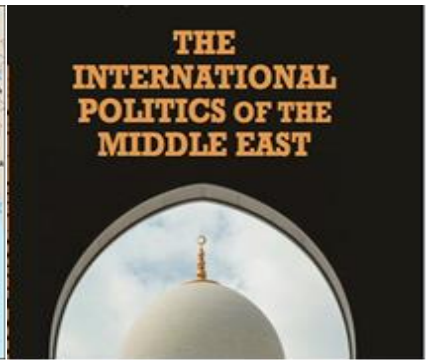
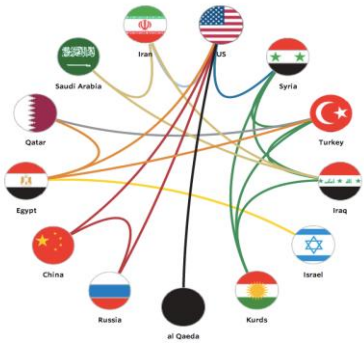
INR4274:
International Politics of the Middle East
Spring 2024 Syllabus





Instructor Contact

Instructor	Dr. Houman Sadri
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Office Hours	M & W: 11:30am-13:45pm by emails or appointments.
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Course Information

Course Name	International Political of the Middle East
Course ID & Sections	INR4274 0W60
Credit Hours	3
Semester/Year	Spring 2024
Online Section:	No face-to-face Class Meetings, BUT all our online students are advised to watch the class lecture videos

Course Description & Objectives

This interdisciplinary course provides a foundation for understanding the complex socio-political, cultural, and economic structure of the Middle East, a vague term that includes the States of North Africa, the Persian Gulf, and the Eastern Mediterranean Sea (known as the Near East). This class covers the major approaches, concepts, and methods, which are the necessary tools for analyzing and comprehending the social structure, governmental institutions, in addition to the formal and informal policies of this vital geographic region.

Another purpose of this course is to go beyond stereotypes, and to stimulate students' critical thinking by the analysis of events and issues from both comparative as well as cross-cultural perspectives. The next objective is to provide an accurate and unbiased recent picture of social, economic, legal, political, and security challenges of the Middle Eastern nations in the post-Cold War period. The Middle East is a significant region for the West, because it is the source of the three major monotheistic religions of the world, and many of its natural resources, particularly the fossil fuels, are vital for the survival of the West. In the post-September 11th, the West (especially the US) is amazed by the level of anti-Western and anti-American sentiments in the region. Many ask: Why do they hate us? In response, some argue that we cannot do anything about the situation, while others suggest that the problem could have been avoided by a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the Middle Eastern cultures, societies, and politics. Still others call for a revision of the failed Western policies in the last century in the region. These are some issues that we examine.

Moreover, this class is to stimulate critical analyses of events and issues in global affairs. It is not my place to train students to be **conservative or liberal people**, but **I use our readings and my lectures to stimulate your minds**. However, **I have no political agenda**, especially since **I am an independent**, who does not even belong to any real political party. More importantly, this course will also assist students to improve their written and oral communication skills, to gain an ability to translate knowledge from one context to another, and to apply theory to practice. Gaining this knowledge is important not only for students, but also for government and business employees and those who realize that we live in an increasingly global village.

Format

Our **Web (or online**) course consists of only one section, which never meets in a regular classroom. However, you are **strongly encouraged to watch the lecture videos**, during which I gave **hints** about quiz and exam questions. There is no required in-class attendance, but students should **think of our Web session like a M/W/F course**, **which has required assignment deadlines on both M & F.** The recorded sessions are available in an on-line digital format on the course website. These recorded video lectures make understanding our courses materials much easier. Our experience indicates that students who watch the videos do much better in our course than those who do not.

Every week, we start a new Reading Module (or lesson plan) on Mondays, and we have assignments due on Mondays and Fridays. The weekly Required Discussion Postings are always

due on Mondays before 9:00am. While our online Final Exam is on Friday 4/26/2024, our two Midterm Exam Modules start on Mondays with their online Review Sessions, but the Midterm Exams are online on Fridays. The **three Exam Modules** are modules numbers 4 (First Midterm Exam or Exam 1), 8 (Second Midterm Exam or Exam 2), and 12 (Final Exam). **The Midterm Exams are available for only one day on Fridays from 6am to 11:59pm, because UCF computer servers go on backup between 12midnight and 6am, so they cut off students.** However, our Final Exam (based on UCF Final Exams schedule) is on 4/26/24 from 6am till 11:59pm. Also, every Friday (with the exception of National Holidays), we have a quiz available only for one day from 6am to 11:59pm (for the same reason).

I prepared **PowerPoint lectures** to make sense of a **great deal of readings** that students must complete in our **text and website articles**. Moreover, we heavily rely on our diverse readings (which provide us with a variety of views) and use them as additional lecture materials. I want my students to be exposed to many different ideas, not just one or two. In this course, we cover 12 Modules or lessons (consist of 9 Reading Modules and 3 Exam Modules). Each Reading Module covers at least one text chapter, and at least a few articles from our website. **Modules are organized as one-stop shop** where related assignments, public discussions, postings, quizzes, exams, and surveys are linked inside modules for your convenience and efficiency.

