POLITICAL ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST (CMEN23)
(7.5 credits)

COURSE INSTRUCTOR
Darcy Thompson (darcy.thompson@cme.lu.se)
Office Hours: Fridays 12:00 to 13:00 or by appointment

COURSE DATES AND LOCATIONS
Start Date: April 4th 2019
End Date: May 31st 2019
Course Day: Thursdays and Fridays
Time: 10:15 to 12:00
Location: CMES Seminar Room

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The course introduces students to the political economy of the Middle East by examining key issues relating to the socio-economic and political conditions, structures, institutions and policy challenges which characterise the region today. Topics of focus in this course include natural resources, and resource inequality in the region, current and long term economic and development issues, governance struggles, and the influence of external actors in domestic and regional affairs. The lectures, course readings, case study analyses and simulation exercises allow students to integrate theoretical and conceptual understandings with empirical examples. The course lectures are organised according to four overarching themes; the economic landscape of the MENA (key characteristics and challenges); socio-political and economic changes in the region over the last decades; the MENA in the international system; and foreign relations in and towards the MENA.

Various assessment methods will be used to evaluate students abilities to carry out academic research (which includes the drafting of different types of research texts), to collaborate with peers, to think critically and apply conceptual ideas to present-day case studies and contexts, and to present research findings and outcomes to an audience.

By the end of this course, students should be able to:
- Understand the socio-economic features and structural characteristics of the MENA economies including the politics of economic development, the economic factors in domestic and regional politics; the domestic and international political economy of oil and gas; and the political economy of regional integration.
- Examine the structure of labour markets, education and female employment. Analyse the causes and possible remedies for youth as well as gender gaps and low female labour force participation.
- Analyse trends in resource inequality and its specific impact on different countries in the region.
- Demonstrate skills of reasoned and supported argumentation in writing and in oral presentation; of independent research and teamwork; and of finding, analysing and synthesising information from a range of sources.
TEACHING METHODS

The course involves lectures – which will be given both online and in-person, group assignments in the form of case studies, simulation exercises, and written assignments. Participating in, and completing all of the assigned work is mandatory for students to pass the course.

Lectures
Attendance and participation in lectures is an important aspect of this course. The lectures will be delivered online as well as in person, depending on the particular week, so be sure to read the course schedule closely. Each lecture (whether online or in person) will form the basis for all course seminars (the case study seminars as well as the simulation seminars). Thus, it is up to each student to ensure that they watch and/or attend the weekly lecture and keep up with the readings assigned for that week’s topic. It is good to keep in mind that the written assignments for this course, which make up a large proportion of the course grade, are closely connected to five seminars. So coming prepared to each of these seminars having done the readings, and having watched/attended the lecture(s) will certainly contribute to students doing well in the course.

Case Study Seminars and Simulation Seminars
In addition to lectures, this course is also made up of five mandatory seminars. These seminars will be delivered in the form of simulation exercises (3 in total) as well as case study exercises (2 in total). Each of these types of activities are specifically designed as learning contexts whereby students are expected to take the theoretical concepts discussed in the lectures and readings and apply them to ‘life-like’ scenarios and ‘real world’ situations/events. For each of the five seminars, students will be asked to complete a corresponding written assignment. These assignments are mandatory and therefore must be completed and submitted in order for students to pass the course. Thus it is important that students attend each of these five seminars and come prepared having read the course readings, watched/attended the corresponding lecture and reviewed any exercise-related material that might be provided for them prior to the seminar.

