

Common Course Outline
POLS 247
Contemporary Middle East Politics
3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

POLS 247- 3 Credits - Contemporary Middle East Politics examines 21st century Middle East politics and policy and their relationship to the United States. Students explore complex current issues in a political and historical context for understanding the Middle East. Topics include U.S. foreign policy in the region, the role of Islam, terrorism, the politics of oil, arms proliferation, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian Question, nationalism, globalization and the Gulf Wars. Students investigate the social, religious, economic, and political impact Middle East nations have on the U.S. and with each other.

Pre-requisites: POLS 101 or POLS 111 or permission of the Political Science Program Coordinator

Overall Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. identify countries in the Middle East region;
2. describe middle eastern geography, political systems and natural resources;
3. discuss Middle East history and culture and its impact on other regions;
4. explain the Middle East region's religious diversity and its significance to states and cultural values;
5. outline the features of Islam and the different sects in the religion;
6. debate the complexities of the Middle East relationships between different states, peoples, international organizations, and terrorist groups;
7. outline the backgrounds of the present day conflicts;
8. explain the growth of terrorism and terrorist groups in the Middle East and their platforms;
9. discuss the causes and outcomes of warfare in the Middle East since World War II;
10. analyze the role of the United States in shaping events since World War II, nation building and impact on the region;
11. evaluate the role of the political, economic and social interest of the United States in the region;
12. explore the political and historical roles played by Europe, Asia, and Africa in the Middle East;
13. explain the challenges of establishing peace in the Middle East; and
14. assess current events in light of the cultural and historic legacies of the region.

Major Topics:

- I. Meet the Middle East
 - a. History, religion and the region
 - b. Religious and ethnic minorities
 - c. History, beliefs and impact of Islam
 - d. Government structures and bringing democracy to the Middle East

- II. American involvement in the region
 - a. U.S. History in the Middle East: from Barbary Pirates to Iraq
 - b. Arab Israeli conflicts and cooperation
 - c. U.S. and Iran: CIA, Shah, 1979-1981 hostage crisis, Iranian Revolution, nuclear development
 - d. U.S. and Iraq: Saddam Hussein, 1991 Gulf War, 2003 Gulf War
 - e. Role of oil in Middle East politics

- III. Terrorism and the Middle East
 - a. Terrorist: national/religious affiliations and sponsors
 - b. Terrorism emerges from the post-Cold War era
 - c. The Middle East after 9/11
 - d. What do the terrorists want

- IV. Inside the region: people, politics and behavior
 - a. Role of woman in society
 - b. Media information age in Middle East politics
 - c. Globalization and the future

Course Requirements

Grading/exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

Class participation in at least 5 collaborations, debates, oral presentations and/or online discussion forums about current political events and topics

A minimum of 4 examinations

A research paper or project on a selected topic of interest and approved by the instructor

Other Course Information:

This course is a Political Science elective.