

# Syllabus

for course at first level

**Middle Eastern and North African Studies I**  
**Mellanöstern- och Nordafrikastudier I**

**30.0 Higher Education  
Credits**  
**30.0 ECTS credits**

<b>Course code:</b>	ABMCG1
<b>Valid from:</b>	Autumn 2023
<b>Date of approval:</b>	2012-03-16
<b>Changed:</b>	2023-03-08
<b>Department</b>	Department of Asian and Middle Eastern studies
<b>Main field:</b>	Mellanösterns språk och kulturer
<b>Specialisation:</b>	G1N - First cycle, has only upper-secondary level entry requirements

## Decision

This syllabus was adopted by the Board of the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies.

The Board of the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies has decided on the revised version.

## Prerequisites and special admittance requirements

Swedish upper secondary school course English B, or equivalent.

## Course structure

Examination code	Name	Higher Education Credits
AB01	Middle East: Religions and Early History	7.5
AB05	Modern Middle Eastern history: 1500-1920	7.5
AB06	Contemporary Middle Eastern history: 1820-2020	7.5
AB03	Politics and Development in the Middle East	7.5

## Course content

The course is the first semester of Middle Eastern and North African studies. Within the framework of this course, the student acquires knowledge about the history of the Middle East and North Africa and the three largest religions in the region; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The course also introduces the student to the region's contemporary political and economic landscape.

The course consists of the following modules:

Middle East Religions and Early History, 7.5 credits:

This course gives an overview of the historical cultural, socio-political and economic developments in the Middle East and North Africa from approximately 1800 BCE to 1500 CE. The course covers the rise of monotheism amid other religious traditions and especially the relationship to the emergence of the three Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), their history, tenets of belief, holy scriptures, rites and central doctrinal groupings.

Modern Middle Eastern history: 1500-1920, 7.5 credits:

This course provides an overview of the modern history of the Middle East, from the decline of the Abbassid

and Seljuk emirates to the Rise of the Ottoman Empire until the end of World War I. It adopts both a chronological and a thematic perspective, in order to outline the most relevant dynamics that the regions included in the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, with a particular focus on political and legal structures, socio-economic transformations and relations with emerging European empires such as Russia, the Habsburgs, Portugal, Britain, France, Italy, Sweden and the Netherlands.

The purpose is to enable the students to outline regional dynamics within the Middle East over the course of the six centuries the Ottoman Empire reigned supreme in the Balkans, North Africa, Arabia, and Western Asia. In this respect, the course must also link the Middle East and North Africa to other regions in the larger Eurasian region and adopt a global perspective. It was the Ottoman Empire, for example, that induced Euro-Atlantic monarchies in Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands to invest in securing alternative routes to Asia in search of direct access to the spice markets at the time dominated by the Ottoman Empire. Corresponding to this process, this course will also help students understand the emergence of the two other great Muslim powers of the era, the Safavids and Mughal Empires.

At the same time, the emergence of the Middle East as both a geopolitical concept and a field of studies will be discussed in a sociocultural context shaped by European imperialism and discuss the intellectual implications by way of consulting major works critiquing orientalism within the field of post-colonial studies. This will enable the students to develop a critical overview of their field of studies, its historical formation, and its current limitations as they include or ignore this critical era in the region's modern history.

Contemporary Middle Eastern history: 1820-2020, 7.5 credits:

This course provides an overview of the contemporary history of the Middle East and North Africa, from the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century, the subsequent rise of a new global order under Euro-American direction after World War I, the Cold War and then the Arab Spring of 2011. It adopts both a chronological and a thematic perspective, in order to outline the most relevant dynamics that the regions included in the expansion of European imperialism at the expense of stability in the Ottoman Empire, with a particular focus on political and legal structures, socio-economic transformations and relations with Euro-American powers such as Russia, the Habsburgs, Germans, Britain, France, Italy, and the United States.

The purpose is to enable the students to outline regional dynamics within the Middle East over the course of the last two centuries that witnessed the rise of modern forms of state rule, a global mechanism to organize interstate relations and a corresponding global economy informed by industrialization and the rise of petroleum-based economies. In this respect, the course adopts a global perspective that links the Middle East and North Africa to other regions during a period of capitalist imperialism and corresponding efforts to resist it. Corresponding to this process, this course will also help students understand the emergence of the major elements of social and political transformation that led to Arab nationalism and political Islam while other arenas of social mobilization, from labor activism, parliamentarism, socialist/communist party development, and women's rights groups shaped the contemporary Middle East.

A number of key texts analyzing these processes will be assigned, drawing especially from major trends in Anthropology, Political Theory, and Historiography to enable students to develop a critical overview of their field of studies, its historical formation, and its current limitations as they include or ignore this region's contemporary history.

Politics and Development in the Middle East, 7.5 credits:

This course provides an introduction to the current landscape of the Middle East and North Africa's political economy. To best accomplish this, students will explore the geographic conditions, demography and cultural politics that shaped the last century of transformation in the region. The course also covers current societies from the perspective of research using gender as a medium of analysis, with particular focus on women's rights in the course of economic change since World War I. The course also deals with the region's contemporary socio-economic experiences with structural changes taking place since World War II and then again, after the Cold War. With the rise of the oil industry during the Cold War a particular area of focus, the course considers the conditions for political and economic development in the Middle East and how various factors impact the forms of labor, social organization, and state formation emerging in the region over the last century of change. By specifically considering issues shaping development in the Middle East around gender, labor, political economy and demography, this course will help students understand the contemporary challenges, such as democratization, for those who live in the region.

