DESCRIPTION:
This interdisciplinary course provides an in-depth introduction to the international politics of the Middle East. The engagement with crucial empirical understandings of the region including transnational ideologies (e.g. pan-Arabism, pan-Islamism), international conflicts (e.g. the conflict in Israel/Palestine), and the relation between globalisation and regional politics as well as contentious politics constitutes the introduction of the course. In the wake of the so called “Arab Spring”, the “refugee crisis” in 2015 and the rise of ISIS, the Europe’s neighbouring region became a central topic in various forms. These substantial changes and conflicts do not only re-shape the political map of the Middle East, but also influence the political situation, public discourse, and policy-making process in Europe and on a global scale. The spillover of Middle-East conflicts beyond the region’s borders challenges traditional thinking about core matters of European security and social cohesion. However, in many of these discourses the long history, including colonial history, of relations between the Middle East and Europe is neglected. The course will thus shed light on the different historical connections between Europe and the Middle East. Drawing on this historical background, the course will examine and contextualize what is labelled the “Arab Spring” the “refugee crisis” and recent developments with regard to Islamic radicalism and Jihadi-Salafism. The course will also critically engage with concepts such as identity politics, sectarianism, and Islamic fundamentalism, which often appear as explanations for conflicts. The last part of the course will be dedicated to analyzing the impact of the conflict situation in the Middle East and transnational dynamics on European politics and society. In this context, we will focus on two strategic interfaces: (1) forced migration from conflict areas and (2) terrorism and radicalization, as two threads connecting the events in the Middle East with the social and political reality in Europe. We will also examine the systemic impact of these topics on the current political discourse and through two excursion where we will meet experts and representatives of a security focused think-tank from Germany and a group/representatives from refugee communities/ diaspora activists.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

PREREQUISITES: No prerequisite

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:
Lecture, discussion, student presentations, course-related trip.

ADDITIONAL COST: None

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
- Identify and analyze structural causes of conflict escalation in regional and global conflicts
- Understand and analyze present and past relations between the Middle East and Europe
- Identify historical continuities and (post-)colonial dynamics shaping international relations between the two neighboring regions
- Analyze the influence of (1) forced migration, and (2) terrorism and radicalization as two separate phenomena on the political discourse and strategic policy making in Europe today
- Critical understanding of key concepts often used to explain conflicts
- Understand differences between actors, ideological backgrounds and histories
- Contextualize the term “crisis” in a more global perspective

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:
• Course participation– 10 
• Class Presentation – 15 
• Midterm exam – 25 
• Research essay - 25 
• Final Exam – 25

COURSE PARTICIPATION
The development of a meaningful discussion depends on students' active participation in class and on their critical reflection on the reading materials. Each session will be structured around a distinct topic, which will be addressed with the help of one or more texts posted on Moodle beforehand. Students will be expected to prepare for class by reading and reflecting upon the assigned texts, and to participate in class discussions, showing that they have understood and critically evaluated the authors' arguments. The IES rubric for participation will be uploaded to moodle.

CLASS PRESENTATION
Each session will be introduced by a student with a 10 minutes presentation on key concepts, central arguments and open questions of the readings assigned in the respective course session. These presentations will provide the possibility to focus on central aspects and open questions students have. In the first week, each student will be assigned for one presentation (to be held in session 5-17). Depending on the number of students in class, joint presentations by two students will be possible. In this case, each student will need to identify their contribution to the presentation.

MID-TERM EXAM
The midterm exam (4-6 questions) has the dual purpose of testing students’ knowledge of facts, and evaluating their ability to critically analyze and contextualize historical events and political trends. It will focus on material covered in the first half of the course (90 minutes, session 12).

RESEARCH ESSAY
Students will write a research essay (ca. 2,000 words) which is due in session 19. In their essay, students develop a coherent argument with the support of textual sources to be cited according to MLA or Chicago standards. Students will be required to schedule a time to discuss their topic with the instructor before session 5.

Final Exam
The final exam (4-6 questions) focuses on material covered in the second half of the semester. Students should, however, also be able to integrate ideas discussed in the first half of the semester in their answers on the final (90 minutes, session 24).

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Attendance and punctuality in all courses and field studies are mandatory. Absences can only be excused for valid reasons. Unexcused absences can affect students’ grades. Students who miss 25% or more of all class sessions will fail the course. Missed exams cannot be taken at another time except in case of documented illness. Late submission of term papers and other work will result in grade reduction unless an extension due to illness or an emergency is approved. Please consult the IES Berlin Academics Manual on Moodle for additional details.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Students are expected to abide by the IES Abroad Academic Integrity Code. Assigned papers need to be properly and amply footnoted where appropriate, with all sources attributed, including images. Suspicious papers may be checked with plagiarism-detecting software.

CONTENT:

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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Transnational ideologies in the Middle East as a challenge for regional orders</td>
<td>Halliday, Fred. 2005. <em>The Middle East in international relations: power, politics and ideology</em>. Cambridge University Press. 229-260</td>
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<td>Session 12</td>
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See also Public Lecture by Dawn Chatty The Syrian Humanitarian Disaster: Sustainability of Containment in the Conflict Region https://lecture2go.uni-hamburg.de/l2go/-/get/v/19312 | Student presentation |
| Session 20 | Confronting a “new” threat: Europe’s efforts to counter new challenges of transnational terror | Excursion to relevant think tank/ German agency focusing on terrorism and threats.  
In this session, the section on political violence, terrorism and radicalization in Europe in the wake of the “refugee crisis” will be concluded by a site visit to one of the think tanks that consult the German government, the EU on this issue such as the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) with an office in Berlin and a focus on jihadism in Germany or the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) |
| Week 11 |
| Week 12 |
| Session 24 | Final Exam | 90 minutes in class |

**EXCURSIONS**

Visit at one of the think tanks that consult the German government/EU on ME such as the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) with an office in Berlin and a focus on jihadism in Germany; or the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP).

**REQUIRED READINGS:**


**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**


(2019/03)