

Course Description:

This course will provide an overview of the histories, politics, and peoples of the Middle East and South Asia from the colonial era to present. The aim of this course is for students to develop an awareness of their own identities and cultures as it relates to the world around them. Students will gain a glimpse into two major geostrategic areas of the world. The course will provide students with tools to absorb the global interconnectedness and interdependence of the world we live in with appreciation for the similarities and differences between and across peoples, cultures, and religions. Students will also develop research, writing, and presentation skills. Through a Model United Nations (MUN) simulation, students will gain a sense of how the politics of negotiation works.

This course will prepare students for taking more detailed and complex area studies courses in the Scholars Academy as they transition into high school. Students will develop critical thinking skills to better understand themselves and others.

Student participation is a fundamental part of this class. Students are expected to do all readings and assignments and come to class prepared for discussion. A stimulating learning environment requires respectful participation, including listening and responding to other students and the instructor.

Assignments and Grading:

20% Homework: Readings and Written Assignments

-One page paper on Islam

-One page position paper on your country for MUN simulation, one page on your own views

15% Class Participation

15% Country Presentations (5 minutes)

15% Model UN Simulation

35% Assessments: 1 Quiz, Final Exam

Week 1: Beginnings: Empire and the Colonial Legacy

Class 1- Monday July 6

Introductions Perceptions and Stereotypes

Assignment:

Read: *Ibn Battuta: International Trade at the Malabar Coast*

Explore and read this map online: *40 maps that explain the Middle East:*

<http://www.vox.com/a/maps-explain-the-middle-east>

Read: *Who Are the Arabs?* Pgs. 1-7

Class 2- Tuesday July 7

The Geography of the Middle East and South Asia

Assignment: Read (short readings):

Queen Victoria's Proclamation to the Princes, Chiefs and the People of India (1858)

Rudyard Kipling's Poem: "Take Up the White Man's Burden"

From M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (1909)

Class 3- Wednesday July 8

A Brief History of Colonialism

Assignment:

1) Study for Quiz on Mapping

2) Read (short readings):

The Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916)

Text of the Sykes-Picot Agreement

The Balfour Declaration (1917)

1947 Partitions Revisited

Class 4- Thursday July 9

Quiz on Mapping

Partition and the Politics of Mapping

Assignment:

1) Read: Muhammad, Islam, and the World: An Overview

2) Read: *Sharon and My Mother in Law*: pgs. 1-61

Week 2: Modern Modes of Belonging

Class 5- Monday July 13

Islam: A Global Religion

Assignment:

- 1) Write a one-page paper on what you understand about Islam as a religion and how it is similar or different to what your own beliefs are.
- 2) Read *The Nation and its Fragments* by Partha Chatterjee

Class 6- Tuesday July 14

The Dawn of Nationalisms

Assignment:

Read: *Sharon and my Mother Law*, pgs. 62- 106

Class 7 – Wednesday July 15

From Secularism to Islamism and Zionism

Assignment:

Read *Sharon my Mother in Law* pgs. 107-139

Class 8 – Thursday July 16

Israel, Palestine, and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Assignment:

Finish *Sharon and my Mother in Law*

Week 3: The UN and “Globalism”

Class 9- Monday July 20

Introduction to the United Nations, its Critiques and Challenges

Assignment:

Read: *Baghdad Burning: Girl Blog From Iraq*, first 20 pages.

Read: George W. Bush' September 11, 2001 Speech

Class 10- Tuesday July 21

The War in Iraq: Weapons of Mass Destruction?

Assignment:

Prepare Country Presentations

Class 11- Wednesday July 22

Country Presentations: The Middle East and South Asia

Assignment:

1) Read Nuclear Weapons background worksheet

2) Prepare Position Papers and Opening Statements for MUN simulation

Class 12- Thursday July 23

Model UN Simulation: Security Council Debate on Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Assignment:

1) Read *Empire or Humanity What the classroom didn't teach me about the American empire* by Howard Zinn

Week 4: U.S. Power and Appropriation

Class 13- Monday July 27

The U.S. in the Middle East

Assignment:

Read: "The Islamic State Through the Looking Glass"

Watch: AbouNaddara film: <http://www.abounaddara.com/anglais/films/12en.html>

Class 14- Tuesday July 28

The Crisis in Syria and Islamic State (ISIS)

Assignment:

Read: El Zein, Dahlia, "Dabke, Israel, and Appropriation," in *Learning to LoveDanceMore* (a performance journal), Volume 10. Winter 2015.

Baker, Katie, "A Much Needed Primer on Cultural Appropriation," in *Jezebel*, November 13, 2012.

Class 15- Wednesday July 29

Cultural Appropriation

Hummus, Samosas, Debka

Assignment: Study for Final Exam

Class 16- Thursday July 30

Final Exam and Wrap up

Reading Materials Provided for the Class

Amiry, Suad, *Sharon and My Mother-in-Law: Ramallah Diaries*, Anchor Books, New York 2006.

All other readings I will provide as a PDF in our class Dropbox, unless a link is provided.

Assignments

- All readings, assignments and class handouts will be posted in our class Dropbox folder.

- Each day after class I will post that evening's readings and assignment for class the next day. Please print the readings and bring with you to class.

- Country Presentations (5 minutes)

You will be assigned a country in the Middle East or South Asia to prepare a five minute presentation about your country in front the class.

- Model UN Simulation

The Middle Eastern or South Asian country, which you present, will be the country you represent at the Model UN simulation we will have in class.

- Paper on Islam

Write a one-page paper about your understanding of what Islam is and how it relates to your own beliefs.

- Position Paper

Write a one-page position paper on your country's position for the MUN simulation, and one page on your own views.