Course Description and Objectives
This course is a reading intensive course on the modern Middle East, “the cradle of civilization,” located at the juncture of Africa, Asia and Europe. Designed primarily for advanced undergraduates students, it covers a wide time span. We will begin the course with the emergence of Islam in 7th century Arabia, the age of empires, and the important changes of the nineteenth century, which ushered in the period of European dominance. Throughout the course, we will focus on how state policies have limited and/or expanded human rights, and in particular women's rights and well-being. In addition to the required books listed below, we will be reading some contemporary articles and opinion pieces. The countries we will study include Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Palestine/Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Tunisia. We will conclude the course by addressing recent developments in the region and its outlook for the future.

Expectations, requirements and grade breakdown
Attendance and participation: 10%
Quizzes: 30% (Three quizzes; 10 points each, see dates below)
Midterm exam: 30% (on October 26th in Sage Hall Room 330)
Final exam: 30% (open book take-home exam, available from December 9 to Monday, December 12, 2016)

Grading scale: I will use numerical scores, which will translate into letter grades as follows:
A (91-100); B (81-90); C (70-80); D (60-69); F (<60)

1. Attendance and participation 10%
You must attend class regularly, and be on time. You should not miss more than two classes without a legitimate and documented excuse. Here are the highest letter grades you can expect to make in this class if you have more than 2 unexcused absences:
   0-2 absences: A
   3-4 absences: B
   5-7 absences: C
   8-9 absences: D
If there are circumstances that prevent you from regular participation (e.g. travel related to work or a family emergency) talk to me as early as you possibly can, and I will try to make arrangements. Most likely, I will ask that you submit extra work to make up for what you miss.

You should read or view the assigned material and be prepared to answer questions in class. The detailed schedule of readings is included in this syllabus.

2. Quizzes 30% (see below for dates and what each of the three quizzes covers)

3. Midterm exam 30% (during regular class time in Sage Hall Rm 330 on October 26th)

4. Final exam 30% (take home essays, open book, available from December 9 to December 12, 2016)

Office Hours
I will be in my office (GAB 468) between 1 and 2 pm on Mondays. Alternatively, you can email me for an appointment. In addition, if you email me with your questions I will make every effort to answer them within
two business days. As a general rule, do not wait until the last day to ask me a question about an assignment or exam.

**Academic Honesty**
Trust and honesty are central for learning to occur, and I hope that you do not need a reminder about that. However, in the interest of making expectations clear let me state that I will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Please be aware that you commit plagiarism if you:

1) reproduce verbatim (or almost verbatim) another author’s words, without using quotation marks and/or without providing a citation; or
2) use another's ideas (even if you don’t use their precise words) without providing citation.

I adhere to and enforce UNT’s policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). You should review the policy (UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16), which may be located at [http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf](http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf) I will address violations of academic integrity in this course in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy. APPEALS: Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16 “Student Standards of Academic Integrity.”

**Disability Accommodations**
The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**UNT Writing Lab**
If writing is not your *forte*, and you want to produce well-organized, well-written papers for this class or others, take advantage of the the Writing Lab on campus [http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/](http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/)

**Revisions to this syllabus**
It is your responsibility to attend class and to follow Blackboard announcements to keep abreast of any changes to the reading schedule or assignments. Please make sure that you have managed your Bb email account such that your Bb email forwards to the email address you most regularly check.

I may revise the schedule depending on class discussions, contemporary developments, and to accommodate a guest lecturer's schedule. I will give you notice of such changes (ideally) at least one week in advance.

