GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Politics of the Modern Middle East: Language, Text and Context (A005132)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 6.0 **Study time 180 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

A (semester 1)	Arabic	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

Kreil, Aymon	LW21	lecturer-in-charge
Khouri, George	LW21	staff member

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028	**crdts**	**offering**
Master of Science in Teaching in Languages(main subject Oriental Languages and Cultures)	6	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Middle East Studies)	6	A
Exchange Programme Oriental Languages and Cultures	6	A

Keywords

Middle East, North Africa, modern and contemporary periods, politics, current affairs, power, modernity, tradition, colonialism, postcolonialism, globalisation, Modern Standard Arabic, Egyptian Arabic

Position of the course

This course, pitched at the graduate academic level (master), builds on the knowledge and skills acquired in a BA-degree programma of Arabic and Islamic Studies, or equivalent. The course brings together various academic subjects that involve the modern and contemporary Middle East and North Africa, its study within a political sciences context, and Arabic language proficiency at intermediate to advanced levels. This course is given in collaboration with the Department of Conflict and Development Studies.

Contents

This course consists of two closely intertwined components: contexts, and language and texts

1 Contexts: thorough study in modular seminars (optional modules), from various empirically as well as theoretically informed perspectives, of relevant themes and cases. These are annually selected in the context of contemporary relevance and/or the scholarly priorities of students and teacher. Subjects that may be considered include: politics of gender and identity, political economy of the Middle East or North Africa, revolution and resistance, local and global ...

2 Language and Texts: productive training of speaking and writing skills in Egyptian and Modern Standard Arabic, at intermediate to advanced levels, with reading and listening assignments that are always closely related to the subjects discussed in the contexts component.

Initial competences

BA in Arabic and Islamic Studies, or equivalent (including academic knowledge at undergraduate level of the history of the Middle East, and intermediate knowledge of Egyptian and Modern Standard Arabic).

Final competences

1 To identify and problematise the complexity of the politics of the modern Middle East in their local and global contexts

2 To apply in creative ways an advanced knowledge of Egyptian and Modern Standard Arabic in the analysis of complex questions pertaining to the politics of

the modern Middle East.

3 To identify and problematise the added value of different disciplines for the resolution of complex questions pertaining to the politics of the modern Middle East.

4 To identify and problematise current theoretical discussions in the academic field of the politics of the modern Middle East.

5 To identify and problematise current empirical discussions in the academic field of the politics of the modern Middle East.

6 To apply independently current theoretical discussions in the academic field of the politics of the modern Middle East.

7 To apply independently current empirical discussions in the academic field of the politics of the modern Middle East.

8 To interpret results of individual research about the politics of the modern Middle East and to apply these in academically valid ways.

9 To reflect critically and in independent and systematic ways about learning, thinking, deciding and acting in the context of the politics of the modern Middle East.

10 To construct valid academic arguments around complex problems related to the politics of the modern Middle East.

11 To engage in written and oral communication, with peers and with others, about the results of independent learning, thinking and acting with respect to complex questions related to the politics of the modern Middle East.

12 To engage in written and oral communication with native speakers, at an advanced level of language proficiency, in the specific context of the political problems of the modern Middle East.

13 To collaborate, in a context of diversity, trans-cultural realities, and historical consciousness, on complex questions related to the politics of the modern Middle East.

14 To have a critical consciousness about the relevance of knowledge about the politics of the modern Middle East for a variety of current social issues, events, debates and opinions.

15 To have a critical consciousness about the significance of an advanced knowledge of Egyptian and Modern Standard Arabic for gaining access to the context of current social issues, events, debates and opinions related to the politics of the modern Middle East.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Practical

Extra information on the teaching methods

Integrative seminar: reading and written assignments, group work presentations, debates, ... coordinated by the main teacher.
Practicum: reading, listening and writing assignments in Modern Standard Arabic coordinated by the native speaker; speaking assignments and debates in Egyptian Arabic coordinated by a language instructor.
The focus is on on-campus lectures. Students are expected to attend these. Class recordings are only available by arrangement with the lecturers for students who have been granted a mandatory 'class recording' facility.

Study material

None

References

- *Politics & Society in the contemporary Middle East*, ed. M.P. Angrist (Lynn Riener Publishers, 2013)
- Ayeb, H., & Bush, R. (2019). *Food Insecurity and Revolution in the Middle East and North Africa: Agrarian Questions in Egypt and Tunisia.* Anthem Press
- Achcar, Gilbert. 2013. *The People Want. A Radical Exploration of the Arab Uprising.* London: Saqi Books.

- *Het Midden-Oosten: the times they are a-changin'*, eds. S. Zemni, et al (EPO, 2013)
- E. Açali, *Neoliberal governmentality and the future of the state in the Middle East and North Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016)
- El Mustapha Lahlali, *Advanced Media Arabic* (EUP 2016, 2nd ed.)
- E. Kendall, *Media Arabic* (Essential Middle Eastern Vocabularies) (EUP 2012, 2nd ed.)
- S. Louis, *Kallimni 'Arabi Aktar: An Upper Intermediate Course in Spoken Egyptian Arabic*(AUC, 2008)
- S. Louis, *Kallimni 'Arabi Mazboot. An Early Advanced Course in Spoken Egyptian Arabic* (AUC, 2009)

Course content-related study coaching

Continuous feedback as a component of the interactive teaching method; electronic platform Ufora

Assessment moments

continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Participation, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Extra information on the examination methods

Continuous assessment: preparation and active participation, including papers and presentations (detailed information will be provided at the start of the course)

Calculation of the examination mark

Contexts : 70 % (continuous assessment)

Language & Texts : 30 % (continuous assessment)

Students who do not participate in (a part of) the assessment, or have a mark below 10/20 for one of the components (Contexts, Language/Texts), automatically fail the entire course. Final marks higher than 10/20 will, in this case, be reduced to the highest mark that does not qualify for automatic upgrade ('deliberation').

A pass mark for one of the components means that the assessment of that component does not need to be retaken in case of a resit. However, the student is always entitled to still take the full second examination opportunity if he/she does not yet pass the entire course unit. The last examination grade obtained is the one counting when calculating the final result.

Facilities for Working Students

1 No exemption from attendance requirements possible;
2 Feedback can be given by email or by appointment during office hours.
For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy