Middle East and North Africa Studies

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Often referred to as the “cradle of civilization,” the Middle East and North Africa was of central importance in the development of agriculture, cities, mathematics, science, and western religious traditions. The Middle East and North Africa region is home to a broad diversity of peoples and cultures as well as the first written language, monumental architecture, long-distance trade, and centralized state systems.

This minor is a broad examination of the Middle East and North Africa region. Students focus their study with a concentration in language, study abroad, or research. The minor is designed to offer flexibility to examine critical issues across the region and to focus on particular areas of interest. The minor requires a minimum of 24 credits and one of three concentrations: language study, study abroad, or research.

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

Farhad Malekafzali, political science

Michael Malek Najjar, theater arts

Lindsey Mazurek, history

Stephen Shoemaker, religious studies

Priscilla Southwell, political science

David Wacks, Romance languages

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. Because not every course in the follow list of 'Requirements' will be offered regularly enough or at a time that fits each students' schedules, students are encouraged to contact the Program Director to discuss potential substitutions when such issues arise.

Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
MENA 111	Media Coverage of the Middle East	4
Choose one of the following:		4
GEOG 209	Geography of the Middle East and North Africa	
GLBL 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 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.

The social science and humanities elective course lists are not exhaustive, as new courses are added periodically. Other courses may count toward these requirements. See the program advisor and/or the Middle East-North Africa studies entry in the Schedule of Classes *for up-to-date information.*

Social Science Electives

- ANTH 250: Introduction to Middle East Studies
- ANTH 342: Archaeology of Egypt and Near East
- ANTH 429: Jewish Folklore and Ethnology
- CRES 410: Experimental Course: [Topic], when Topic is “Working Abroad” (
- CRES 410: Experimental Course: [Topic], when Topic is “Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”
- CRES 435: Israel and Palestine
- GEOG 209: Geography of the Middle East and North Africa
- GLBL 323: Islam and Global Forces
- GLBL 423: Development and the Muslim World

- HC 431H: Honors College Social Science Colloquium: [Topic], when Topic is “The Politics of Human Rights)
- HC 431H: Honors College Social Science Colloquium: [Topic], when Topic is “The Problem with Genocide and Mass Atrocity”
- HC 434H, Honors College International Cultures Colloquium: [Topic], when Topic is “Middle East Peace”
- HIST 325: Precolonial Africa (HIST 325)
- HIST 417: Society and Culture in Modern Africa: [Topic]
- HIST 419: African Regional Histories: [Topic]
- HIST 450: The Iraq War
- JDST 212: Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
- JDST 213: The Jewish Encounter with Modernity
- JDST 352: Jewish Literature and Culture
- JDST 353: Jewish Image and the Media
- JDST 354: Jewish Thought and History
- PS 199: Special Studies: [Topic], when Topic is “Crisis in the Middle East”
- PS 385: Nuclear Politics in the Middle East (PS 384)
- PS 399: Special Studies: [Topic], when Topic is “Nuclear Politics of the Middle East”
- PS 399: Special Studies: [Topic], when Topic is “Politics of North Africa”

Humanities Electives

- ARB 201: Second-Year Arabic
- ARB 202: Second-Year Arabic
- ARB 203: Second-Year Arabic
- ARB 301: Language and Culture
- ARB 302: Language and Culture
- ARB 303: Language and Culture
- ARB 331: Reading Classical Arabic
- ARB 353: Arab Cinema
- ARB 410: Experimental Course: [Topic] (past topics include, “Shiism” and “1001 Arabian Nights”
- ARB 411: Classical Arabic Sources
- ARH 321: Ancient Jewish Art
- ARH 325: Islamic Art & Architecture
- ARH 382: Arts of the Silk Road
- COLT 231: Literature and Society (only if taught by Michael Allan)
- COLT 370: Comparative Comics (only if taught by Michael Allan)
- COLT 461: Studies in Contemporary Theory: Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory (only if taught by Michael Allan)
- COLT 462: Cultural Intersections: Orientalism (only if taught by Michael Allan)
- COLT 470: Studies in Identity: [Topic] (only if taught by Michael Allan)
- FLR 350: Folklore and the Bible
- FLR 411: Folklore and Religion
- HBRW 111: Biblical Hebrew I
- HBRW 112: Biblical Hebrew II
- HBRW 113: Biblical Hebrew III
- HBRW 201: 2nd Year Modern Hebrew
- HBRW 202: 2nd Year Modern Hebrew
- HBRW 203: 2nd Year Modern Hebrew
- HBRW 311: Biblical Narrative
- HBRW 312: Biblical Poetry
- HBRW 313: Postbiblical Literature
- REL 102: World Religions: Near Eastern Traditions
- REL 211: Early Judaism
- REL 222: Introduction to the Bible I
- REL 223: Introduction to the Bible II
- REL 233: Introduction to Islam
- REL 317: Jesus and the Gospels
- REL 321: History of Christianity
- REL 324: History of Eastern Christianity
- REL 325: History of Eastern Christianity
- REL 335: Introduction to the Qur'an
- REL 355: Mysticism
- REL 357: War, Terrorism & Religion
- REL 410: Experimental Course: [Topic], when Topic is “Islamic Origins”
- REL 410: Experimental Course: [Topic], when Topic is “Islamic Law and Society”
- REL 414: Biblical Book: [Topic]
- REL 418: Martyrdom
- REL 432: Islamic Mysticism: [Topic]
- TA 472: Multicultural Theater: [Topic], when topic is “Israeli and Palestinian Theater”
- TA 472: Multicultural Theater: [Topic], when topic is “Middle Eastern Theater”
- WGS 410: Experimental Course: [Topic], when topic is “Muslim Women: Life and Identity”

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.