, the Arab World is characterized by the competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran, two regional hegemony supporters along sectarian lines, most notably in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen. Whereas Sunni, Shia, and other religions lived alongside each other peacefully for many decades, the contemporary tensions between sects are an important political issue nowadays.

### 3. COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### Core competencies:

- CB1 - Students possess and demonstrate knowledge in a field of study that starts from the base of general secondary education, and is usually at a level that, although it is supported by advanced textbooks, includes some aspects involving knowledge coming from the vanguard of such field of study.
- CB2 - Students know how to apply their knowledge to their work in a professional way and possess competencies that are demonstrated through the elaboration and defense of arguments and the resolution of problems within the field of study.
- CB3 - Students have the capacity to gather and interpret relevant data (within the field of study) to make judgments regarding social, scientific or ethical issues.
- CB4 - Students can transmit information, ideas, problems and solutions to an audience, whether specialized or not.
- CB5 - Students develop learning skills which are necessary to undertake further studies with a high degree of autonomy.

#### Cross-curricular competencies:

- CC2 - Self-confidence: ability to assess our own results, performance and capabilities with the inner conviction that we are capable of doing things and meeting the challenges we face.
- CC3 - Adapt to new situations: to be able to assess and understand different positions, adapting one's approach as the situation requires.
- CC7 - Awareness of ethical values: Ability to think and act according to universal principles based on the value of the person that are aimed at his/her full development and that entails a commitment to certain social values.
- CC9 - Interpersonal relationships: Ability to interact positively with other people by verbal and non-verbal means, through assertive communication, understood as the ability to express or convey what you want, what you think or feel without upsetting, attacking or hurting the feelings of the other person.
- CC12 - Critical reasoning: ability to analyze an idea, phenomenon or situation from different perspectives and to assume one's own personal approach to it, based on rigor and argued objectivity, and not on intuition.

#### Specific competencies:

- SC07 - Report and discuss the problems that cause international instabilities: conflicts, inequalities, exclusion, environment, pressure groups and public opinion, among others.
- SC22 - Play an active role in proposing solutions to specific problems and conflicts, regardless of the area geopolitics.
- SC23 - Contribute to the promotion of peace policies and proposals for peaceful solutions to conflicts.
- CE26 - Report, evaluate and assess current international events and situations.

#### Learning outcomes:

- LO1: The Student will be able to establish analogies and differences between the different actors present in the international arena.
- LO2: They will be able to identify and analyze the different geopolitical, geoeconomic, and sociocultural areas, as well as their specificities.
- LO3: Inform and discuss the issues that cause international instability: conflicts, inequalities, exclusion, the environment, pressure groups, and public opinion, among others.

The following table shows the relationship between the competencies developed during the course and the learning outcomes pursued:

Competencies	Learning outcomes
CB1, CB4, CB5, CC7, CC12, SC26	LO1: The Student will be able to establish analogies and differences between the different actors present in the international arena.
CB3, CB4, CB5, CC2, CC3, CC7, CC9, CC12, SC26	LO2: They will be able to identify and analyze the different geopolitical, geoeconomic, and sociocultural areas, as well as their specificities.
CB2, CB4, CB5, CC2, CC3, CC7, CC9, CC12, SC07, SC22, SC23	LO3: Inform and discuss the issues that cause international instability: conflicts, inequalities, exclusion, the environment, pressure groups, and public opinion, among others.

## 4. CONTENT

Geopolitics and ways of resolving the main conflicts in the area. Dynamics of cooperation between actors and study of the evolution of political systems and economic development

## 5. TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

The types of teaching-learning methodologies used are indicated below:

- Cooperative learning.
- Problem-based learning (PBL).
- Simulation environments.
- Case method.

## 6. LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Listed below are the types of learning activities and the number of hours the student will spend on each one:

### Campus-based mode:

Learning activity	Number of hours
Discussions and colloquiums	8
Oral presentations	5
Tutorials	18
Autonomous work	50
Master class	23
Asynchronous master classes	7
Case analysis	17
Problem solving	10
Reports and writings	10
Face-to-face knowledge tests	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>

## 7. ASSESSMENT

Listed below are the assessment systems used and the weight each one carries towards the final course grade:

Assessment system	Weight
Knowledge test	30%
Oral presentations	20%
Portfolio	20%
Supervised Individual Assignments	30%

When you access the course on the *Campus Virtual*, you'll find a description of the assessment activities you have to complete, as well as the delivery deadline and assessment procedure for each one.

### 7.1. First exam period

To pass the course in the first exam period, you must obtain a final course grade of at least 5 out of 10 (weighted average).

In any case, you will need to obtain a grade of at 5.0 in the final exam in order for it to count towards the final grade along with all the grades corresponding to the other activities.

## 7.2. Second exam period

To pass the course in the second exam period, you must obtain a final grade of at least 5 out of 10 (weighted average).

In any case, you will need to obtain a grade of at 5.0 in the final exam in order for it to count towards the final grade along with all the grades corresponding to the other activities.

The student must deliver the activities not successfully completed in the first exam period after having received the corresponding corrections from the professor, or those that were not delivered in the first place.

## 8. SCHEDULE

This table shows the delivery deadline for each assessable activity in the course:

Assessable activities	Deadline
<b>Group assignment</b>	Week 3 (Friday 23:59)
<b>Individual essays</b>	Weeks 6, 8, 11, 15 (choose 2) (Friday 23:59)
<b>Oral presentation</b>	Weeks 6, 8, 11, 15 (Friday 23:59)
<b>Knowledge test</b>	Week 16-17 (exact date tbd)

This schedule may be subject to changes for logistical reasons relating to the activities. The student will be notified of any change as and when appropriate.

## 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

The main reference work for this subject is:

- Hinnebusch, R., & Gani, J. K. (Eds.). (2020). *The Routledge handbook to the Middle East and North African state and states system* (1st ed.; ISBN 978-1032239767). Routledge. Ayoob, M. (2018).

All course readings will be provided on Canvas as PDF files. Below, please find an overview of literature suggestions.

## 10. EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UNIT

From the Educational Orientation, Diversity and Inclusion Unit we offer support to our students throughout their university life to help them reach their academic achievements. Other main actions are the students' inclusions with specific educational needs, universal accessibility on the different campuses of the university and equal opportunities.

1. Accompaniment and follow-up by means of counselling and personalized plans for students who need to improve their academic performance.
2. In terms of attention to diversity, non-significant curricular adjustments are made in terms of methodology and assessment for those students with specific educational needs, pursuing an equal opportunities for all students.
3. We offer students different extracurricular resources to develop different competences that will encourage their personal and professional development.
4. Vocational guidance through the provision of tools and counselling to students with vocational doubts or who believe they have made a mistake in their choice of degree.

Students in need of educational support can write to us at:

[orientacioneducativa.uev@universidadeuropea.es](mailto:orientacioneducativa.uev@universidadeuropea.es)

## 11. ONLINE SURVEYS

Your opinion matters!

The Universidad Europea encourages you to participate in several surveys which help identify the strengths and areas we need to improve regarding professors, degree programs and the teaching-learning process.

The surveys will be made available in the "surveys" section in virtual campus or via e-mail.

Your assessment is necessary for us to improve.

Thank you very much for your participation.