

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY
HIST 3370.01I- 26070 –EARLY MIDDLE EAST HISTORY
FALL 2017

Instructor: Dr. Tamer Balci

Telephone: (956) 665-8785

Classroom: ELABS 117 (Edinburg) and University Library, 2.206 (Brownsville)

This course is taught on ITV Course Time: 3:05 pm - 4:20 pm

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Office: ELABS 346 B

Office Hours: T-R: 2:00 – 3:00 pm in office or by appointment

Course Description & Objectives: *Hist 3300 is a prerequisite of this course ONLY for History majors.* This is an advanced course concentrating on the historical trajectory of what is broadly defined as the Middle East from a period dating from the rise of Islam in the seventh century up to Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. The course is divided into two main parts. In the first part, we will cover a broad range of subjects including the basic tenets of Islam, Shiite-Sunni differences, Islamic philosophy, Sufism and the emergence of Islamic civilization along with the history of Islamic empires until the late eighteenth century. The rise and fall of the Umayyad, the Abbasid, and the Mamluk, the Seljuk, and the Ottoman and the Safavid empires will be covered along with the interaction of these empires with Europe, India, China and Africa. Muslim rule in Spain, the Crusades and the Mongolian invasions will be examined in regard to their influence on the indigenous people in Spain and the Middle East. In the second part, we will seek to understand how the various states and regions of the Middle East gradually lost their dominant economic and political position to the West after the geographical discoveries. The course also aims to better understand how the indigenous leadership and peoples of the Middle East world grappled with the challenges posed by the advent of the modern world system.

Course Level Student Learning Objectives for Hist 3370

1. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to explain in writing main beliefs, events and persons that shaped the Middle East history.
2. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to examine current issues critically from a historical perspective and argue effectively in writing about major issues of the pre-modern Middle East history.
3. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to identify and critique historical facts and interpretations, and analyze issues in historical context in writing.
4. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to remember the significance of Islam and the Middle East in the world politics in writing.
5. Students who successfully complete this course will be able to analyze primary sources in writing and differentiate primary and secondary sources.

Required Texts

1. William Ochenwald & Sydney Nettleton Fisher. *The Middle East: A History*. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2010. Seventh Edition.
2. Karen Armstrong. *Islam: A Short History*. New York: Random House, 2000, 2002.

Recommended Source: <http://web.library.yale.edu/international/near-east-collection>

Note: As the course must cover a number of issues that cannot be examined solely from the perspective of a single work, some shorter works, articles and translation of primary documents will be available on library reserve, or will be accessed on Blackboard.

Course Requirements & Assignments

4 In-Class Group Assignments: You will receive four in-class group assignments. These assignments include, reading, analyzing and discussing primary documents. You will read the assigned documents and answer the questions as a group. Analyzing primary documents requires background knowledge of the historical period. You are advised to read history of the period from your textbook or the course notes. Primary documents will be available on Blackboard. You are required to print them out in advance.

Grading Group Assignments: Every assignment will be graded based on its focus, content, accuracy adequacy and interpretation. You may receive up to fifty points for each assignment. Incomplete, inaccurate or unsatisfactory assignments will get lower points. Assignments will make up total two hundred points toward your final grade. Group members will receive the same grade.

1 Analytical Essay Writing: During the semester you will write one analytical essay. Essay-writing guidelines and all related handouts will be posted on Blackboard.

2 Quizzes: There will be 2 short quizzes.

1 Midterm Examination: The midterm exam will cover all material presented during the first half of the course, including readings and lectures.

1 Final Examination: The final exam will cover all material presented during the second half of the course, including readings and lectures.

Course Policies

Grading Policy: I will grade all assignments and exams within 10 days. Essays will be graded within 20 days.

1 Analytical Essay	(300 Points)	2 Quizzes	(2x50=100 Points)
1 Midterm Examination	(200 Points)	4 In-Class Assignments	(4x50=200 Points)
1 Final Examination	(200 Points)		
Total:	1000 Points		

Grades will be determined as listed below

A: 900 points or more

C: 700 to 799 points

B: 800 to 899 points

D: 600 to 699 points

F: Below 600 points

Class Participation & Attendance: You will participate in weekly discussions of the required texts and other books or articles as assigned. You are expected to participate in class discussions. You should come to class prepared and have done as much of the reading as you can. Showing a consistent lack of preparation will hurt your prospects for success in this class in all of its facets. No more than 2 excused absences are allowed. If you have to miss a session, you should notify me in advance. You may be dropped from the course if you miss more than 3 meetings or two consecutive assignments. Be aware of and keep up with the Course Schedule in the Syllabus. Participate in activities to the best of your ability.