**Required books**

**Recommended texts**
Weekly reading schedule

Week 1: August 29 (Monday): Approaching our subject
- Raewyn Connell and Rebecca Pearse. 2015. “The Question of Gender”, pages 1-12 and “Gender theorists and gender theory” in Gender In World Perspective, (3rd edition) pp. 52-71 (posted on Bb)

Week 2: September 5 (no class on Monday): Introduction to basic beliefs and practices in Islam
- Islam in Encyclopedia Britannica (read up to Islamic Philosophy, on p. 19 of the pdf) posted on Bb or available at http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/295507/Islam#

Week 3: September 12: The role of interpretation in the preservation and inscription of the Qur’an
- Fatima Mernissi. 1975. Beyond the Veil: 18-41 (Bb)
- Decoding the “DNA of Patriarchy” in Muslim Family Laws https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/zainah-anwar-ziba-mir-hosseini/decoding-%E2%80%9Cdna-of-patriarchy%E2%80%9D-in-muslim-family-laws

Week 4: September 19: Founding Islamic discourses
- James Gelvin. Ch 2. Gunpowder Empires
- Leila Ahmed. Ch. 4 & 5
- Quiz #1 on Wednesday, September 21 (over material assigned for August 29 - September 19)

Week 5: September 26: The onset of political and economic transformation: 17-18th centuries
- Gelvin. Ch. 3 & 4
- Ahmed Ch. 6 (about women's lives from 1400-1800)
- Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1993). Turkish Embassy Letters. Introduction, esp. xxvi-xxxiv. Read 57-60 (the hamam); 69-73 (freedom of movement); 113-20 (visit to Sultana); 133-37 (a happy captive).

Week 6: October 3: The question of modernity: 19th century
- Gelvin Chapters 5, 6 & 7, pp. 69-139
- Gelvin. Chapters 8 & 9 (take a brief look at Ch. 10 on constitutionalism)
- Ahmed. Ch. 7
- Quiz #2 on Wednesday, October 5 (over material assigned for September 26 - October 5)

Week 7: October 10: From Empires to Nation-States in the 20th c. Middle East: Focus on Egypt
- Gelvin. Read the section on Egypt in Ch. 12
- Leila Ahmed 8, 9 & 10 (on Social and Intellectual Change and the Divergent Voices in Egyptian politics)
- Optional: Leila Ahmed Ch. 11 & 12 The Struggle for the Future and Conclusion 208-48
- Ruth Michaelson. “Masters with No Universe: The Seething Anger of Egypt's Students Three Years after the Coup” The Daily Beast, June 26, 2016 http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/06/27/the-
Week 8: October 17: From Empires to Nation-States: Turkey
- James Gelvin. Revisit section on the Young Turks in Ch. 9 and read Chapters 11 & the section on Turkey in Ch.12
- Quiz #3 on Wednesday October 19 (over Egypt and Turkey)

Week 9: October 24: From Empires to Nation-States: Iraq, Syria and Palestine/Israel
- Gelvin. Chapter 13 & 14
- Alix Biggs. 2015. “Gender and peacemaking in Israel-Palestine” http://www.demosproject.net/if-wed-had-women-wed-have-an-agreement/
- Films: The Birth of Israel (BBC, 2008) and Anna Baltzer: Life in Occupied Palestine
- Midterm on October 26 during regular class time in Sage Hall 330

Week 10: October 31: From Empires to Nation-States: Iran
- Gelvin. Section on Iran in Ch. 12 and Chapters 16, 17 & 18
- Shirin Ebadi. Iran’s women are not afraid. The Guardian. October 6, 2009 http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/oct/06/iran-women-rights-vote-discrimination
- Worsening conditions for women in Iran begin to draw attention http://www.iranhumanrights.org/2015/04/rouhani-women-discrimination/
- Film: Persepolis

Week 11: November 7: From Empires to Nation-States: Gender in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states
- Gelvin. Section on Saudi Arabia in Ch 12. Also revisit Gelvin Chapter 16 on oil.
Week 12: November 14: Contemporary Issues in the Middle East
- Gelvin Ch. 15, 17 and 19

Week 13: November 21 (Thanksgiving break 24-27): Contemporary Issues in the Middle East and beyond

Week 14: November 28: Contemporary Issues
- Gelvin Ch. 13 (reread)

Week 15: December 5: Last day of class