Each **reading module** is divided into six parts:

1. Reading modules begin with **required readings**, all of which must be completed before Tuesdays required postings' deadlines before 11:59pm. Of course, you may begin reading ahead, since you have access to your text, website articles, schedule, and modules.
2. Students are required to discuss the content of readings in our **online required Weekly Discussion** (**due Mondays by 9:00am**), which involves each student replying directly to instructor's analytical questions by using the Reply Button inside Instructor's Posting. This means that students **must read ALL** materials before the discussions begin; and they **must clearly document or cite ALL weekly readings in their posting**. For the complete list of requirements and format of the assignment, please see the **Discussion Posting Guidelines** linked, inside the Module and see the Sample Posting in our Syllabus Folder listed on modules page. Remember that the Canvas System does not accept late postings. Moreover, we cannot accept any gradable assignment(s) by e-mail or Course Mail, based on UCF rules.
3. Students should first complete **Required Readings** (including Book Chapters, Outlines, Summaries, Key Concepts, and Articles) for each module to better understand the subject before making their discussion posting. In total, there are 12 (required and optional) discussion postings, but you are strongly encouraged to complete the first 3 postings which are much easier than the rest plus any other 3 postings that you like. For earning full 30 points for discussion postings, however, you must complete at least 6 postings.
4. There is an **Optional Question Forum** for **exchanges among students** who may have additional questions about the reading materials or current events. This optional forum is to facilitate communications among students themselves, so they can exchange ideas with each other and learn from one another. This forum is to create a **Community of Learner**, another UCF goal. The aim is to **empower students** by providing them the opportunity to act as teachers to help one another. Those students who act as teachers learn the materials

better themselves, and those who listen to them tend to identify better with their own peers. This way, most reading questions are answered, and vague points are clarified. With this method, we can make sure that the materials are clear for all students. So, this Forum should help students with their preparation for the quizzes and tests. Thus, we use the **Question Forum** for the question/answer period by students, for students, and via students themselves. Serving as a monitor, the instructor interjects in the Question Forum only when the students' answers to the questions are not correct (or complete) or he may play the role of the devil's advocate for providing students with different perspectives.

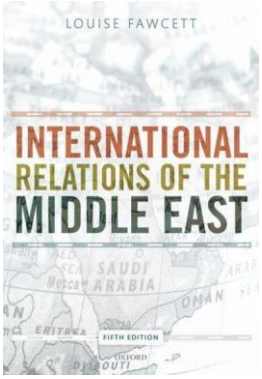
5. For each reading module, the next step is a **quiz** that **covers all reading materials** of that particular module in addition to including questions from our course Syllabus Folder, which includes the Syllabus File, Course Requirements & Grading System, Class Schedule, Discussion Posting Guideline, Sample Discussion Posting, Rubric for Discussion Posting Grade, and Protocols page. **There are 9 reading modules; and thus 9 quizzes**. You are required to take only 3 out of 9 quizzes. However, I suggest that students take all 9 quizzes, so I can **drop their lowest 6 quizzes scores**. I add up their top 3 quizzes for their final total quiz score.
6. The final step in any module is the Weekly **Optional** (ungraded) **Anonymous Survey**, which is available if you click on the Module Description Page. These surveys are setup to be fully **anonymous** to provide privacy to students who are **too shy** to ask a direct question from the instructor (via **Course Mail**) or have a criticism of the course or the instructor during a particular module. **These ungraded Surveys include two parts**: the first covers the material highlights, but you may just say **OK** here, and move to the more important second part, where you **place your criticism or praise**. Since the surveys are fully anonymous, students should feel free to express themselves, make any constructive criticism of the lectures, readings, and/or format. As the instructor will not know the identity of the students in survey, then he may address such criticism in the Question Forum. If you have no criticism, you are **NOT required to use these ungraded Optional Surveys**. Of course, you are also welcome to provide any positive input, if you like any aspect of the class to help us maintain the more effective and useful parts of this course. Your input is certainly appreciated, even though you remain anonymous.

As necessary, we may utilize audiovisual resources to further our understanding of the materials, if **our Course Website** technology allows us. Our course materials (except for our required text) are available on-line.

Text

The following books and materials are **required** for our class:

- **Louise Fawcett**, *International Relations of the Middle East*, 5th ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 2019 (ISBN: **978-0-19-880942-5**).



Additional reading materials will be available at our Website. You may access them via our Class Website inside each Module.

PowerPoint Information

Some of this course's content is displayed as PowerPoint files. If you do not have PowerPoint installed on your system, you can download a free PowerPoint Viewer from Microsoft for your Windows computer. If you have a Mac or Windows computer you can use OpenOffice.

Teaching Philosophy

Education is a tool for improving the quality of life. Education is not an end in itself but a process. My teaching philosophy is to encourage critical thinking, innovative problem-solving, practical application of theory, and tolerance of diverse ideas and cultures from an international perspective. To achieve these goals, I employ an interactive teaching style, which empowers students by encouraging them to contribute to the ongoing discussion of both familiar and unfamiliar topics and materials. My teaching goals are both to share my academic knowledge and experience with my students and to inspire and help them to become life-long learners.

I strongly believe in providing many options and opportunities for my students to improve their total final scores and earn an excellent grade. Without any pressure, it is students' choice to use our class options. Our class has the most generous low score dropping policy, since we drop 6 (out of 12) postings, 6 (out of 9) quizzes, and 1 (out of 2) the midterm exams. I do not micromanage students. Our generous drop policy allows students to feel as professionals and complete only those assignments which fit their life schedule better. Of course, I hope that they do not procrastinate and begin our class by doing all assignments from the first day, secure high scores, or learn from their mistakes to improve the quality of assignments. When they reach the minimum required number of assignments in each category (based on class requirements), then they do not need to complete any assignment until our UCF required Final Exam on 4/27/2023.

General Policies

Based on the UCF's rules and standards, the instructor will pursue the following general policies:

1. **The professor reserves all rights to modify the content** of the syllabus, class schedule, and/or the course, as it becomes necessary. Student should pay attention to such changes.
2. With no exception, **students MUST only use Course Mail**, when they need to contact the professor and/or the class Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA or TA for short).
3. If you receive no reply from the instructor (or TA) within **48-hours** (during regular business days & hours, M-F 8:00-17:00) when they are **not** on business trips), it means that they did not receive your message. Please re-send the message to them.
4. Based on UCF rules and respecting students' **privacy**, the instructor provides student's record only to the student himself/herself on a one-to-one basis. He will not discuss one student's case in front of others in any **public forum**. Students are also not allowed to discuss their private cases in the public forums of our course. Thus, students must **directly contact the instructor via Course Mail (not in class public forums)**, if they have questions about their own records, grades, or particular situations.
5. Dr. Sadri encourages and **welcomes questions** as well as comments from all students. However, he will not allow any student to intimidate other students or dominate the class discussion. No student is allowed to impose his/her ideas on others or create an unhealthy class environment, against UCF regulations and standards.
6. Students Participation Score is penalized for **repeated questions whose answers are in the Syllabus Folder (including Syllabus and more) documents** and course forums.
7. With our generous drop policy, there is no need for changes in deadlines. However, please inform the professor, if you face special career situations (e.g., military deployment to the front) or personal issues (e.g. hospitalization) not listed on the UCF calendar.
8. Since our course materials are on-line, all students MUST check **Course Mail**, class **Web Forums,** and their e-mails at **least twice a day** (once in the morning and once at nights) for new class announcements, news, messages and/or updates by professor or TA.
9. Without exceptions, ALL written **(gradable) assignments** (postings, quizzes, and exams) **MUST be submitted to our Course Website, based on UCF rules**. The format requirement is single-spaced format, black color font, New Times Roman font, and 10-point font size. You are responsible for grammar and spell checking your work.
10. In case of emergency or technical challenges with the Canvas, the Instructor may use students' e-mail addresses from the UCF Knight-Email. Please check your Knight-Email address on daily basis otherwise you may not receive certain emergency messages.
11. If you have **an official name change** during the term, you must inform the instructor immediately, since UCF may not do that, as it has happened in the past.
12. Students should regularly check our Website Assignments Deadline page and avoid submitting assignments to **our Course Website** at the last minute. The **Website clock** may be different from your own time, and that may lead students to miss a deadline. Late assignments are considered missed. **No gradable assignment, posting, quiz, or exam is accepted by e-mail or Course Mail.** According to UCF rules, it is students' responsibility to submit assignments before the deadlines, Eastern Standard Time (**EST**).

13. **Any grade (or score) dispute** or participation discrepancy must be resolved within a week from the day (and time) when scores are posted, or the discrepancy has occurred. No late (or last minute) appeals will be considered.
14. Students, who take a passive (or inactive) role in our class by avoiding assignments, especially during the first 4 weeks of the term, will be considered **"disengaged,"** based on UCF standards. They will be severely penalized on the case-by-case basis.

Make-Up Policy

Theoretically, **there are no make-ups for our quizzes, exams, or Weekly Discussion Postings**. We have a very generous dropping the lowest score policy for each student throughout the term. Most students consider our "dropping low score system" as a very generous make-up policy.

Remember that the **First Midterm Exam is required for all** without an exception. After taking the First Exam, it can be replaced by the Second Midterm Exam, which has a higher score. However, the First and/or the Second Midterm Exams are *NOT* a replacement for the Final Exam (on 4/26/24). Also, there is no make-up for the Final Exam or the optional Extra Credit Quiz.

Make-Up for Authorized University Events or Co-curricular Activities

Students who represent the university in an authorized event or activity (for example, student-athletes) and who are unable to meet a course deadline due to a conflict with that event must provide the instructor with documentation in advance to arrange a make-up. No penalty will be applied. For more information, see UCF policy: https://policies.ucf.edu/documents/4-401.pdf

UCF General COVID Statement

We recognize and understand the difficult times we are all in. The COVID-19 pandemic impacts us all in many ways, including physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, academically, and professionally. I will work with you on challenges you may be encountering and to provide support to help you succeed. However, please keep in mind that you are accountable, especially in terms of our online class attendance, participation, and contributions.

UCF Statement Regarding Masks

Since our class is a W (or fully online) course without any face-to-face time, we do not have the same Mask requirements as the face-to-face courses. However, it is important that students know the following UCF policy.

UCF expects that all members of our campus community who are able to do so get vaccinated, and we expect all members of our campus community to wear masks indoors, in line with the latest CDC guidelines . Masks are required in approved clinical or health care settings.

UCF COVID & Illness Notification

Students who believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19 or who test positive must contact UCF Student Health Services (407-823-2509) so proper contact tracing procedures can take place. Students should not come to campus if they are ill, are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.

Students should contact their instructor(s) as soon as possible if they miss class for any illness to discuss reasonable adjustments that might need to be made. When possible, students should contact their instructor(s) before missing class.

