



ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME

European Interdisciplinary Studies, Natolin campus (Advanced Academic Master)

YEAR

2022-2023

COURSE TITLE

US Foreign Policy towards the Middle East and North Africa

SEMESTER

2

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

FRÖHLICH Stefan

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

STEINGASS Sebastian

COURSE TYPE

Compact Seminar

MAJOR(S)

EUN

ECTS CREDITS

no ECTS

TEACHING HOURS

10

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

TUTORIAL(S)

COEFFICIENT

not applicable

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This compact seminar examines the US' role in the Middle East and North Africa since the end of the Cold War.

After an introductory session including a brief review of the geostrategic relevance of the region and the history of US engagement there, the first part of the course will analyse the structural changes and paradigm shifts after the end of the Cold War arguing that through repeated (military) interventions the country had become the dominating actor and deeply entangled in MENA power politics.

The second part will analyse the profound shift in US foreign policy towards the region after the terrorist attacks in 2001 which led the Bush administration to replace traditional balance of power politics by unfettered democracy promotion.

In the third part, the course will examine how Obama's pivot to Asia-Pacific, Trump's "America First" and the new geopolitics of energy security led to a withdrawal from Washington's hegemonic position in the region.

The fourth and final part will discuss the major implications of US disengagement on the MENA regional security complex: on the one hand, it increased strategic uncertainty particularly for close US-allies, on the other hand it opened the door for other external great powers such as Russia and China to fill the power vacuum.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students should be able to present and discuss research methods and theoretical approaches of International Relations, tackle relevant questions, and develop and sustain analytical arguments and conclusions related to the course topic.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

None.

TEACHING METHOD(S)

Seminar with lectures, presentations, and discussions.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

The compact seminar will be assessed on a 'pass/fail' basis through:

- an online multiple-choice test (80% of the mark) at the end of the final course session - 15 minutes to answer 7 questions, and
- overall attendance (20% of the mark).

The weighted average of both assessment elements needs be equal or greater than 50% for a student to pass the compact seminar.

Each student is entitled to re-taking the test once. The re-take test would account for 80% of the mark whilst overall attendance would account for the remaining 20%.

Since compact seminars carry no ECTS credits, the final result will be present on the transcript, but will have no impact on the student's final average, nor on the overall grade, nor on attaining the diploma.

COURSE CONTENTS

Students are expected to attend all classes, actively participate in the course and read the assigned literature before coming to class. They also should make use of the relevant newspapers and magazines dealing with current US foreign policy in general and the MENA issue in particular. They are expected to make contributions to the discussion sessions after each lecture and presentation.

The course structure consists of lectures, student presentations (individually 10-15 min; in pairs/groups 15-20 min), and open discussions of the presentations. While preparing the presentations, students should also use additional materials by doing own research. The assistant will coordinate the topic selection before the beginning of the course.

Each session will begin with a brief lecture introducing the topic. It will be followed by an oral presentation by students and discussion. Participation in the presentations is optional.

Note that in light of current events, the readings below may still be updated before the start of the course.

Introduction: History and characteristic principles of US Foreign Policy towards the MENA region (1h)

Lecture

Part II: Structural changes and paradigm shifts in US MENA policy from the end of the Cold War to 9/11 (2h)

Introductory Lecture

Student Presentation: America's global war on terror – how did the US deal with the Islamist threat after the terrorist attacks?

PART III: US disengagement from the region – an incremental process and its strategic consequences for transatlantic conflict and crisis management (2h)

Introductory Lecture

Student Presentation: After Afghanistan: The end of US/Western humanitarian interventions?

PART IV: US disengagement and the (re)emergence of other external great powers (2h)

Introductory Lecture

Student Presentation: The new regional security architecture: regional partners between balancing and hedging

Outlook and course conclusions (1h)

Discussion

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

See Course Outline.