If a student is unable to attend one of the seminar dates due to illness or another unforeseen circumstance, they must communicate this to the instructor in advance of the class, and will be required to complete a make-up assignment in the form of an extended research paper. The assignment must be submitted no later than one week after the missed seminar.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Simulation Response Papers
Following each of the three simulation exercises, students are required to submit a response paper identifying and discussing the main themes touched on in the exercise (hint: they relate to the course literature, so if this is not obvious to you, look harder at the reading list to try to make connections between the exercise and the readings). Students will be permitted to work in pairs or by themselves for these assignments. Each student/pair will be assessed on their ability to engage with the course literature (incorporating at least 2 texts listed on the course syllabus in their response papers) in order to understand and discuss the issues touched upon in the simulation activity. Note that students should refrain from summarising any texts they might choose to use. Not only is the instructor who is grading the assignments, very familiar with all of the course readings (and therefore does not need a summary of the text!) but summarising is not critically engaging with the texts and with the events of the exercise itself. Remember that the purpose of these response papers is to discuss how the exercise relates or does not relate to both real-life patterns/trends as well as existing research on these trends. See appendix 1 for more detailed instructions on what should be included in the response papers.
Group Case Study Analyses
Working in groups of 3, students will be presented with a factual ‘case’ scenario which connects to theme(s) covered in the course. Working groups must prepare an in-depth analysis of the case, complete with recommendation(s) for future actions/solutions. Each case study analysis should be no longer than 2000 words, and should discuss the major factors of the case, what decisions or actions need to be taken and how they should be taken, and of course why. All proposals for action must be justified, and therefore must be supported with additional research. Groups are encouraged to highlight other similar cases and/or research/findings that support any plan of action.

The course consists of two case study exercises, both of which require the full participation from students, including the submission of an in-depth analysis. For each exercise students must arrange themselves in a new group constellation. Note that no student is permitted to work with the same student for than once for a case study assignment.

Final Assignment
Students will be given the option of choosing between two different final assignments.

Option 1:
The central idea of this assignment is for students to apply the knowledge and understandings that they have developed in the course to an empirical (‘actual’ and/or ongoing) issue that relates to the region. In other words, students must identify a ‘real life’ problem that can be connected to the Middle East as both a physical as well as conceptual space, and discuss it in relation to course literature. Students must present their chosen issue or problem, explain and contextualise it for the reader, and then examine it analytically using course literature. This means taking a critical approach to the course literature, and analysing if and how the issue/problem confirms or challenges what has been discussed in course readings, and why. A major objective of this assignment therefore is making connections to the course literature. In order to receive a good grade the assignment should display knowledge from multiple (min. 7) readings. The required length of this paper is approximately 4000 words. The grading matrix I will use in my evaluation of this assignment will be posted on LUVIT so that students can see exactly what the assignment should include. It is strongly advised that students review the grading matrix prior to the submission of the assignment.

Option 2:
Wikipedia is based on a vision that every person should have free access to knowledge. English Wikipedia articles are viewed over 8 billion times per month, making the site the fifth most visited in the world. The articles deliver information that might not otherwise be available in certain circumstances due to a lack of resources, or liberties. While criticisms of Wikipedia include assertions that its openness makes it unreliable and unauthoritative, it nonetheless stands as a valuable starting point for inquiry on a huge range of topics. “For many subjects – including scholarly topics – it is very often Wikipedia pages that are the top hits on Google” (Corbyn 2016).

The objective of this assignment is to turn research produced for academic credit into knowledge available to the world. Conventional research papers have a limited reach when it comes to readership – the course instructor who oversees the grading of the assignment, and perhaps fellow classmates (but not always). This means that the knowledge (not to mention the time and energy put into the text) rarely reaches beyond the confines of the course itself. It also means the piece of work ‘dies’ with the end of the course – what is the usefulness of that? This assignment aims to make the reach students conduct for credit accessible to a much wider audience (the world). Working in groups of two or three, students are to create or significantly improve a Wikipedia entry on a topic that relates to one of the several themes covered in the course. The article should be between 2500 to 3000 words in length, but can incorporate texts from other Wikipedia articles should it fit within its scope. Students will likely need to spend some time trying
to identify a knowledge gap on Wikipedia, in connection to a topic that relates to the course. See appendix 2 for a more detailed outline of this assignment.