Ethics & Turnitin.com

In this course we will utilize **turnitin.com,** an automated system which instructors and TAs can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit assignments through the Canvas Assignment Tool in electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from **turnitin.com** that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit **http://www.turnitin.com .**

University Writing Center

Beside a good deal of reading, our course involves a great amount of writing. When you have any challenges with writing assignments or if want to improve the quality of your work, see:
University Writing Center, Trevor Colbourn Hall 109
Satellite Locations: Main Library, Rosen Library, Online
407-823-2197, http://uwc.cah.ucf.edu/

The University Writing Center (UWC) offers writing support to students from first-year to graduate in every discipline. Tutors provide help at every stage of the writing process, including understanding assignments, researching, drafting, revising, incorporating sources, and learning to proofread and edit. The UWC's purpose is not merely to fix or edit papers, but to teach writing strategies that can be applied to any writing situation. Consultations are available for individuals and small groups. You may schedule a 45-minute appointment by clicking the *Success Resources* tab on Webcourses, calling the UWC at 407-823-2197, or through the UWC website.

The UWC seeks graduate and undergraduate tutors from all majors. To learn more about becoming a writing tutor, please contact them.

Rules of Conduct

One of the University of Central Florida's most enduring academic traditions is its Rules of Conduct code. Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Rules of Conduct at <https://scai.sdes.ucf.edu/student-rules-of-conduct/>.

The instructor will follow the code and expects all students to do the same. As Golden Rule (https://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) handbook clearly states, failure to comply with university rules may subject violator(s) to appropriate action by university authorities and/or appropriate civil authorities. Serious violations of university rules will be recorded in the record of the student(s).

UCF Course Accessibility

The UCF is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need access to course content due to course design limitations should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> (Ferrell Commons 185, 407-823-2371).

Campus Safety Statement for Students in Online-Only Courses

Though most emergency situations are primarily relevant to courses that meet in person, such incidents can also impact online students, either when they are on or near campus to participate in other courses or activities or when their course work is affected by off-campus emergencies.

The following policies apply to courses in online modalities.

- To stay informed about emergency situations, students can sign up to receive UCF text alerts by going to <https://my.ucf.edu> and logging in. Click on "Student Self Service" located on the left side of the screen in the toolbar, scroll down to the blue "Personal Information" heading on the Student Center screen, click on "UCF Alert", fill out the information, including e-mail address, cell phone number, and cell phone provider, click "Apply" to save the changes, and then click "OK."

- Students with special needs related to emergency situations should speak with their instructors outside of class.

Deployed Active-Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active-duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Religious Observation

Students must notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class for a religious observance. For more information, see the UCF policy at:
http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter5/documents/5.020ReligiousObservancesFINALJan19

Course Requirements & Grading System

The final grades are on a Point System. I do not use letter grades on assignments, postings, quizzes, or tests to avoid misleading interpretations of final grades. I encourage students to avoid letter grade interpretation of their scores. Modules Zero assignments and the Final Exam are required for all. Midterm Exam 2 is ONLY required for those with low Midterm 1 score.

Our course is organized to create **equal opportunity** for students with different learning abilities and skills. If students are not doing well with a particular course requirement, they can still earn enough points to get a desirable final grade. Moreover, there is an opportunity to earn up to 5 Optional Extra Credit Points for the final grade.

CRITERIA	POINTS
3 (out of 9) online Quizzes, 10 points each	**30**
6 (out of 12) online Discussion Postings, 5 points each	**30**
Required First Exam (Second Exam is required for low scores)	**20**
Required Final Exam (online)	**20**
TOTAL	**100**
Extra Credit (online)	**5**

Students are expected to participate in our **online discussion** forums. Individuals who are active Students are expected to participate in our required **online discussion** postings forums. Individuals who are active by their early postings, extensive contribution to Discussion Forums, participating in Optional Forums, and **helping other students** in our Optional (Question, Technical, From the Grapevine) Forums **are eligible for a higher participation score**. In addition, if their final grade is on the borderline between two grades (e.g., A- & B+), their participation record is the key factor in my decision for a higher grade.

NOTE: Please feel free to check only your raw scores on the Canvas Gradebook anytime. However, **the Canvas provides Inaccurate and Misleading Grade Statistics**, because it does not take into account our generous dropping the lowest scores policy. Canvas simply adds all your scores regardless of their quality, ranking, and dropping the lowest figures. For students, Canvas grade statistics often show a very high-performance percentage which is seriously misleading and wrong. For confirming your scores and grade standing, please simultaneously email both the professor and Teaching Assistants (TAs).

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 - 100 points
A-	90 - 92 points
B+	87 - 89 points
B	83 - 86 points
B-	80 - 82 points
C+	77 - 79 points
C	73 - 76 points
C-	70 - 72 points
D+	67 - 69 points
D	63 - 66 points
D-	60 - 62 points
F	59 and below

Since the grading is based on a **simple point system**, at any time during the term you should be able to add your earned points together to recognize your projected grade. Please feel free to contact the instructor directly if you have any questions about your grade. Moreover, the instructor will use the plus and minus grading system which allows for a more accurate and fair evaluation of student performance. The range for each grade is indicated in the table.