Course Drops: According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

Communication and Netiquette: Students in online courses should use the email system in Blackboard Learn. I will answer all emails within TWO BUSINESS days. Per UTRGV policy, all email communication between the UTRGV faculty and staff and students must be conducted through the students' official University supplied UTRGV email account. Therefore, please use your UTRGV assigned email for any correspondence with UTRGV faculty and staff. Other emails may be blocked by the spam filter. You are responsible for the consequences of an undelivered or delayed email that are blocked by the spam filter. All students must have adequate writing skills to communicate content in a professional and concise manner. Students must be proficient in their written presentations including strategies for developing ideas, citing scholarly references, writing style, wording, phrasing, and using language conventions. Students must follow Chicago Manual of Style guidelines, use non-racist and non-sexist language, and include sufficient references to support their thesis and ideas in the assignments.

Late Work and Make Ups: Make-up exams will be given only if you provide a documented emergency situation that had prevented you from completing the exam. If you miss an exam, you must come to my office to take your exam. There is no make up for missed in-class group assignments.

Incomplete Policy: Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. An incomplete will only be assigned if you have a documented emergency. All incomplete course assignments must be completed within 30 days.

Grading Assignments and Exams: I will grade and give feedback on all assignments, Quizzes, Midterm and Final exams within 10 days. Essays will be graded within 20 days.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion

from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism, and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and contact Student Accessibility Services to schedule an appointment to initiate services. It is recommended that you schedule an appointment with Student Accessibility Services before classes start. However, accommodations can be provided at any time. **Brownsville Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu. **Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence: In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “responsible employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect in an environment free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

Mandatory Course Evaluation Period: Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (<http://my.utrgv.edu>); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available:

Fall 2017 Module 1	Oct. 5 – Oct. 11
Fall 2017 Module 2	Nov. 29 – Dec. 5
Fall 2017 (full semester)	Nov. 15 – Dec. 6

Course policies are subject to change: It is the student’s responsibility to check Blackboard for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in Blackboard.

Topics & Schedule

August 29-31: Introduction to the course; geography and the peoples of the Middle East. Pre-Islamic Society and the Age of Prophet Muhammad. **Reading:** O & F, p.1-35, Armstrong p. 3-23.

September 5-7: The age of caliphates and the emergence of Umayyad Empire. Basic tenets of Islam. **Reading:** O & F, p. 37-61. Armstrong, p. 23-37. Armstrong, p. 41-50. *Primary document reading 1: "Isra-Mirac" posted on Blackboard.*

September 12-14: Sources for early Islamic history: Qur'an and Hadith. Main Islamic schools of thought: Shia and Sunni Islam. End of the Umayyad Empire and rise of the Abbasid Caliphs. **Reading:** O & F, p. 63-95. Armstrong, p. 50-77.

September 19-21: Islamic Civilization: Philosophy, Science and Literature. Social life and the roles of Women. **Reading:** O & F, p. 96-120. *Primary document reading 2: "Constitution of Medina" posted on Blackboard.*

September 26: QUIZ 1 !!!

September 28: Muslim rule in Spain and N. Africa. The emergence of Turkish domination, the Seljuk Empire and the Crusades. **Reading:** O & F, p. 121-134. Armstrong, p. 81-96.

Oct 3-5: The Mongol invasions. Fall of the Abbasid Caliphate and the Seljuks. The rise of Mamluk Empire. **Reading:** O & F, p. 135-144. Armstrong, p. 96-111.

October 10: Midterm exam review.

October 12: MIDTERM EXAM !!!

October 17-19: The rise of Ottoman Empire and the late Byzantine Empire. **Reading:** O & F, p. 149-169. Armstrong, 115-138.

October 24-26: The struggles of the Muslim Empires: The Ottoman Empire against the Safevid and the Mamluk empires. **Reading:** O & F, p. 171-189. *Primary document reading 3: Al-Jahiz: "The Merits of the Turks" Posted on Blackboard.*

October 31-Nov 2: The institutions of the Safevid and the Ottoman empires. **Reading:** O & F, p. 190-214.

November 7-9: The institutions of the Safevid and the Ottoman empires. **Reading:** O & F, p. 215-230.

November 14: Impact of the geographical discoveries on the Middle East: transformation of the Ottoman Empire and the collapse of the Safevids. **Reading:** O & F, p. 231-255. Armstrong, p. 141-191. *Primary document reading 4: "Safevid historian Eskandar Monshi Beg Narrates Battle of Chalderan" posted on Blackboard.*

November 16: QUIZ 2 !!!

November 21: Middle East and the West: The French Revolution and its impact on the Middle East. **Reading:** O & F, p. 259-270.

November 23: Thanksgiving Holiday! No Meeting!

November 28-30: Enlightenment and the Middle East. **Reading:** TBA

December 5: Final Exam Review: Overview of the key issues.

FINAL EXAMINATION: TBA