COURSE GRADING
• Seminar Response Paper – 20%
• Case Study Analyses (2) – 20% each
• Final Course Assignment - 40%
WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

(Thurs) 4/04. Introduction to the Course  
*Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT*

(Fri) 5/04. Lecture 1: Introduction to the Politics of the MENA  
*Time: 10:15 – 12:00, Place: CMES Seminar Room*
- Colonial legacies and economic development
- Regime types: How did they come to be and what distinguishes them
- What characterises the politics of MENA-region?

*Mandatory Reading:*
ISBN: 9781506329284


*Optional Reading:*
ISBN: 9781506329284


(Thurs) 11/04. Lecture 2: Industrialisation and State-led Development  
*Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT*
- Rise of commodity orientated economies
- The growth of state power in the Arab world; the welfare state
- Oil and non-oil rich countries

*Mandatory Reading:*

https://www.jstor.org/stable/3216808?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

Optional Reading:


(Fri) 12/04. Case Study 1 (In-Class)
*Time: 10:15 – 12:00*
*Place: CMES Seminar Room*

Read preparation material available on LUVIT in the corresponding “Case Study 1” folder.

(Thurs) 18/04. Lecture 3. The End of the Developmental State
*Time: 10:15 – 12:00*
*Place: CMES Seminar Room*

- Tracing the roots of economic underdevelopment in the MENA
- Economic reform and structural change
- International financial regulations and the Arab state

Mandatory Reading:


Optional Reading:
https://www.jstor.org/stable/i350800

https://www.jstor.org/stable/3012499?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

(Thurs) 25/04. Lecture: Institutional Challenges to Development in the MENA
*Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT*

-Human capital
-The formal and informal labour market
-The demographic rift
-Public sector institutions

*Mandatory Reading:*


*Optional Reading:*


(Fri) 26/04. Simulation 1
*Time: 10:15 – 12:00*
*Place: CMES Seminar Room*

Read preparation material available on LUVIT in the corresponding “Simulation 1” folder.

(Thurs) 2/05. Lecture 5. Contemporary Economic Challenges to Development in the MENA
*Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT*

-The economic cost(s) of oil rich states
-Regional and global economic integration (the impact of trade agreements)
-Labour immigration/emigration and its effects
Mandatory Reading:


Optional Reading:
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17938120.2016.1225453

https://brill.com/view/book/edcoll/9789004336452/B9789004336452-s005.xml

(Fri) 3/05. Simulation 2
*Time: 10:15 – 12:00
Place: CMES Seminar Room*

Read preparation material available on LUVIT in the corresponding “Simulation 2” folder.

(Thurs) 9/05. Lecture 6. Looking Beyond Oil – The Future of Oil Exporting Countries
*Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT*

Mandatory Reading:
https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/emperor-has-no-clothes-the-limits-of-opec-in-the-global-oil-market/1A35BB1511789C7AEC0F36AAAAD2C188 (33pp)


Optional Reading:


(Fri) 10/05. Case Study 2 (In-Class)
Time: 10.15 – 12.00
Place: CMES Seminar Room
Read preparation material available on LUVIT in the corresponding “Case Study 2” folder.

(Thurs) 16/05. Lecture 7. Resource (In)Security in the MENA
Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT
- State-led agricultural policy management
- Hydro-politics and struggle for water
- Agricultural economies and trade

Mandatory Reading:


Optional Reading:

De Châtel, Francesca (2014). The role of drought and climate change in the Syrian uprising: Untangling the triggers of the revolution. Middle Eastern Studies, 50(4), 521-535. (14pp)
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00263206.2013.850076

Giglioli, Ilaria (2013). “Rights, citizenship and territory, water politics in the West Bank.” In Sultana, Farhana and Loftus, Alex (eds.). The right to water: Politics, governance and social struggles, (pp. 139-158). New York: Routledge. (19pp)

(Fri) 17/05. Simulation 3
Time: 10:15 – 12:00
Place: CMES Seminar Room

Read preparation material available on LUVIT in the corresponding “Simulation 3” folder.

(Thurs) 23/05. Lecture 8. Regional and International Relations of the MENA
Time: 10:15 – 12:00
Place: CMES Seminar Room

Mandatory Reading:
ISBN: 9781506329284


Optional Reading:

(Fri) 24/05. Final Assignment Presentations (In-Class)
Time: 9:15 – 12:00
Place: CMES Seminar Room

(Fri) 31/05. Lecture 9: The Impact of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) on MENA Societies
Time: Online – Video Lecture, LUVIT
**Mandatory Reading:**


ISBN 978-3-319-65771-4


[https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-journal-of-middle-east-studies/article/womens-digital-activism-in-a-changing-middle-east/04EE3317C5AA2241F1BFE5BFF7B490D8](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-journal-of-middle-east-studies/article/womens-digital-activism-in-a-changing-middle-east/04EE3317C5AA2241F1BFE5BFF7B490D8)


**Optional Reading:**


Appendix 1: Simulation Response Papers

In connection to the three in-class simulation exercises students are required to submit response papers. The submission of each of these response papers are mandatory to pass the course. Each paper will be graded as a pass or fail at the time of submission. At the end of the course, students will be allowed to select one of the three response papers for formal assessment (according to the grading matrix provided below). The paper will comprise of 20% of the total course grade so it is important that students choose their best work to be formally graded.

For the paper itself, students are asked to identify the major themes touched on in the simulation activity, of which there will be several. Choose one theme and connect it to relevant course literature (meaning any of the listed course texts that relate to, and/or discuss the specific theme/issue). You are to analyse how the chosen texts discuss the issue, and in what way(s) this relates to, or does not relate to, what you observed and experienced in the simulation exercise. In other words, how did the simulation exercise reflect or not reflect the knowledge, assumptions, and arguments presented in your chosen texts?

Since the paper is short in length, no space should be wasted summarising either the chosen texts, nor how the activity played out. Instead, jump right into your discussion on how the texts relate or do not relate to your experience participating in the exercise (in terms of the processes, and outcomes of the exercise). Each response paper should a maximum 750 words. This is not a lot of words to actively engage in two texts, so you need to make you arguments concise and to the point.

Appendix 2: Wikipedia Assignment

As mentioned earlier in the syllabus, the objective of this assignment is to turn research produced within academia into knowledge available to the world. Students can play a role in this through the use of Wikipedia. Please remember that whether a group is writing an original article or contributing to an existing one, the collective group contribution should amount to roughly 2500 to 3000 words. This means that if a group chooses to contribute to an existing article, the additions/changes need to be quite substantial in order to reach this number count. A 2500 to 3000 word article calls for a certain level of detail on a given topic, so it is important to keep this in mind when planning the scope of the article. For this assignment, all articles or contributions must include links to at least 9 other Wikipedia pages. When writing your article, it will be helpful for to try to identify other pages that connect to your topic. Keep in mind that you are certainly allowed to modify other Wikipedia pages so that they connect better to your own article.

When it comes to writing style, it is important to remember that an encyclopaedia entry is not the same as a conventional research paper. For this assignment, you cannot expect to write a research paper and publish it as a Wikipedia article. You need to spend some time familiarising yourself with what constitutes a good encyclopaedia article in terms of writing style, organisation, objectivity, prose, etc. There is no shortage of resources provided by Wikipedia to help guide authors in the writing process.

To receive a high grade for this assignment the article should be able to achieve ‘good article’ status, which according to Wikipedia means:

i) Articles must be well written: clear and concise, grammatically correct, and respectful of copyright laws.

ii) Articles must be verifiable – meaning reliable sources must be used, and all ideas must be properly cited. Every claim requires at least one verifiable source.

iii) Articles must address the main aspects of the topic in a focused manner.
iv) Articles must be *neutral*; they must represent the subject fairly, proportionately and without bias.

v) Articles must be *stable*; meaning that they do not change significantly due to an ongoing edit war – edit wars are not warmly welcomed in the Wikipedia community.