Quizzes

To learn about our course topic, one must understand diverse political issues at national, regional, and international levels. To make sure that students are not captured by only one strong view, I have provided competing views in each module to make sure that my students are exposed to a variety of ideas and are not brain-washed by only one view (especially my own ideas). Based on schedule, students are required to read (free of any cost) **articles** linked inside each Module of our **Webcourses@UCF online course** in association with each text chapter. To confirm that module readings are understood, there are **NINE CLOSED-BOOK** multiple choice online quizzes--each related to one reading module. **Closed-Book means** that **one is not supposed to use the reading materials while one takes the quiz**. Students are required to take only 3 (out of 9) quizzes, but they are encouraged to take at least one of the first three quizzes which tend to be easier than the rest. Of course, students are welcome to take all other quizzes as well to maximize their total quiz scores.

With only 10 questions, each quiz is worth 10 points. It covers **all readings in one particular module plus questions from the Syllabus Folder files** to make sure that everyone knows the class rules for their own benefits, according to the recommendation of the UCF Course Development Office. Moreover, the same UCF Office suggests that Quizzes (with 10 questions) should be set for only 5 minutes. However, I extended the time limit to 10-minutes for each quiz. For the quizzes, our records show that majority of students take only about 5.5 minutes—a record very close to what the UCF staff suggested for time limit.

Now the question is: What should be done about those who need more time? I can certainly identify with those who may need more time, simply because of my own learning disabilities. Please do not repeat my personal challenging school experience to ignore my learning disabilities for years; and get yourself tested for learning disabilities and report it to the UCF Office of Disability. This way, you can legally receive double-time for the quizzes and texts, based on Federal and UCF rules. If you do not have learning disability, please contact the professor to help you improve your Study Habits and Methods, so you would be more efficient and effective in taking the quizzes and earn higher scores.

About Canvas System timing, depending on your type of Internet Connection to UCF system, some students will get cut off at the 10-minute time limit for the quizzes. While others may be in time violation. To avoid any penalty points, I strongly suggest that you submit your answers before the 10th minute starts. Time violations are penalized by 1 point for each extra minute.

Moreover, UCF computer servers some nights go on backup (sometimes between 12 mid night to 6am the next day), so some students were cut off in the past. Thus, our quizzes cannot be open for more than a day. Each quiz is only open for one Friday from 6:00am to 11:59pm, each quiz is linked inside its own module. As mentioned earlier, quizzes are designed for 5 minutes, but **you have up to 10-minutes to complete each**. The exceptions to this rule are the students registered with the **UCF Student Disability Services.** These students have double time (i.e., 20 minutes) for each quiz, based on UCF rules. **However, the Disability Students MUST ask the UCF Disability Services to provide the professor with confirmation of their status in the first week of the term**. These students cannot use the extra time until the instructor receives the notification from UCF Disability office.

UCF aims to prepare students for both objective and subjective tests. Quizzes are examples of objective tests. The quiz questions are multiple-choice and/or true-false in nature. Since **there is no make-up for the quizzes**, it is strongly **recommended** that students **take all 9 quizzes** and maximize their chance of higher total quiz score and avoid possible computer and network technical problems, which may lead to losing the opportunity to submit their quiz. To calculate students' total quiz scores, however, the professor will **automatically drop their 6 lowest quiz scores** and use only the top 3 out of their 9 quiz scores for each student. Students may earn up to a total of 30 points for their total quiz score.

Note: It is normal that for some, quizzes would seem more challenging than for other students. The key issue for success on the quizzes is to **master** the readings. This means that you must fully repeat the readings at least 3 times, which is what I also do while preparing for my lectures.

There is no shame in reading the materials 3 times, based on current educational standard. For those students, who do not **master** the readings, the 10-minute time limit will seem too short.

For those who do not master the readings, it is impossible to cheat on the quizzes, because Canvas System choose 10 random questions (from a large question pool) for each student. **No two quizzes are the same**, because the question pool is very large with at least a couple of hundred questions. Even if a few students take the same quiz together, they will certainly have different sets of quiz questions within their own 10-minute. Moreover, the quizzes get harder as the term moves on, so I made the first three quizzes easier and suggest that students take them. There is no choice, but to **master** (or comprehend, not just memorize) the assigned readings. If you have questions, please ask us by direct emails.

Exams

Our class has 3 exams: First and Second Midterm Exams as well as UCF Required Final Exam. First Exam and the Final Exam are required for all students without any exception. Second Exam is only required for those whose First Exam score is low (i.e., below 14 out of 20 points or what students say at "C" or less levels).

All 3 exams are **Closed-Book** online tests. In a **Closed-Book test**, one may mention our text or lecture materials (only from their memory), but one **does NOT directly "quote"** text or lectures **(with page numbers of the readings)**. Students should **NOT document their test writings**. Documenting is **citing the author along with page numbers.** In a **closed-book** test, quoting or documenting is considered **plagiarism**, which is a punishable act based on UCF rules.

Each exam covers about one-third of the course materials. Students are **required to take the First Midterm Exam without an exception**. Those who do not do well on the First Exam (or Exam 1) are then required to take the Second Midterm Exam (or Exam 2). For these two midterm exams, the instructor drops the lowest score for each student. If you miss a Midterm, it will automatically earn zero. The First or Second Midterm Exam is **not** a replacement for the UCF Required Final Exam (during the UCF Final Exam period). **The Final Exam covers the last third of the term (or Modules 9-12)**. There is **no make-up** for the Final Exam (scheduled for 4/26/2024), so students must take it as UCF has scheduled it, linked in our Module 12. Please put our exams' dates on your personal schedule, so your do not miss them for any reasons.

