

**PROPOSAL FOR COURSE CHANGE**

To: Curriculum Committee

From: Social Sciences and Philosophy Department

Date submitted: 15 September 2008

Request for: **Course Addition**

Submitted by: Alexander Mirkovic, Assistant Professor of History

Approved by: Department Head: *H. M. Tm*  
Dean of School: *G. Duncan*

Reviewed by: Registrar: *Jammy Kiwder*  
Vice President:

✓ 11-14-08  
KF

- a. **Catalogue Description:** Political, social, and cultural survey of the history of the Middle East from the rise of Islam to modern times.
- b. **Number:** HIST 3803
- c. **Title for Catalogue:** History of the Middle East
- d. **Title for Course Inventory:** The Middle East
- e. **Description:** Political, social, and cultural survey of the history of the Middle East from the rise of Islam to modern times.
- f. **Effective date or term:** Summer I 2009

**II. Justification and feasibility of course:**

- a. What is the need for this course? Who will take it?  
In the modern global world, especially after 9/11/2001, it has become necessary to know and understand the history of the Middle East and the role of Islam. A good part of the course, especially in the beginning is devoted to Islam and its ambitions to create a "community" of believers. This is particularly significant in the modern world, when Islamic societies are still struggling with this issue. The course was already offered as Social Science Seminar and it drew a considerable number of students. It is geared primarily to history majors, but there were couple of students from other related areas that enrolled and have been able to successfully complete the course.
- b. How does it relate to other work being offered by your department? Is there an overlap with other courses in the department?  
Social science and Philosophy department has been trying to develop a stronger curriculum in non-European (World History). Since there are very few courses in the catalogues that cover this area (World History) there is no overlap. Most other courses in the area of World History are offered by Dr. Micheal Tarver, who teaches Latin American and Asian history. Dr. Georgena Duncan offers course on Africa, which also do not overlap with the proposed course. There is nothing offered in the geographical area of the Middle East and the proposed course would be the first one.
- c. Is the course part of any general plan of development in your department?

app CC 10/24/08  
app FS 11/12/08

The department is trying to strengthen the curriculum in World History and move beyond the traditional areas of US and European history. As a major center of activities of the World History Association, the department is ideally suited to achieve this goal. As mentioned before, Dr. Georgena Duncan already offers courses on Africa, and Dr. Micheal Tarver does so for Latin America. Because of their administrative obligations as dean and department head, there is a need to add to this part of the department's curriculum.

- d. How often will the course be offered?

The course will be offered on **bi-annual** basis, following the usual course rotation within the department.

- e. How will the course be staffed?

The course will be taught by Dr. Alexander Mirkovic, who has already taught it as Social Science Seminar. Dr. Peter Dykema would also be able to teach this course in case of an unforeseen emergency.

- f. When applicable, state with which departments you have specifically coordinated this change?

I have worked with the department of Foreign Languages and International Studies.

List Department Head/  
Program Director Consulted:  
(Add to list as needed)

Indicate Support  
for Proposal  
(yes/no)

Date:

1. Dr. Ramon Magrans

YES

Early September 2008

2.

If no, please attach explanation from responding Department Head indicating why they do not support the proposal.

**Assessment Note:** While this course does not directly relate to any specific departmental assessment goal, it does provide an additional course through which the department can continue to assess its students, both majors and non-majors. In specific, the course could be used to assess verbal and written communication skills and the ability to analyze, critique, and synthesize primary and secondary sources. The Departmental Assessment Committee will evaluate the course with the instructor to determine how best to incorporate the class into the Department's efforts at assessment.

## History of the Middle East SYLLABUS

History of the Middle East

Instructor: Dr. Alexander Mirkovic

Office: Witherspoon 263

Office Hours: M 10-12 and 2-4pm, W 10-12 and 2-4pm, R 2-4pm and also by appointment.