### **Learning outcomes**

In order to pass the module Middle East Religions and Early history, 7.5 credits, students are expected to be

able to:

- exhibit knowledge about the history of monotheism and its relations to the rise of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, their tenets of belief, holy scriptures, rites and central doctrinal groupings,
- broadly identify important courses of events and persons in the historical development of the Middle East and North Africa from approximately 1800 BCE to 1500 CE, with a special focus on the role of Prophets such as Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad as they shape the origins of various sects within the religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates.

In order to pass the module Modern Middle Eastern history: 1500-1920, 7.5 credits, students are expected to be able to:

- Show knowledge of the history of the Middle East from the rise the Ottoman empire until the end of World War I and an ability to outline the main political and socio-economic trends and issues and demonstrate how they interconnect;
- Show ability to make connections among different regions of the Middle East and to place the Middle East in a broader trans-regional, even global context throughout history;
- Show ability to critically reflect upon the Middle East as both a geopolitical concept and a field of study using the complex relationships developed over the history of the Ottoman Empire and its rivalries with European and Safavid Empires

In order to pass the module Contemporary Middle Eastern history: 1820-2020, 7.5 credits, students are expected to be able to:

- Show knowledge of the history of the Middle East from the rise the end of empire until the events associated with the Arab Spring in the 2010s and an ability to outline the main political and socio-economic trends and issues and demonstrate how they interconnect;
- Show ability to make connections among different regions of the Middle East and to place the Middle East in a broader trans-regional, even global context throughout the recent past;
- Show ability to critically reflect upon the Middle East as both a geopolitical concept and a field of study using the complex relationships developed over the last two hundred years.

In order to pass the module Politics and Development in the Middle East, 7.5 credits, students are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate basic knowledge of the contemporary political-economic landscape of the Middle East and North Africa.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of what distinguishes the Middle East and North Africa region in terms of the various geographical conditions, demographic challenges and the resulting economic factors.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of gender and labor structures on the region's contemporary social life and women's rights.
- Demonstrate a basic ability to analyze conditions for political and economic development in the Middle East.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge about the study of the Middle East in general and its political economic landscape in particular and thereby insight into the role of knowledge in society and about people's responsibility for how it is used.

### **Education**

The instruction will consist of lectures and seminars. Attendance on all instruction is compulsory.

The instruction will be conducted in Swedish and/or English as specified for each respective course offering.

Instruction is either online or campus-based, as specified for each course offering.

For more detailed information please refer to the course description. The course description will be available one month before the course starts.

### **Forms of examination**

a) All modules are examined on the basis of final exams in the form of digital multiple-choice examinations.

The language of examination, Swedish or English, will be the language stated for the respective course instance.

For more detailed information please refer to the course description. The course description will be available one month before the course starts.

If a student has a certificate with recommendations for special pedagogical support due to a long-term disability, the examiner can adapt the examination or allow the student an alternative examination.

b) Grades will be set according to a seven point scale related to the learning objectives of the course:

A = Excellent

B= Very good

C = Good

D = Satisfactory

E = Adequate

Fx = Fail, some additional work required

F = Fail, much more work required

c) The student will be informed of the written grading criteria when the course starts. The communicated grading criteria are binding.

d) In order to pass the course, students must receive a grade of E or higher on all examinations and meet the attendance requirement of 80 percent on each module.

Under special circumstances, the examiner may, after consulting with the coordinating teacher, grant the student an exemption from the obligation to participate in certain mandatory teaching. The student may then be assigned a compensatory assignment.

The letter grades A-E are converted into number 5-1 and aggregated to an average grade, which is calculated by weighting the number of higher education credits of each module. The final course grade thus constitutes a weighted average of the modules. Standard rules for rounding numbers apply.

Credit transfers of modules should be weighted in when grading of the whole course.

Assignments not submitted on time will be grade with a penalty of one grade on to the seven point scale.

e) At least two examination opportunities should be offered for each course when it is given. At least one examination opportunity should be offered during an academic year when the course is not given.

Students who receive the grade Fx or F twice by the same examiner are entitled to have another examiner appointed for the next examination, unless there are special reasons to the contrary. Such requests should be made to the person responsible for the course.

A student who receives the grade E or higher may not retake the examination to attain a higher grade.

f) The completion of a supplementary assignment in order to convert the grade Fx into a passing grade is not permitted for this course.

### **Interim**

When the syllabus is discontinued, students have the right to be examined according to this syllabus once per semester during a transition period of three semesters.

### **Limitations**

This course may not be included in a degree together with a course, taken in Sweden or elsewhere, of identical or partially similar content.

### **Required reading**

For up-to-date information about required reading, please refer to the department website at [www.su.se/asia](http://www.su.se/asia). The current reading list will be made available at least two months before the course starts.