Middle East–North Africa Studies

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The Middle East and North Africa region is home to a wide range of peoples and cultures and has an crucial place in the history of societies and cultures. It is also in the midst of grave instability and unrest, which has global consequences.

The Middle East–North Africa studies minor is a broad examination of the Middle East and North Africa region. The minor requires a minimum of 24 credits and, in addition, one of three concentrations: language study, study abroad, or research. The minor is designed to offer flexibility so that students may focus on particular areas of interest while providing them with an introduction to critical issues in the contemporary Middle East and North Africa.

Participating Faculty

Michael Allan, comparative literature

Diane Baxter, anthropology

Shaul Cohen, geography

Rick Colby, religious studies

Jane Cramer, political science

Alex Dracobly, political science

Stephen Dueppen, anthropology

Hanan Elsherif, religious studies

David Frank, honors college

Deborah Green, Judaic studies

David Hollenberg, religious studies

Angela Joya, international studies

Farhad Malekafzali, political science

Michael Malek Najjar, theater arts

Stephen Shoemaker, religious studies

Alison Snyder, architecture

Priscilla Southwell, political science

David Wacks, Romance languages

Anita Weiss, international studies

Minor in Middle East–North Africa Studies

Students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of 24 credits of course work. Courses applied toward the minor must be passed with a C– or better or P (pass). Of the 24 credits, a minimum of 20 must be graded. Students must take a minimum of 16 credits in residence. In addition, students must complete an area of concentration (language, study abroad, or research). Some credits toward the concentration may be used to satisfy the 24 credits of course work, as described below.

Requirements

ANTH 250	Introduction to Middle East Studies	4
Choose one of the following:		4
GEOG 209	Geography of the Middle East and North Africa	
INTL 423	Development and the Muslim World	
PS 199	Special Studies: [Topic] (Crisis in the Middle East)	
COLT 231	Literature and Society [1]	
COLT 370	Comparative Comics [1]	
COLT 461	Studies in Contemporary Theory: [Topic] [1]	
COLT 462	Cultural Intersections: [Topic] [1]	
COLT 470	Studies in Identity: [Topic] [1]	
Elective courses		16
Total Credits		**24**

[1] Taken as applicable and/or available.

Electives. Of the 16 required credits in elective courses, 8 must be drawn from social science courses and 8 must be drawn from humanities courses, as listed of below. Confer with a program advisor to determine other applicable courses not listed below. Check for courses with Middle East–North Africa (MENA) themes listed in the Schedule of Classes each term; courses listed under MENA count toward the minor. In addition, students may petition the director of the minor for the inclusion of other applicable MENA-related courses that have at least 50 percent Middle East–North Africa content.

A minimum of 12 credits must be in upper-division courses (300 or 400 level). No more than 8 elective credits from any one department may count toward the minor. Courses must be taken from a minimum of three departments.

Social Science Electives

- Exploring Other Cultures: [Topic] (ANTH 310) (Muslims in the United States)
- Archaeology of Egypt and Near East (ANTH 342)
- Israel and Palestine (CRES 435), Israel and Palestine (CRES 535)
- Geography of the Middle East and North Africa (GEOG 209)
- Foundations of Islamic Civilization (HIST 120)
- Shi'ism and Revolution (HIST 373)
- The Iraq War, 2003–2011 (HIST 450), The Iraq War, 2003–2011 (HIST 550)
- Ancient Greece: [Topic] (HIST 412) (Alexander and Classical Greece)
- Ancient Rome: [Topic] (HIST 414) (Roman Middle East)
- Islam and Global Forces (INTL 323)

- Seminar: [Topic] (INTL 407),Seminar: [Topic] (INTL 507) (Militant Islam; The Arab Uprising; Political Economy of War and Conflict)
- Development and the Muslim World (INTL 423) ,Development and the Muslim World (INTL 523)
- Israelis and Palestinians (JDST 340)
- Special Studies: [Topic] (PS 199) (Crisis in the Middle East)
- Special Studies: [Topic] (PS 399) (Politics of North Africa; Politics of the Middle East; Nuclear Politics of the Middle East)

