Arab World: International Relations, Security and Governance

Code: 41715
ECTS Credits: 10

2024/2025

Degree	Type	Year
4313800 International Relations, Security and Development	OT	0

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Prerequisites

No specific prerequisites

Objectives and Contextualisation

Course objectives

- To gain an in-depth understanding of the various concepts, theoretical models and methodological tools in the field of security and development studies.

- To advance in the formulation and elaboration of research proposals that can contribute to knowledge and to social and political debates based on the analysis and use of the theoretical framework and instruments necessary to work in the international sphere.

- To know and be able to critically evaluate the theory and practice of human development and human security.

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- Acquire the necessary knowledge of the politics, culture, religion, economy and society of the Arab world in order to be able to analyse different regional dynamics in a comparative manner.

- To acquire the necessary skills to analyse regional dynamics of cooperation and conflict in order to extract the conceptual and analytical tools for future analysis.

Learning Outcomes

1. CA18 (Competence) To assess the social, economic and environmental impact of the foreign policies of relevant actors on the Middle East and North Africa, as well as alterations in the international structure and processes.
2. CA19 (Competence) To base participation in political and academic debates on evidence and the literature that exists on area studies and international relations in the Middle East.
3. KA16 (Knowledge) To identify the actors who have an impact on the dynamics of cooperation and conflict in the Arab world and the rest of the Middle East and North Africa region, understanding their characteristics, functions and roles in shaping political dynamics and security in the region.
4. KA17 (Knowledge) To recognise the theoretical frameworks and approaches for analysing international relations, security and development in the Arab world.
5. KA18 (Knowledge) To describe the impact of trends and changes in the international system on the Arab world and, where relevant, the Middle East and North Africa region.
6. KA19 (Knowledge) To explain the evolution of a conflict in the Arab world and, more broadly, in the Middle East and North Africa region, having identified the key actors and processes.
7. SA21 (Skill) To compare the dynamics of cooperation and conflict in both the Arab world and Middle East and North Africa region in different periods and geographical contexts.
8. SA22 (Skill) To critically analyse the political systems, social structures and foreign policies in place in countries in the Arab world and the rest of the Middle East and North Africa.

Content

Block I. Introduction to International Relations in the Arab World

In this block, the specificity of the Arab World region will be addressed from the point of view of the Social Sciences, and more specifically of International Relations. It will analyse how historical, cultural, religious and socio-economic factors have shaped political and social dynamics in the region. Furthermore, it will examine how regional dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region influence the international system and vice versa. The theoretical approach of the Sociology of Power to understand the tensions in the Middle East and how they manifest themselves in political and social contexts will be presented. In addition, feminist perspectives from the Middle East and North Africa will be examined, analysing the role of women in politics and society, as well as the struggles and achievements in terms of gender equality.

It will address, among others, the following issues:

- The specificity of the region from the point of view of the Social Sciences.

- International Relations and the MENA region

- Tensions in the Middle East and the theoretical proposal of the sociology of power.

- Feminist Perspectives from the Middle East and North Africa

Block II. Geopolitics and Political Economy

This block will examine how global geopolitical and economic dynamics influence the region, considering factors such as military power, economic interests and strategic alliances. The impact of the great powers in the region will be studied, as well as the foreign policies of the region's major states, considering their interests, priorities and strategies in the international arena. Special attention will also be paid to oil and gas resources in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, analysing how energy resources influence international relations and regional dynamics.

These issues, among others, will be addressed:

- Global powers, fractures and transformations: the impact on the Middle East and North Africa.

- Oil and gas cooperation in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

- The foreign policies of the region's large states.

Block III. Violent conflicts

This block will examine the intervention of major powers in regional conflicts, whether through direct military intervention, support for local actors or political and economic influence. Specific cases of armed conflict in the Maghreb and the Mashreq will be studied, analysing the causes, dynamics and consequences of these conflicts. It will explore how these conflicts have impacted on international relations, regional security, and the political and social dynamics of the region.

