This course is about the economic structures, institutions and policy challenges in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The course starts with a broad overview of the main structural features that distinguish Middle Eastern economies and goes on to address selected aspects of economic policy in the contemporary period in areas related to demography and human resources, poverty and macroeconomic adjustment. For the purposes of this course, the MENA region comprises the Arab countries, Iran and Turkey.

Objectives of the Course:

- To conceptualise the structural characteristics and features of the MENA region economies and to offer a consistent framework for the study of these economies.
- To understand the linkages amongst the MENA economies through labour and capital flows and channels of transmission of oil-market related shocks.
- To explore and discuss critically specific policy approaches to identified economic problems relating to human resources (population, employment, gender gaps and migration), macroeconomic adjustment, poverty, and inequality.
- To enhance critical understanding of economic problems and development strategies in the MENA region and discuss policy options in regional and international contexts.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand the socio-economic features and structural characteristics of the MENA economies, and attempt to classify the MENA economies according to their different structural characteristics (oil and non-oil economies, labour surplus and labour deficit economies, etc)
- Analyse the specificity of the ‘demographic transition’ process in the Middle East in general and examine forces behind persistent high fertility rates, in particular.
- Examine the structure of labor markets, education and female employment. Analyse the causes and possible remedies for gender gaps and low female labour force participation.
- Discuss the forms, determinants and consequences of labour transfer and migration between the economies of the region.
- Analyse trends in poverty, inequality and income distribution and examine determinants of wage differentials in several economies in the region.
- Discuss and apply key concepts of economic policy analysis to contemporary problems and opportunities in areas relating to macroeconomic adjustment and structural reform of economic systems in the region.
- Develop an in depth appreciation of the position of the MENA countries in the wider context of the international economy.

Coursework & Assessment

40% Weekly reaction papers: Students are required to write a total of eight weekly reaction papers on a specific seminar topic/question (500-750 words each).

35% Final Examination: A final take-home examination will be cumulative and ask students to connect particular seminar topics in essay form, drawing upon class readings, lectures, and seminar discussions as well as relevant outside material.

15% Attendance and Participation: Students are expected to come to class prepared and to participate critically in each weekly seminar. Students are permitted to miss one class without penalty. Participation points are tallied per class meeting.

10% Presentation: Students must make one ten-minute presentation addressing a given seminar question. A student presentation consists of a lead discussant cogently drawing from a careful and critical reading of the referenced material on specific seminar topics. Success is normally judged by ability to generate round-table debate and discussion within the group. Please refer to the list of seminar topics provided separately for this course.

* Essential Readings, the rest are highly recommended

Session 1: Introduction and Theory Building


Session 2: Application of Theory and Overview of Region


**Session 3: Demography and Population**


**Session 4: Gender and Development**


**Session 5: Labour Market Structure**


**Session 6: Regional Migration**


* 23. Maurice Girgis (2002) "Will Nationals and Asians Replace Arab Workers in the GCC?" Egyptian Economic Centre Working Paper No. 74

**Session 7: Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment**


(Also see from week one readings: Said, M., H Chang and K Sakr (1997) “Industrial Policy and the Role of the State in Egypt: Lessons from the East Asian Experience (especially pages 219-235 and 252-259)

**Session 8: Poverty and Inequality**


Session 9: Globalisation and Regional Integration


Session 10: Revolution and Democracy

Readings to be Announced.

Common Data Sources:

World Bank, *World Development Report*, annually (contains useful development data for various regions including MENA); an electronic database of the World Bank’s indicators is found in *World Development Indicators (WDI)*, CD-ROM, updated annually, Washington D.C.

ERF (1998), *Economic Trends in the MENA Region*, (annual), The Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey, Cairo: ERF (electronic version also available on the net, see ERF site below).