Phone: (479) 968-0455

Email: [amirkovic@atu.edu](mailto:amirkovic@atu.edu)

**Course Objectives:** This course covers social, cultural, and political history of Islamic societies, from the beginning (Muhammad) to the modern times. The geographical focus is on the Near East. Chronologically, the course is divided in four sections: 1) The Rise of Islam; 2) The Emergence of the Islamic World System 1000-1500; 3) The Islamic World in the Age of European Expansion 1500-1800; and 4) The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination after 1800.

- Making students familiar with the main events and processes in the history of Islamic societies in the Middle East.
- Acquiring the knowledge of basic facts with regard to the emergence and development of Islamic societies,
- understanding the causes and effects of major changes,
- familiarizing students with the tools of historical research, especially reading and analyzing the primary sources (in translations).
- A more general goal is to help students acquire a historical understanding of the Islamic world, by emphasizing diversity, change, and continuity in human society, as well as understanding of how and why Islamic societies develop and change.

### Rationale/Justification for the Course:

In the contemporary world as it is today, the course does not need much justification. Islamic and Arabic speaking societies of the Middle East interacted with their neighbors in Africa and Asia for centuries and served as a major cultural and economic link between them. The Middle East is located at the crossroads of three continents, Europe, Africa, and Asia, and its role in World History is central. In the contemporary world, the Middle East acquired even greater significance, first because of oil and second due to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the subsequent Arab-Israeli conflict, which marks the World history to this day.

### Textbooks:

Francis Robinson, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of the Islamic World* (Cambridge University Press, 1999)  
# ISBN-10: 0521669936 # ISBN-13: 978-0521669931

Bernard Lewis, *A Middle East Mosaic: Fragments of Life, Letters and History* (Modern Library; 2001) # ISBN-10: 0375758372 # ISBN-13: 978-0375758379

James L. Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2004) # ISBN-10: 0195167899  
# ISBN-13: 978-0195167894

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is expected and necessary for the successful completion of the course. Attendance will be checked regularly. Absences can be justified and unjustified. Participation in regularly

scheduled university events also justifies an absence. In case of a missed exam (justified only!), a make-up session will be organized at mid-term and at the end of the semester. There will be no make-up exams during the course of the semester, regardless of whether the absence is justified or unjustified.

**Evaluation:** Students' work is evaluated by three in-class exams, and three shorter papers (3-4 pages)

- Three in-class exams consist of identifications and an essay. The study guides will be distributed a week ahead of the exam
- The First Paper topic is "Caliph and Imam: the Understanding of the Concept among Various Islamic Groups"
- The Second Paper topic on the role of trade and commerce in the Islamic world. It must cover the era before 1800s and you will focus on a food item that originated or was widely used in the Islamic world. Possible choices include: apricots, arak, coffee, frankincense, hashish, sugar cane, cardamom, falafel, cinnamon, saffron, and so on. A good place to start your research is Kenneth F. Kiple, *The Cambridge World History of Food* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- The Third Paper is on an issue or personality from the modern Middle East (after 1800s) and possible topic include: "Michel Aflaq: The Founder of the Baath Party", "Sykes-Picot Agreement", "Theodore Hertzl", "The Founding of the Islamic Brotherhood", "The Assassination of King Abdullah I", "Camp David Accords", "Sharif Hussein bin Ali", and so on. This paper requires using primary sources.

Extra credit assignments are at the sole discretion of the instructor, but the students are encouraged to request extra credit assignments, having in mind that extra credit should represent an effort above and beyond the ordinary requirements of the class. The grades for extra credit are "merits extra credit" or "insufficient for extra credit."

Plagiarized work receives 0 points on the first offence. The second offense is punished with an F as a final grade. In addition the case will be reported to the university disciplinary committee.

**Other Issues:** Discrete use of tape-recorders is permitted. Cell-phone should be turned-off or put in the silent mode before the start of the class. In case of tardiness, students should proceed to the nearest available chair with least possible interruption of the class.

