

## **HTS 2041 Syllabus**

History of the Modern Middle East Section A 3 Credits

SUM 2026

### **Instructor Information**

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**Instructor: Laura Bier**

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### **General Course Information**

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#### **Description**

This course will cover the political, cultural and social processes (both global and local) which have shaped the Middle East and North Africa in the modern period (18th-20th century). First, we will be looking at the rise of nationalism and the role that imperial powers from Europe and beyond had on the formation of the modern nation-states in the region. Second, we will be studying the major ideologies that have mobilized communities across the region and the rise of new social and political movements, with a particular focus on mass politics. Third, we will touch upon some of the major cultural and social changes of the last two centuries. Covering a geographic area that stretches from North Africa to Iran, this course will rely upon case studies from different locales to highlight the diversity of the political, social, and economic life of the modern Middle East. We will use visual sources (photos, propaganda posters and films), audio sources (interviews, old newsreels and music) as well as textual sources (including official documents, memoirs and newspaper articles to center Middle Eastern perspectives and include many contrasting voices from the region.

#### **Course Learning Outcomes**

By the time you finish this course you will be able to

- Describe the major actors, events and forces which have shaped the history of the Middle East from the 18<sup>th</sup> century through the first decade of the 21st century
- Explain the impact of global and local forces on the region, particularly changing relations with Europe and the United States
- Recognize the diversity of voices and experiences within the region
- Make informed arguments about the region and its history and critically evaluate the claims of others.

#### **Required Course Materials**

James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History (5th ed.)*

*Suad Amiry, Sharon and my Mother-in-Law: Ramallah diaries*

Additional readings will be available in the Course Pack, available free of charge on Canvas

**Grading Policy:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>Map Quiz</b>	5%
<b>Midterm</b>	15%
<b>Short Quizzes</b>	25%
<b>Perusal Assignments</b>	25%
<b>Preparation/Participation assignments</b>	15%
<b>Final</b>	15%

**Description of Graded Components**

You will have a variety of assignments in this course ranging from short quizzes to written document analyses. Here is some additional information:

**Map quiz**

Will test your knowledge of basic regional geography

**Short Quizzes**

One per week. Multiple choice and short answer. These will help you assess how well you understood concepts, events and people covered in the modules for the week. They will be primarily based on the readings in your textbook.

**Perusal Assignments**

Perusal is an application which allows you to annotate texts as a group. We will use it to annotate primary sources. There is a short introductory assignment which you will complete which will explain how to work with it. Perusal assignments are weekly

## Preparation/Participation assignments

These include:

- Opening questions
  - These are quick questions to get you to start thinking at the beginning of a module (it essentially substitutes for a question I might start an in-person lecture with a 5-10 min. student discussion). They are worth 1 point each and are graded on a pass/fail basis. You can access them from within the module section.
- Discussion posts
  - We will have weekly, online discussions. You can access them from within the Module section.
  - You will also be required to submit one comment or reply to each discussion, although I hope you will submit more. I would far rather have one substantive, thoughtful comment from each one of you than a bunch of comments like "good point!" or even the more sophisticated "When you said x, y and z it really resonated with me."
- **Midterm and Final**
  - 900-1000 word essay exam consisting of responding to a single question. You will be given a list of possible questions a week before the exam.

All assignments should be handed in on Canvas. I won't accept emailed work, mostly because the chances are good it will get lost

All assignments will be due at 11:59 pm on Sundays.

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage
<b>A</b>	90-100%
<b>B</b>	80-89%
<b>C</b>	70-79%
<b>D</b>	60-69%
<b>F</b>	0-59%

## Course Policies

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### Attendance and/or Participation

Your participation grade is calculated solely on the written participation assignments described above.

### Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

### **This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.**

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following

Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Georgia Tech is a public institution which means **access to accommodations for any disability is your right** as a member of the public. Also, Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established accommodations with the Offices of Disability Services, please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through Disability Services, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but not

limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), please contact the Office of Disability Services at 404.894.2563 or [dsinfo@gatech.edu](mailto:dsinfo@gatech.edu) or Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs

### **Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