Humanities Electives

- Language and Culture (ARB 301), Language and Culture (ARB 302), Language and Culture (ARB 303)
- Introduction to Arabic Culture (ARB 253)
- Arab Cinema (ARB 353)
- Experimental Course: [Topic] (ARB 410), Experimental Course: [Topic] (ARB 510) (Shiism; 1,001 Arabian Nights; Character of the Middle Eastern City)
- Architectural Design (ARCH 484), Architectural Design (ARCH 584) or Interior Design (IARC 484), Interior Design (IARC 584)
- Research: [Topic] (IARC 601) or Research: [Topic] (ARCH 601) (Independent studies related to Istanbul and Turkey in general)
- Literature and Society (COLT 231) (when taught by Michael Allan)
- Comparative Comics (COLT 370) (when taught by Michael Allen)
- Studies in Contemporary Theory: [Topic] (COLT 461) (Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory) (when taught by Michael Allen)
- Cultural Intersections: [Topic] (COLT 462) (Orientalism) (when taught by Michael Allen)
- Studies in Identity: [Topic] (COLT 470) (Multiculturalism and Empire) (when taught by Michael Allen)
- Biblical Narrative (HBRW 311), Biblical Poetry (HBRW 312), Postbiblical Literature (HBRW 313)
- Seminar: [Topic] (LING 407), Seminar: [Topic] (LING 507) (African Languages)
- World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions (REL 102)
- Early Judaism (REL 211)
- Introduction to the Bible I (REL 222)
- Introduction to the Bible II (REL 223)
- Introduction to Islam (REL 233)
- Jesus and the Gospels (REL 317)
- History of Christianity (REL 321)
- History of Eastern Christianity (REL 324)
- History of Eastern Christianity (REL 325)
- Experimental Course: [Topic] (REL 410), Experimental Course: [Topic] (REL 510) (Islamic Political Thought; Islamic Law and Society)
- Biblical Book: [Topic] (REL 414) (Revelation)
- Martyrdom (REL 418)
- Early and Medieval Christian Heresy (REL 424)
- Sex and Gender in Early Christianity (REL 426)
- Seminar: [Topic] (SPAN 407), Seminar: [Topic] (SPAN 507) (Spanish Islamic Literature)
- Multicultural Theater: [Topic] (TA 472), Multicultural Theater: [Topic] (TA 572) (Arab American Theater)
- Multicultural Theater: [Topic] (TA 472), Multicultural Theater: [Topic] (TA 572) (Middle Eastern Theater)

Concentration

In addition to the credit requirements above, students choose to complete one of the three following concentrations: language, study Abroad, or research.

Language Concentration. Students must satisfactorily complete a minimum of one year of a MENA language: Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, or Persian-Farsi. Language credits may be earned at the UO, through an approved overseas program, or transferred from another college or university. Students may also satisfy the language requirement by examination, demonstrating a level of competence equivalent to one year of college-level language.

Currently, Arabic and Hebrew are offered as regular UO language courses. Turkish and Persian-Farsi are offered through the Yamada Language Center. Students may earn university credit for courses taken at the Yamada Center (1–3 credits per term). In order to complete the minimum one-year requirement for Turkish and Persian, students must take the New York University 12-point Foreign Language Proficiency Examination. Students who receive 12 points on the exam have satisfactorily completed the minimum one-year language requirement.

In addition, students may complete a second year of a MENA language and apply 8 credits of this work toward satisfaction of the humanities credits requirements.

Study-Abroad or Internship Concentration. Students spend a minimum of one term in an approved study-abroad or internship program in a Middle Eastern–North African country.

Currently, there are 19 study-abroad programs offered through the UO, in Jordan, Morocco, Israel, Turkey, and Tunisia. All of these programs meet the study-abroad requirement option. Other programs through accredited universities and organizations may be accepted for university credit and for the study-abroad requirement option. For these programs to count toward the concentration, the student must meet with the minor advisor. Students planning on the study-abroad or internship option must meet with the program advisor to discuss the study-abroad program that fits with the objectives of the minor.

The UO participates in IE_3 Global, which offers internships in Tunisia and which count toward the study-abroad or internship requirement. Other internship possibilities may be available. For these programs to count toward the concentration, the student must meet with the minor advisor and have it approved before signing up for the internship program.

Once students return from their study-abroad or internship experience, they must write a five- to six-page reflection of their experiences abroad, to be read and approved by the minor advisor. As noted, the minor advisor must approve courses taken abroad and the structure and content of an internship in advance. With the approval of the advisor, up to 8 credits taken abroad may count toward the overall minor requirement of 24 credits.

Research Concentration. Students write a high-quality, 15- to 20-page research paper on a MENA-related topic. For this pathway, students work with a professor who guides their research, monitors their progress, and approves their completed research paper. To research and write their paper, students may select to enroll in a 401 (Research) or 405 (Reading and Conference) course. Four credits of 401 or 405 may apply to the 24-credit requirement.