#### University Calendar:

- Last day to officially drop courses with full refund: August 23
- Labor Day: September 3
- Last day to drop course with 80% refund: September 26
- Mid-term: October 11
- Thanksgiving: November 21-26
- Last day to drop courses with a "W": November 26
- Last day of classes: Dec 6
- Final Examinations: December 10-14 (check university calendar for the schedule)

#### Additional Readings:

M. G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972)  
 Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988)  
 A. Hourani, *Islam in European Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991)  
 P. Crone, *Roman, Provincial, and Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)  
 P. Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)  
 S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Cairo Geniza*, 5 vols. (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967-1988)



M. C. Lyons and D. E. P. Jackson, *Saladin, the Politics of Holy War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982)

H. Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: 1973)

B. Lewis, *Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963)

A. Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991)

B. Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: 1968)

David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace* (New York: Henry Holt, 1989)

### Schedule

Date	Topic	Examination
Week 1: Aug 23, 28	Introduction <b>The Rise of Islam: Pre-Islamic Arabia</b> Read: Robinson, <i>The Cambridge Illustrated History</i> , Chapter 1, The Rise of the Islamic World Movie Analysis: <i>The Messenger</i>	
Week 2: Aug 30, Sep 4	<b>The Rise of Islam: Prophet, Tradition (Hadith), and the Qur'an</b> Robinson, <i>The Cambridge Illustrated History</i> Movie Analysis: <i>The Messenger</i>	
Week 3: Sep 6, 11	<b>The Rise of Islam: Development of the Umma and the Companions of the Prophet</b> Robinson, <i>The Cambridge Illustrated History</i> Movie Analysis: <i>The Messenger</i>	
Week 4: Sep 13, 18	<b>The Rise of Islam: Diversity within Islam: Sunni, Shia, Karajites, Ismailis</b> Robinson, <i>The Cambridge Illustrated History</i> Movie Analysis: <i>The Messenger</i>	
Week 5: Sep 20, 25	<b>1000-1500: Philosophers and (or) Sufis?</b> Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History</i> : Chapter 2, The Emergence of the Islamic World System Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History</i> : Chapter 7, Knowledge and its Transmission	<b>First Exam: September 20</b> The Rise of Islam <b>First Paper due: September 20</b> Topic: Caliph and Imam
Week 6: Sep 27, Oct 2	<b>1000-1500 The Role of Trade and the Islamic World System</b> Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History</i> : Chapter 5, The Economy in Muslim Societies	
Week 7: Oct 4, 9	<b>1500-1800</b> Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History</i> : Chapter 3, The Islamic World in the Age of European Expansion.	

Week 8: Oct 11, 16	<b>1500-1800</b> The Islamic World in the Age of European Expansion Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History: The Ordering of Muslim Societies.</i>	
Week 9: Oct 18, 23	<b>1500-1800</b> The Islamic World in the Age of European Expansion Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History: Artistic Expression of Muslim Societies</i>	
Week 10: Oct 25, 30	<b>1800 to the Present</b> The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination Read: Robinson, <i>Cambridge History: The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination</i>	Second Paper due: October 25 Topic: An Islamic Trading Post
Week 11: Nov 1, 6	<b>1800 to the Present</b> The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination Read: Pierre Bourdieu: Honor and Shame in Kabyle Society (will be provided!)	<b>Second Exam: October 30</b> The Emergence of the Islamic World System
Week 12 Nov 8, 13	<b>1800 to the Present</b> The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination Read: Gelvin, <i>Modern Middle East</i> , Part II: The Question of Modernity	
Week 13: Nov 15, 20	<b>1800 to the Present</b> The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination Read: Gelvin, <i>Modern Middle East</i> , Part III: World War I and the Middle East State System	
<b>Thanksgiving: Nov 21-5</b>		
Week 14: Nov 27, 29	<b>1800 to the Present</b> The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination Read: Gelvin, <i>Modern Middle East</i> , Part III: World War I and the Middle East State System	
Week 15: Dec 4, 6	<b>1800 to the Present</b> The Islamic World in the Era of Western Domination Read: Gelvin, <i>Modern Middle East</i> , Part IV: The Contemporary Era	Third Paper Due: December 6 <sup>th</sup> . Topic: A Contemporary Issue or Personality in the Middle East
Final Exam Week : December 10-14		<b>Final Exam</b> (check the university calendar for the actual day, place, and time)