One hundred years ago, the borders of modern Middle Eastern states did not exist. With the conclusion of World War I in 1918, however, the European powers divided up the territories of the former Ottoman Empire and created new borders, new states – and new conflicts. Beginning c. 1918, we will explore the development of each Middle Eastern country’s unique identity and history and how Middle Eastern countries interact with one another, and with the outside world, today. In this context we will explore the differences between Sunnis and Shiis, Middle Eastern minorities such as Druze, Christians, Alawis, and Ismailis, and the differences between Arabs, Turks, Persians and Kurds. The role of oil, the emergence of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the growth and development of political Islam, and the causes and effects of the turmoil in the Arab world, Iran, and Turkey in the last several years will all be considered as part of this class. The class will include extensive readings, lectures, and class discussions, and relevant video footage will be used to illuminate the region’s unique history and political style.

Special attention will be given to ethnic and/or religious minorities in each Middle Eastern country under investigation in this class. We will use a textbook, William L. Cleveland and Martin P. Bunton’s *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Westview Press, 2012- 5th edition) as well as a variety of articles from academic journals and chapters from books. Newspaper and/or magazine articles of contemporary significance and relevance will be suggested as well as we approach a particular week’s assignment.

As the semester progresses inevitably more time is spent on certain topics, and less so on others. This means that some times we will not stick precisely to the syllabus as currently constituted; we may spend more time on a particular country than intended based on student interest as well as based on the course of contemporary events. Thus the syllabus may be slightly adjusted to reflect such minor changes as the semester unfolds. This is to be expected and you will always be informed of any changes several weeks before they happen.

Class requirements will include 2 papers of about 5-7 pages each, a final exam, and class participation. Attendance in class is important and you are strongly encouraged to attend every class, if possible. Since it’s the summer office hours are pretty informal and we can meet right after class, for as long as you like or need, or by appointment.

Your grade will be computed on the following basis: two papers of about 5-7 pages each, a short answer final exam, and class participation. Each paper will be worth 25% of the grade, the final exam is worth 30% of the final grade, and class participation is worth 20% of your final grade.
Paper topics will be distributed at the beginning of class; you will be asked to compare and contrast key developments in the state formation of multiple Middle Eastern countries. Papers should be double-spaced and in 12 point format. Essays should include citations from the assigned sources – the Cleveland and Bunton book, the assigned articles, and class lectures. You may also choose to consult additional articles from peer-reviewed academic journals or book chapters from reputable academic presses. When in doubt, please consult with me. When citing class lectures, please provide the date of the lecture as well as the lecturer’s name.


It is highly recommended to keep up with news about the contemporary Middle East. Articles will be discussed in class on a regular basis. Some newspapers/websites to keep track of might include The New York Times and the Washington Post from the U.S., The Daily Star (Lebanon), Al-Ahram (Egypt), and Ha’aretz and the Jerusalem Post (Israel). There are, of course, many others as well.

The Middle East news site “Al-Monitor” is highly recommended.

**Week 1 – July 10, 11, 13 – Introducing the Modern Middle East, World War I, and begin Modern Turkey**

**Readings:**

1). Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 35-93


3). Please get a head start and begin reading on Turkey and Iran for the following week; your first paper is due on Friday June 16 – the end of week 2!

**Week 2 – July 17, 18, and 20 – Turkey and Iran**

**Readings on Turkey:**

1). Cleveland and Bunton, (on Turkey) pp. 289-324, 331-349, 504-528, 941-955


**Recommended:**


**Readings on Iran:**

1). Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 349-363, 528-551, 675-716, 955-966, 996-1006


**Recommended:**


3). Najibullah Lafraie, *Revolutionary Ideology and Islamic Militancy: the Iranian Revolution and Interpretations of the Quran* (I.B. Tauris, 2009), chs. 9-10 (online access)
Week 3 – July 24, 25, 27 – Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon

**Egypt - Readings:**

1). Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 364-384, 552-590, 617-628, 717-738, 755-762, 1007-1020


**Recommended:**

1). Michal Lipa, “Internal Determinants of Authoritarianism in the Arab Middle East: Egypt Before the Arab Spring”, *Hemispheres*, 31:3 (2016), 57-67


**Syria**

**Readings:**

1). Cleveland and Bunton – pp. 406-419, 425-427, 591-597, 802-821, 1023-1026,

**Recommended:**

1). Michael Provence, *The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism* (University of Texas Press, 2005), chapter 3, “Mobilizing the Mountain” (online access through Brandeis University Library)

2). Fouad Ajami, ch. 7, ”The Truth of the Sects,” in *The Syrian Rebellion* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 2012), (online access through Brandeis University Library)
Recommended:


Lebanon

Readings:

1. Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 419-425, 608-617, 738-755, 966-973


Recommended:


Week 4 – July 31, August 1, 3 – Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia

Iraq

Readings:

1). Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 385-404, 597-604, 821-847, 861-882, 976-995


Recommended:


Jordan – Readings:

1). Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 399-403, 604-608


3). Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Modern King in the Arab Spring," The Atlantic, April 2013

Recommended:


**Saudi Arabia**

**Readings:**

1). Cleveland and Bunton, pp. 430-443, 763-786, 1026-1029


**Recommended:**


**Week 5 – August 7, 8, 10 – Introducing the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Middle East Overview and Review, and final exam.**


**Final Exam Thursday, August 10**