After Final Exam, please take the **Post-Test (linked in Module 12)**, as a sign of your learning level and engagement in our class. Post-Test has the same questions as Pre-Test which is linked in Module 1. Pre-Test is also required as a sign of initial learning and engagement in our class. The final grade of those who fail to take Pre-Test and Post-Test will be penalized.

Regarding format, each exam will provide **equal opportunity** to students with different learning abilities. In this regard, each **exam has 3 parts**: **In Part 1**, there are Objective Questions or multiple choice; in **Part 2**, Short-Answers Questions that are a combination of objective and subjective questions); and in **Part 3**, Essay Questions, which are considered more subjective. In the **First Part** of the exam, there will be 7 objective questions (consist of multiple and/or true-

false questions), each worth 1 point. There are no choices in this part and all questions must be answered. The **Second Part** of the exam consists of short-answer questions, each of which can be answered briefly in one short sentence. In this part, students have options, and are required to **answer only 2** questions, not more and not less. There will be a penalty for answering more or less than 2 questions in this part. Each short-answer question is worth 3 points for a total of 6 points. The **Third Part** of the exam is made of essay questions, which are considered subjective questions. Students have options and are required to **answer only one essay** question, which is worth 7 points, including 2 points for the essay outline (see sample outline and essay format in Modules 4, 8, and 12). Organize your thoughts and write down an **outline** with at least 5 Roman Numerals (subdivided into at least a couple of points) before starting the essay. For this outline, the **First** and **Last** Roman Numerals refer to the Introduction and Conclusion sections. The **other three** Roman Numerals must relate to the other three mini questions inside your essay question. The **outline is worth only 2 points**, so take it seriously.

The essay must be an extensive answer (**at least 500 words in length**), which will be evaluated based on following **criteria**: **clarity**, **content**, **organization**, **comprehensiveness**, **argument quality**, and **supporting evidence** (facts and examples). Before submitting exam, essay answer must be single-spaced format, New Times Roman font, black color font, and 10-point font size. You are responsible for **grammar and spell checking** your work. There is penalty for violation of these rules. **Hint**: Use at least a separate paragraph for each of your Roman Numerals.

Since UCF servers some nights go on backup (between 12 midnight to 6am the next day) and some students were cut off in the past, our exams cannot be open for more than a day. Each required exam is only open for one Friday from 6:00am to 11:59pm. Based on UCF Course Development staff suggestions, our exams are designed for 45 minutes, but **I have extended your time to 60-minutes to complete each exam**. The exceptions to this rule are the students registered with the UCF Student Disability Services. These students have double time for each exam, based on UCF rules. However, the Disability Students must ask the UCF Disability Services to provide the instructor with documentations of their status in the first week of the term. These students cannot use the extra time until the instructor receives the notification from the Disability Services.

The UCF Canvas System **does not save your answers**, if you violate the time even by a micro-second. Depending on your Internet Connection to UCF, some students will get cut off at the 60-minute time limit, while others will be in time violation. I strongly suggest that you save and submit your answers before the 60th minute starts. Time violations are penalized by 1 point for each extra minute.

Extra Credit

There is one **Optional Extra Credit** opportunity worth 5 points throughout the term. This Extra Credit is a Quiz that covers a number of **Optional Reading Assignments** in Module 12 at the end of the term. This quiz has the same format and requirements as a regular quiz, so read the Quiz section. The Extra Credit Quiz is linked in the Module 12; and it is listed in our Class

Schedule. The difference between the Extra Credit Quiz and other quizzes is that you have only 5 questions and have only 5 minutes for Extra Credit Quiz.

Since UCF servers some nights go on backup (sometimes between 12 midnight to 6am the next day) and some students were cut off in the past, this extra credit quiz cannot be open for more than a day. It is only open for one day from 6:00am to 11:59pm. Extra Credit Quiz is designed for 2.5 minutes, based on UCF Course Development staff. However, **I have extended your time to 5-minutes to complete it**. The exceptions to this rule are the students registered with the **UCF Student Disability Services.** These students have double time for the Extra Credit Quiz, based on UCF rules. However, the Disability Students MUST ask the UCF Disability Services to provide the instructor with documentations of their status in the VERY first week of the term. These students cannot use the extra time until the instructor receives the notification from UCF Disability office.

Again, the Canvas System may either cut you off or keep you in time violation (depending on your Internet Connection to UCF). I suggest that you save and submit this quiz before the 5th minute. There is penalty point for time violations. One point is subtracted for each extra minute beyond 5 minutes. Disability Students have double time for Extra Credit Quiz, based on UCF rules.

Attendance, Engagement, & Participation

Attendance:

For the online students (in W or V courses**)**, students' **attendance** level is partly based on their active (or passive) record in our Optional Forums. There are 3 Optional forums: Questions, Tech Help, and "From the Grapevine:" For the complete description of each forum, please check the first one listed by Dr. Sadri. Students who want recognition for their activities should help their peers in these Optional Forums. Those who have a strong record will get my help for a higher final grade in our class. To encourage good academic behavior, individuals who are active by **helping other students** in our **Question & Technical Help Forums** and participating in other Optional Forum: **From the Grapevine** are eligible for my assistance to their final grade, when their total scores fall on the borderline between two grades (such as A- & B+). Their active participation record will be the key factor influencing my decision for a higher grade. If you feel that you do not have a strong attendance record and have taken a very passive role in our class, please complete the Extra Credit assignment (worth 5 points), linked in Module 12.

