

ECS 4504-01: Economics of the Middle East

Spring 2008
TR 9:30–10:45 in HCB 313

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Office Hours: TWR 11:00–12:20 or by appointment

Reading Materials:

- Richards, A. and Waterbury, A. 2008. *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, 3rd edition. Westview Press.
- A collection of on-line reading materials will be posted on the class Blackboard page.

Course Description and Objectives: The purpose of this course is to examine the the economies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). By the end of this course you should have a general knowledge of the economic development of these countries, how they got where they are, the current economic issues they face, and the policies they are using to address these issues. The MENA is a large, complex and diverse region which faces a wide range of economic issues. Our focus will be on the economic development, current economic policies and the future economic prospects of the region. Other courses are available that focus on the cultural, political and social issues of the Middle East.

Assignments and Responsibilities: Economic theories of development and growth are complex and abstract. To understand them and to learn to “think like an economist” you must be actively engaged with the material. I am an advocate of learning-by-doing and of applying critical thinking. Critical thinking is self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. All learning begins with questions and to truly understand a topic you must be able to generate important questions about it. I will try to minimize class lecture time and maximize class discussion time and try to coach you through the steps of critical thinking. *This means that you must come to class prepared.* You will be expected to read the assignments *before* we discuss them in class. To encourage this, %20 of your course grade will depend upon your preparation and class discussion. You will not be able to earn an A in this course if you do not come to class prepared. Not only will coming to class prepared earn you more points in the class but it will also make the class much more interesting for us all.

During the first week of class you will either choose or be assigned a particular country (or countries) that you will focus on throughout the semester. For instance, if you choose Lebanon, you will be the class “country expert” for Lebanon. When we discuss issues such as labor markets you will be expected to know the relevant facts about Lebanon. *You should make a folder for your country and include in it*

such things as the World Fact Book report, Census population pyramids, etc., and bring that folder to class so that you will have basic facts available during discussion.

For each topic you will read chapters from the assigned text as well as some on-line material to be posted on the class Blackboard web page. I will begin each topic with a brief background lecture to cover the basic economic concepts involved and to summarize the essential arguments. Each topic area will also include an in-class discussion of the reading material. To help you prepare for these discussions I will post on the class Blackboard page a set of short questions associated with the readings. You should read the assigned material with these questions in mind and prepare short answers for each of the questions and try to find specific information for your assigned country. You should also prepare questions of your own that are motivated by your readings.

On most days, I will begin the class with a short quiz that will be taken from the discussion questions. A major part of your class participation will depend upon these short quizzes. Your answers will be graded on a four three basis as follows: 0 points if not submitted; 1 point if submitted but you do not know the answer; 2 points if your answer is not particularly inspired; 3 points if your answers are specific to the readings and your specific country. Make sure that you arrive to class on time since the quizzes will be during the first few minutes of class.

You will also prepare two short research papers. I will post several on-line resources in the Resources folder of the class Blackboard page but you will no doubt find other relevant material for your papers. The research reports will be no more than fifteen double spaced pages each including graphs and tables. You will be given a suggested outline for each paper. These papers must be submitted to the class Blackboard page using the Digital Drop Box by midnight on Sunday of the week due. You will receive a 10% penalty for each day that your paper is late. In other words, if you post your paper any time on Monday the most you can score is 90%; if you post on Tuesday the most you can score is 80%, etc. Your papers should be submitted in either PDF or Word format. The name of the file that you post should be constructed as: the first six letters of your last name + the first letter of your first name + the paper number + the extension “doc” or “pdf”. Thus, the file name for my first paper would be: “BeaumoP1.pdf”.

Grading: Your grade will be determined as follows:

- midterm exam (R 2/28) @ 20%
- final exam (F 4/25) @ 30%
- 2 short papers @ 15% each for 30%
- quizzes, discussion questions and participation @ 20%

The approximate grade distribution will be: A: 90% or higher; B: 80–89%; C: 70–79%; D: 60–69%; F: less than 60%. This distribution is only approximate and will depend upon where “natural” breaks occur in the grade distribution. In addition, I will assign ‘+’ and ‘-’ grades at the upper and lower end of each range. (There is no A+ grade.)

Exams will be short answer and essay questions. The final exam is cumulative and will be given during the scheduled final exam period (Friday, 4/25/2008, 12:30–2:30 PM in HCB 313). Make-up exams will not be given unless you have a legitimate and verifiable emergency.

Participation will be judged according to how prepared you are to discuss the assigned readings. Simply making comments does not constitute *useful* participation. You must be able to make specific comments relevant to the readings.

Academic Honor Code: Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code published in The Florida State University Bulletin and the Student Handbook. The Academic Honor System of The Florida State University is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student's own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community.

Please see the following web site for a complete explanation of the Academic Honor Code. (<http://www.fsu.edu/Books/Student-Handbook/codes/honor.html>)

You should realize that I take the honor code very seriously. If I find you guilty of plagiarizing or cheating on an exam I will assign you a zero for the assignment and report you to the Dean of Students with the recommendation that you be expelled from the university.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Student Disability Resource Center.

Syllabus Change Policy: This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Day	Topics	Readings
1	1/8 1/10	T R	Course overview. Critical thinking. Economic Basics: Supply & Demand Post country choices via Digital Dropbox	Web Web Notes
2	1/15 1/17	T R	Economic Basics: GDP; NIA; PPP Economic Basics: PPF & Dutch Disease	RW #2, Web Notes RW #2, Web Notes
3	1/22 1/24	T R	Development Strategies Growth Accounting	RW #2, Web Notes Web Notes
4	1/29 1/31	T R	Economic Growth Economic Growth	RW # 3, Web Notes RW # 3
5	2/5 2/7	T R	Demographics Demographics	RW # 4 Web
Paper # 1: Current Economic Conditions of <i>YourCountry</i> Due by midnight Sunday 2/10				
6	2/12 2/14	T R	Human Capital Human Capital	RW #5 Web
7	2/19 2/21	T R	Water and Food Water and Food	RW # 6 Web
8	2/26 2/28	T R	Review and discussion MID-TERM EXAM	weeks 1 through 7 weeks 1 through 7
9	3/4 3/6	T R	Oil and the Middle East Oil and the Middle East	Web Web
10	3/11 3/13	T R	SPRING BREAK SPRING BREAK	
11	3/18 3/20	T R	The Public Sector State-Led Growth	RW # 7 RW # 8
12	3/25 3/27	T R	Outcomes and U.S. Policy Planning & Development	RW # 9 Web
Paper # 2: The Human and Natural Resources of <i>YourCountry</i> Due by midnight Sunday 3/30				
13	4/1 4/3	T R	The Role of Islam Islamic Economics	RW # 14 Web
14	4/8 4/10	T R	Islamic Banking Islamic Banking	Web Web
15	4/15 4/17	T R	Integration & Migration Future Prospects of MENA	RW # 15, Web RW # 16
	4/25	F	FINAL EXAM 12:30–2:30 PM in HCB 313	