**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF MIDDLE EAST**

**ARST 619**

School of Foreign Service (SFS)

Center for Contemporary Arab Studies

Georgetown University

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This course examines contemporary issues relating to the international politics of the Middle East and introduces students to core theoretical debates in International Relations and their relevance for the understanding of contemporary developments in the Middle East. Each topic is selected to illustrate a particular issue-area within the region. The course is structured around major questions and issues of importance from within the region rather than around schools of thought. It also addresses biases in the study of world and regional politics by outlining the imperial and colonial origins of the discipline and including critical perspectives from a diverse pool of scholars from and on the region. What is the discipline of International Relations? What constitutes mainstream perspectives in the field? What critiques are raised by alternative perspectives? Why is IR considered to be hegemonic, Western-centric, imperialist, racist? How do new voices contribute to decentering, decolonizing the field? What is Global IR? How can we aim towards Global IR? What are the emerging perspectives and how do they help us understand and analyze the Middle East?

Through a combination of conceptual, historical and political review, the students are encouraged to explore the relationships between domestic politics and regional/international processes, war and peace-making, identity and security politics and the importance of access to strategic resources (gas, oil, water, food). While making no claim to being exhaustive, the course is broad enough to allow students with an interest in the International Relations of the Middle East to explore a wide range of conceptual and empirical issues, the way they intertwine and intersect.