Engagement:

Inspired by the UCF educational mission, full **engagement** in class is essential in our online course. 1) In part, students' **engagement** is measured by observing how carefully each student follows all class instructions and rules (listed in the Syllabus Folder), Announcements, and emails from the Professor and the Teaching Assistants (TAs). Students who ask questions whose

answers are already in the above-mentioned documents are obviously showing "**disengagement**" in our course. To encourage students to take the class rules seriously, each quiz has questions from the Syllabus Folder. 2) Class **engagement** is also measured by students' completing the Pre-Test in Module 1 and Post-Test in Module 12. 3) Finally, students' **engagement** is measured by meeting the UCF Financial Aid Requirement Report (in Module 0), by completing 2 simple assignments, based on Module Zero description. The final grade of those who show any "**disengagement**" is penalized by their level of passivity in this class, based on UCF rules.

Participation:

Obviously, students' **participation** is vital in our class. What do we mean by participation? **Participation means students actively completing the weekly course discussion postings**. Students may present explanation, opinion, or relevant comments about an issue, based on my instructions in our Discussion Posting Forum linked within each module. However, simply asking questions or bombarding the instructor (or TA) with emails (whose answers are already in the syllabus) is not considered active participation.

Are there any weekly participation grades? Your weekly posting is evaluated on a **point system based on our rubric (in our Syllabus Folder)** which evaluates each posting from zero to 5 points. More specific posting instructions are linked in each module under the title: **Discussion Posting Guidelines**. If you are not sure about the acceptability of your work, then please make your postings by Sunday night. On Mondays, TA will send messages to students whose works are unacceptable or incomplete. Such students will have time before Tuesday night deadlines to revise their postings (in the Discussion Forum) and make them acceptable or complete. **If you make your posting after Sunday night, there is no time for TA comments, so you take a chance**. Thus, you may earn no points at all, despite your initial attempts. This term, there are 12 (including the extra posting in Module 12) opportunities for Discussion Postings: **the first three (Modules 1-3) are easier, so you might want to do them**. You have the option for the remaining postings, and all you need is at least 6 postings in total. Since the Discussion questions become much harder as the term goes by, you are strongly recommended to complete the earlier ones.

How do you calculate your participation score? It is easy to calculate your participation score. Please simply add the scores that you received for each posting. You may earn up to 30 points in total for 6 fully-completed Posting, based on our Rubric and Posting Guidelines. For detailed posting instructions, see the Discussion Posting Guidelines, linked in each module description page. There are 12 (including the Optional posting in Module 12) weekly Discussions. I drop the 6 lowest Postings for each student, and add their totals.

Note: The instructor may subtract points from the final participation score of those students who repeatedly violate syllabus rules throughout the term. Such violations include: not using Course Mail, asking questions whose answers are already in the syllabus, and repeating errors for which they had received my comments.

Other Assignments

If the students take a laidback attitude towards the readings or the class discussion, the instructor may assign additional oral and/or written assignments in form of reports or research projects to stimulate participation.

Technical Challenges

Unless there is a well-documented UCF computer server or network crash at one of the UCF campuses, the responsibility of the technical problem is fully with the students, based on UCF rules.

It is partially **due to Tech Problems** that we have such a **generous drop policy** in our course to minimize the impact Tech Problems. **To avoid Tech Problems**, I encourage the students to use UCF campus labs and Internet Network located at any of 10 different area campuses located in Central Florida region, if they can. This is especially **important for Exams and Quizzes**, which are open only for one day (**Friday 6:00am till 11:59pm**). You have a full week for each set of weekly required postings, so if you cannot connect to our Website one day, you can try it later.

In fact, one reason that our quizzes and exam are **available only from 6am till 11:59pm** is that many of the UCF computer servers and network go to a backup (or repair) process between 12 (midnight) and 6am the next day. Thus, I decreased the chance of my students being cut off from the UCF during an exam or a quiz. Moreover, there is statistically less chance of computer crashes on Mondays and Fridays, so all our assignments, Exam and Quizzes are available ONLY on those 2 days.

According to UCF, since different students use different equipment, software, and networks, it is the students' responsibility to make sure that their system is compatible with UCF and Canvas' server to avoid Technical Problems. For this information, please check the **Technical Support** button on the first menu of our Course Website, especially please do the "**Browser Check**."

Based on our recent experience, here are some useful suggestions:

1. **If you can**, use UCF computers and network, instead of less secure home (or office) service.

2. **If you have the option**, use wired instead of wireless services that tend to cut off occasionally.

3. **Use reliable updated Internet Browsers** that have no problems with UCF network.

4. **Avoid internet pick time** to take your quizzes and exams.

5. Temporarily, **suspend your computer Fire Walls**, when you connect with UCF to take a test.

6. **Do NOT give to other students your PID & NID** numbers or username & passwords.

7. **If you can**, use UCF labs, to have an authorized witness, if a local crash occurs.

