

Geography of the Middle East

Winter 2016: People, Politics, and Place



TOPICS:

Environment and the land

- Weather and climate.
- The earth and natural resources.

People and culture

- People, place, identity and ethnicity. Culture and conflict.
- Land use: human adaptation to arid and semi-arid environments.
- Successes and setbacks in human and economic development.
- Origins, development, and spread of Middle East religions: traditional narratives and challenging new evidence.
- Sacred geographies: competing salvation histories, geographies; eschatology and politics in the past and present Middle East.

Geopolitics

- The making of the modern Middle East.
- Geographies of power, ideology and empire.
- Middle East as “shatterbelt.”

Required Texts

- Held and Cummings. (2014) *Middle East patterns*. Sixth edition.
- McCants (2015) *The ISIS apocalypse: the history, strategy, and doomsday vision of the Islamic State*.

Class hours:	Tuesday Thursday 11:30–12:45.
Classroom:	209 Padnos.
Credits:	3.
Program credit:	- <i>International Relations</i> , Geography and History; - <i>Middle East Studies</i> , elective; - <i>GVSU General Education</i> , World Perspectives. - <i>Geography, Environment and Development</i> .