It will address, among others, the following issues:

- The intervention of major powers in the region's conflicts.

- Case studies of armed conflicts in the Maghreb

- Case studies of armed conflicts in the Mashreq.

Block IV. Identity, ideas and social mobilisation

This block will examine the role of discourses, ideas and ideologies in the Arab World region. It will analyse how political, religious and cultural discourses influence the shaping of individual and collective identities, as well as political and social dynamics. It will explore the relationship between population and popular mobilisations, analysing how social movements and protests have emerged in response to different political and socio-economic challenges. In addition, the role of religious communities in conflicts in the Middle East will be analysed, looking at sectarian tensions and conflicts.

It will address, among others, the following issues:

- Discourse, ideas and ideology in the region.

- Population and popular mobilisation

- Religious communities and conflict in the Middle East

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Classroom lectures and seminars	50	2	CA18, KA16, KA17
Readings and reading notes	50	2	CA18, CA19, KA16, SA21, SA22

Type: Supervised			
Readings and preparation of different exercises	75	3	CA18, CA19, KA16, KA17, KA18, KA19, SA21, SA22

During the module, a blended methodology combining lectures and reverse pedagogy is used in order to encourage more active and participatory learning. Through the master classes, the lecturer transmits fundamental knowledge and provides an overview of the content. With reverse pedagogy, on the other hand, students are responsible for doing compulsory reading prior to the sessions, in order to be able to actively participate in class activities and discussions.

In order to develop the knowledge acquired, students have the opportunity to carry out practical exercises related to their theoretical content. These exercises allow students to apply the concepts learned and develop practical skills relevant to the module. In addition, autonomous learning is promoted, as students are required to prepare short oral questions based on the compulsory readings, in which they must show their understanding of the content and their ability to express themselves coherently and accurately.

Finally, to assess students' progress and understanding, a two-part exam is administered. The first part is a test which tests the theoretical knowledge acquired. The second part consists of a topic-type question, in which students must answer in an argued and analytical way, demonstrating their ability to relate and apply the concepts studied in the module.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Class paarticipation	10%	15	0.6	CA19, KA16, KA19, SA22
Exam	40%	2	0.08	CA18, KA16, KA17, KA18, SA21, SA22
Oral questions	10%	20.5	0.82	CA19, KA18, KA19, SA22
Realization of Practical exercises	40%	37.5	1.5	CA18, CA19, KA16, KA17, KA18, KA19, SA21, SA22

The evaluation of the module will be carried out considering the following criteria:

1. Elaboration of 4 exercises corresponding to each of the blocks, following the instructions provided on the virtual campus at the beginning of the module. These exercises must be handed in on the date and in the way as informed by the professor responsible for each block. Each exercise will have a weight of 10% in the final mark, which represents a total of 40%.
2. Formulation of 4 questions related to two sessions of the Aula Mediterrània cycle organised by the IEMed. Students need to select two of the three sessions available and pose 2 questions for each of the two sessions based on the reading corresponding to each session, as well as other complementary readings. Each question will be worth 2,5% (10% in total) of the final mark. Questions must be submitted to the virtual campus before the corresponding session.
3. Final exam which will consist of a quiz which will account for 20% of the final mark and the development of a topic question which will contribute the remaining 20%. This section of the exam will assess the

overall understanding of the content of the module and the student's capacity for analysis and argumentation. Overall, the final exam will account for 40% of the total module mark.

4. Active participation in classroom activities will amount to 10% of the final grade. In case of missing a class, students must notify in advance and provide a valid justification, whenever possible.

It is important to note that attendance, participation and meeting the established deadlines are fundamental aspects for the evaluation process in this module.

Bibliography

COMPULSORY BIBLIOGRAPHY

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At lest one compulsory text will be required for each lesson.

Readings corresponding to the 4 exercises of the 4 blocks.

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Software

No specific software

Language list

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(TEm) Theory (master)	1	Catalan	second semester	afternoon