8. If you use your peer's computer to take our quizzes (or exams), then you must login to **MyUCF** or **Canvas** after your peer **computer has been off (for at least 3 minutes). Violators may experience Tech Problem, and their scores automatically go to ZERO.**
9. If you have any Technical Problem, please contact UCF Online Support about Webcourses@UCF tech issues at: http://learn.ucf.edu/support/

Class Schedule & Assignments
Spring 2024

Date	Topic	Reading & Assignments
Mon 1/8/2024	**UCF Semester Begins**	UCF Spring Term officially begins.
1/8	**Module 0**: **Course Orientation**	**Read:** • Instructor's Welcome & Orientation Postings • Syllabus, Class Schedule, & All Instructor's Postings on All Forums in Discussion Section • **NOTE**: Reading class rules is important, since all quizzes cover them. Any violation of UCF and class rules leads to participation penalty points for the lack of FULL **engagement** in our class. **Assignments:** • Read lecture on **Pol Sci/Int'l Relations**. • **NOTE: You must always use our Course Mail for e-mailing Dr. Sadri and our class Teaching Assistant (TA)**
1/12	**Module 0**: **Course Orientation**	**Two Required Assignments for UCF Financial Aid Report:** • Take the **Orientation Quiz ASAP** • Reply to instructor's **"I am" Message**
Friday 1/12	**Module 0**: **Course Orientation**	• UCF Late Registration: Last Day to Add & Drop

1/15	**Module 1: Introduction & Theory and History**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 1 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
1/19	**Module 1: Introduction & Theory and History**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 1:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Module 1 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • **Take Pre-Test: Taking it is required.** • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
1/22	**Module 2: Cold War & Post-Cold War**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 2 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
1/26	**Module 2: Cold War & Post-Cold War**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 2:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Module 2 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today

1/29	**Module 3: Oil Politics**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 3 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
2/2	**Module 3: Oil Politics**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 3:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Module 2 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
2/5	**Module 4**: **First Midterm Review**	**Review Assignment:** • Online Review Session. • Review your required readings & notes. • Finish **ALL** readings before emailing any questions to us. • Email (via Course Mail) your questions about readings and the exam to Class TA and Dr. Sadri at the same time
2/9	**Module 4**: **First Midterm Day**	**Assignment:** • **First Midterm Exam Day.** • Our Exam is available **only on-line** • It is **ONLY today** from 6:00am to 11:59pm at our website (covering Modules 1-3).
2/12	**Module 5: Political Reform & Identity**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 5 Discussion,** due by 9am today.

2/16	**Module 5: Political Reform & Identity**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 4:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Module 5 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
2/19	**Module 6: Islam & Middle East**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 6 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
2/23	**Module 6: Islam & Middle East**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 5:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Module 6 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
2/26	**Module 7:** **Regionalism, Security, & Foreign Policy**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 7 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
3/1	**Module 7:** **Regionalism, Security, & Foreign Policy**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 6:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Module 7 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today

3/4	**Module 8**: **Second Midterm Review**	**Review Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before you send an email or post any questions • Online exam review session.
3/8	**Module 8**: **Second Midterm Exam**	**Assignments:** • **Second Exam Day, required only for those with less than 14 points on Exam 1.** • This Exam is available **only on-line** • It is **ONLY today** from 6:00am to 11:59pm at our website (covering Modules 5-7).
3/11	**Module 9: Major Conflicts** **Part 1: Arabs & Israel**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 9-1 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
3/15	**Module 9: Major Conflicts** **Part 1: Arabs & Israel**	**Assignments:** • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
3/18-3/22/24	**UCF Spring Break**	**No Classes During Spring Break**

3/25	**Module 9: Major Conflicts** **Part 2: Oslo Process**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 9-2 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
3/29	**Module 9: Major Conflicts** **Part 2: Oslo Process**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 7:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering All Modules 9-1 & 9-2 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
4/1	**Module 10:** **Regional Challenges** **Part 1. Persian Gulf**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module. **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 10-1 Discussion,** due by 9am today.
4/5	**Module 10:** **Regional Challenges** **Part 1. Persian Gulf**	**Assignments:** • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
4/8	**Module 10: Regional Challenges** **Part 2: Arab Spring**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before **Watching Video Lecture & Making your posting.** • Post the **Required Module 10-2 Discussion,** due by 9am today.

4/12	**Module 10: Regional Challenges** **Part 2: Arab Spring**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 8:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering Modules 10-1 & 10-2 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
4/15	**Module 11: Great Powers – US, EU, China, & Russia**	**Read:** • Listed readings in our module **Assignments:** • Finish **ALL** readings before your posting Your **Discussion Posting** is due by 11:59pm.
4/19	**Module 11: US, EU, China, & Russia**	**Assignments:** • **Quiz 9:** available **only** today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering Module 11 Readings & Syllabus Folder) • Weekly Optional Survey Opens today
4/22	**Module 12:** **Extra Credit & Review**	**Online Review Session:** • Review your required readings & notes. • Email your questions about the materials and exam to the Instructor and TA. • Read questions by your peers on the Question Forum and try to answer their questions. They may do the same for you. • Instructor is available online during his Office Hours. **Optional Extra Credit Readings:** **Read:** • If interested, complete Optional readings based on the module list. **Optional Assignments:** • If interested, make the Optional Discussion Posting. • **Optional Extra Credit** Quiz available for all students only today 6:00am-11:59pm (covering only Optional Extra Credit Readings listed in the module)

4/26	**Module 12:** **Final Exam Day**	**Assignments:** • **Final Exam Day is on-line.** • **No Class**: Our Final Exam is available **ONLY today** from 6:00am to 23:59 at course website (covering Modules 9-11). • **Post-Test is also available today and is due by 11:59pm. Taking it is required.**