UNDP, *Arab Human Development Report*, annual report with much data on socio-economic indicators in Arab part of the Middle East

Some Useful Web sites on Middle East:

1. [http://www.erf.org.eg](http://www.erf.org.eg) (The site for Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey, Cairo: ERF; see especially Working Papers and Economic Trends)

2. [http://www.meeaweb.org/](http://www.meeaweb.org/) (Middle East Economic Association, MEEA, based in North America, contains some electronic papers; also useful for conferences, etc)

3. [http://www.mesa.arizona.edu](http://www.mesa.arizona.edu) (Middle East Studies Association of North America, MESA; this is more interdisciplinary)


5. [http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en](http://www.almasryalyoum.com/en) (One of many Egyptian dailies, you will find keeping up with Egyptian news to be a good supplement to class discussion)
**Guidelines for writing good response papers**

Weekly discussion questions should be taken as mere suggestions and jumping off points for further discussion. These papers are foremost an analysis of the readings and the theoretical frameworks of the authors. That means that you should stick to the text as much as possible and employ evidence from the texts as much as possible.

**Argument:** Your paper must have an argument. This can be a critique of one (or several) of the authors, an alternative explanation, a comparison – there is a lot of flexibility but your paper must have an original argument. These are not summaries.

**Structure:** make sure that your essay is carefully crafted (introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion, topic sentences etc.) and uses details and evidence to back up your claims.

**Tone:** you are writing for the professor, but imagine that this will be published in a journal. Your tone should be formal and your audience broad.

**Content:** This is not a summary. Assume that we have all read the same material and all have comprehended it. Now, take this a step further by examining the theoretical frameworks of the authors and analyze and critique (not necessary criticize, but feel free to challenge these if you'd like) the works using evidence from the readings. In short, question whether the framework that one author uses or promotes is more applicable or less than another. What assumptions is the author starting with to make his or her conclusion?

**Citations:** Of course we have all read the same material, but you need to tell us which of these articles you got your information from. If it is an outside source, you need to write a full citation. If it is from the required reading you may just use an in-line text citation without a bibliography. But, at the very least, we need author and page number. If there are two articles by the same author we need the year as well in order to distinguish between them.

**Style:** Papers should be double spaced with one inch margins. Indent your paragraphs and you don't need spaces between paragraphs. This is the format of a formal academic essay.

Finally, look over your paper and read it for grammatical and spelling mistakes.
MARKING CRITERIA FOR ESSAYS/FINAL PAPER

Presentation: Clarity of Exposition and Correct Use of Sources (20% of the paper grade)

A: Ideas are well-expressed. Answer structured clearly, with a good introduction and logical progression. Grammar and spelling are accurate. Sources are wide, relevant and thoroughly analysed. Correct use of in-text references and a comprehensive bibliography is attached.

D: Poorly structured, documented and communicated; Answer confused and lacks a coherent and logical framework. Several grammatical and spelling mistakes are present. Sources either not consulted or irrelevant to the research question. Referencing is absent or unsystematic, and no bibliography attached.

Analytical Content: Methodology, Use of Theory and Supporting Evidence (60% of paper grade)

A: Analytically sophisticated with a wide and deep knowledge of literature and a superior marshalling of evidence. Question is addressed comprehensively and imaginatively. Student was attentive to the research question throughout the essay. Theories well handled and correctly applied to question on hand. Sufficient conceptual and empirical evidence is given in support of the key arguments (summary tables/charts can be used). Conclusions and policy implications are analytically sound, stated clearly, and are well grounded in theory and substantiated by adequate evidence.

D: Little analytical technique or depth; evident omissions or misunderstandings; Failed attempt to address the question. Arguments lack supporting evidence. Argument shows no theoretical awareness or inappropriate choice and handling of theory. Conclusions and policy implications are unsubstantiated / invalid; based on anecdotes and sweeping generalisations.

Originality of Argument: Evidence of Critical Thinking (20% of paper grade)

A: Original ideas and/or synthesis of arguments presented in readings are offered. Critical analysis is applied.

D: Generally deficient in effort and/or argument. Answer merely repeats or summarizes readings and lecture and lacks critical thought.