GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Introduction to the Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa (A005480)

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

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

A (semester 2) English Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

Kreil, Aymon LW21 lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Arabic and Islamic Studies)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, English, Turkish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, French, Turkish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Applied Language Studies: a combination of at least two languages(main subject Dutch, German, Turkish)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in History	5	A
Exchange Programme African Languages and Cultures	5	A
Exchange Programme Cultures and Languages in Context	5	A
Exchange Programme Global Studies and World Societies	5	A
Exchange Programme History	5	A
Exchange Programme in Political and Social Sciences	5	A
Exchange Programme Oriental Languages and Cultures	5	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in Multilingual Communication: a combination of at least two languages	5	A
Linking Course Master of Arts in Translation: a combination of at least two languages	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Multilingual Communication: a combination of at least two languages	5	A
Preparatory Course Master of Arts in Translation: a combination of at least two languages	5	A
Elective Set Culture and Society	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Middle East, North Africa, Arab Countries, Islam, Anthropology, Ethnography

Position of the course

This course aims to introduce the students to the anthropology in the Middle East and North Africa. It offers a reflection on the history of the discipline in the region, on its main concepts and topics and on its contemporary debates. The course sessions give an insight into the conditions of knowledge production and its political, social and cultural implications combined to learning key elements for understanding Middle Eastern and North-African countries.

Contents

This course offers an introduction to:

1. The history of anthropology in the Middle East and North Africa and its main authors and fields of inquiry;
2. The social conditions of knowledge production in and on the Middle East

and North Africa in the colonial time and after the independences;
3. Main concepts and debates shaping the anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa today;
4. Social commonalities and differences across the regions known as the Middle East and North Africa;
5. The social conditions of life in the Middle East and North Africa.

Initial competences

Learning outcomes secondary education.

Final competences

1 The student understands and critically reflects upon the social and political implications of knowledge production;
2 The student situates the actors and topics of main debates in the anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa;
3 The student gains critical insights into ethnographical knowledge, its assets and its challenges;
4 The student situates the contribution of Middle Eastern and North-African fieldworks for anthropology;
5 The student has acquired key anthropological concepts for understanding norms, aspirations and constraints shaping life experiences in the Middle East, North Africa and beyond;
6 The student can assess the impact of culture and religion on life experiences in the Middle East, North Africa and beyond;
7 The student has the anthropological tools to assess debates on the history and the current situation of the Middle East and North Africa.

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

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods

Lectures: courses in relation to the study material prepared for the classes and for the exams. The lessons are recorded and made available on Ufora for a week after each session.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Syllabus Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no

References

Soraya Altorky (ed.) 2015. *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Middle East*. Chichester: Wiley Publishing.

Dale F. Eickelman. 1989. *The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach* (Second Edition). Engelwood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Michael Gilsenan. 2000. *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East* (Revised Edition). London: IB Tauris.

Course content-related study coaching

Feedback on participation during classes, by appointment and over e-mail or Ufora.

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

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

Written assessment with open-ended questions

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

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Calculation of the examination mark

Final examination: 100%

Facilities for Working Students

1. The lessons are recorded and are available on Ufora for a week;
2. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same academic year
3. Alternative time for feedback

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy