Course title: Development Economics in the Middle East
Course code: ECON 3001 AMJO
Programs offering course: Middle East Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. semester credits: 3
Contact hours: 45
Term: Fall 2020

Course Description

This course is about the economic structures, institutions and policy challenges in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The course starts with a broad economic history of the region in the 19th Century and goes on to address selected aspects of economic policy in the contemporary period in these countries. The contemporary natures of the problems facing the MENA countries are addressed throughout the course. This course will explore issues relating to social, economic, and political development in the MENA region through a multidisciplinary lens. As the course also aims to address the practical side of implementing development, it will depend on augmenting the classroom activities with guest speakers from a variety of organizations working in the development field.

Learning Objectives

By completing this course, students will:

- Develop a broad understanding of the economic history of the region, and be able to assess the impact of integration into the international economy, in particular
- Evaluate the features and structural characteristics of the MENA economies and the socio-economic features as well as distinguish between different types of economies within the MENA region such as oil and non-oil economies
- Analyze and criticize the economic policies and problems in the region
- Evaluate the position and key policy options in regional and international contexts
• Formulate the development of economics from Mercantilism to modern growth models

Course Prerequisites

None.

Methods of Instruction

The course will use a combination of lectures, case studies, and student presentations. Specific topics and particular cases will be investigated further in discussions initiated (under guidance) by students, individually, or in small groups. Wherever applicable, additional media resources, including feature films and documentaries, will be utilized to enhance students’ exposure to some of the everyday realities of the Arab World. Class attendance and active verbal participation in class discussions are crucial elements of the course and all students are expected to engage in that process. In particular, students are expected to contribute with critical discussions of the reading assignments and thoughtful consideration of peer comments, and with discussion and critique of ideas and arguments presented, including those of the seminar facilitator.

Assessment and Final Grade

1. Traditional Homework Assignments 10%
2. Current Events Projects 20%
3. Midterm Exam 30%
4. Final Short Paper 20%
5. Presentation of Final Paper 10%
6. Class Participation 10%
   TOTAL 100%

Course Requirements

Traditional Homework Assignments

All students are expected to all homework and problem sets handed in to students during the course (A total of 3-4). The goal is to help students prepare for their Midterm exam and identify where they need help sooner rather than later. Homework
and problem sets might be required to be solved during class time or at home. Announcements will be available prior to that.

Current Events Projects

Students are expected to collect articles throughout the course related to development issues and write up a short summary of each article discussing the relation between the article and what they have learned in class throughout the semester (2-3 articles Maximum)

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will be administered on March 10 and will carry a score of 30% of the final grade. This exam will cover all the reading material and discussions presented in class up to that date.

Final Short Paper

Short paper should be about five to six pages in length. The student is expected to choose a country of interest on the MENA region, provide background on that country, data on growth, income inequality, political and social factors, and other key indicators. Evaluate the country status and provide solutions for improving the development level.

Presentation of Final Paper

Presentation of the final short paper is required by each student with an open discussion.

Class Participation

Questions, presentations and discussions are what will make this class work; your physical and mental presence in class and your consistent participation are all necessary. Please make sure that you do the reading each and every time and that you come to class ready to express yourself, give effective presentations and discuss
the readings. The grade will depend on the quality and quantity of student comments and questions as well as other evidences of engagement with the course. It counts for 10% of the total grade.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled classes and come prepared to participate fully in class activities. Students are further expected to be on time for all classes. Deadlines must be respected, even in cases of excused absences. Please refer to your handbook for more details regarding attendance policy.

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1
Class: Introducing Economic Development

Reading:


Assignment:

• Preparing and reading the assigned chapter

Week 2
Class: Comparative Economic Development

Reading:

Assignment:

• Preparing and reading the assigned chapter
• Take home: Homework 1

Week 3

Class: Classic Theories of Economic Growth and Development

Reading:


Assignment:

• Preparing and reading the assigned chapter
• Start preparing for current event project and 2
• Homework 1 due

Week 4

Class: Chapter 3 continued

Reading:


Assignment:

• Preparing and reading the assigned chapter
• In class problem set
Week 5
Class: Poverty, Inequality, and Development

Reading:


Assignment:

- Preparing and reading the assigned chapter
- Quick revision of midterm material

Week 6
Class: Midterm

Week 7
Class: Solving Midterm and open questions (15 minutes)

Population Growth and Economic Development

Reading:


Assignment:

- Using internet links and documents posted on CANVAS
- Preparing and reading the assigned chapter
- Current Event Project 1 due

Week 8
Class: Chapter 6 continued

Reading:

Week 9
Class: Human Capital Education and Health in Economic Development

Reading:


Assignment:

• Preparing and reading the assigned chapter

Week 10
Class: International Trade and Development Strategy

Reading:

Chapter 12

Assignment:

- Using internet links and documents posted on CANVAS
- Preparing and reading the assigned chapter
- Current Event Project 2 due

Week 11
Class: Case Study 1

Will be given to you

Week 12
Class: Case Study 2
Will be given to you

Week 13
Class: Wrapping up and open discussion (or Guest Speaker)

Week 14
Class: Final Exam

Course Materials
Readings

2. World Development Report
3. Selected readings provided as the course starts and preferences of students are to be taken into account.

Online Resources

1. World Bank Development Data and Statistics
2. International Monetary Fund
3. IMF World Economic Outlook
4. United Nations Economic and Social Development
5. United Nations Statistics Division
6. United Nations Development Program
7. Human Development Report