

MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

Overview and Contact Information

One of four interdisciplinary majors within the Asian Studies program, the major in Middle Eastern studies allows students to specialize in the history, languages, cultures, and politics of the Middle East. The Five College Certificate in Middle Eastern Studies allows students to complement any disciplinary major with multidisciplinary studies and linguistic attainments.

Complementing course work at Mount Holyoke are extracurricular activities and study abroad programs that broaden and deepen students' understanding of this region.

Language study is the core component of the major. Our students are expected to incorporate the humanities and the social sciences fully into their studies with classes at Mount Holyoke and the other colleges in the Five College Consortium.

On campus, our students experience regional culture at many levels, including language tables and clubs, guest lectures, performing and visual arts, film, festivals, and regional cuisine. These activities are often initiated by and benefit greatly from the diverse student population of Mount Holyoke.

Most of our students spend a semester or a summer in study abroad programs. Students may participate in one of the many Mount Holyoke College-approved Middle Eastern study abroad programs.

Middle Eastern studies majors and minors graduate to pursue careers in fields as varied as education, business, NGOs, journalism, the arts, government service, and graduate study.

See Also

- Arabic Minor (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/arabic>)
- Asian Studies (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/areas-study/asian-studies>)

Contact Information

Sohail Hashmi, Chair

Denise Falk, Academic Department Coordinator

112 Ciruti Center
413-538-2885
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/asian>

Faculty

This area of study is administered by the Asian Studies Committee:

Satyananda Gabriel, Professor of Economics

Rie Hachiyangi, Professor of Art

Sohail Hashmi, Professor of International Relations on the Alumnae Foundation and Professor of Politics

Kavita Khory, Professor of Politics

Susanne Mrozk, Professor of Religion

Naoko Nemoto, Professor of Asian Studies, Teaching Spring Only

Joshua Roth, Professor of Anthropology

Ajay Sinha, Professor of Art History

Ying Wang, Felicia Gressitt Bock Professor of Asian Studies

Calvin Chen, Associate Professor of Politics

Amina Steinfels, Associate Professor of Religion

Elif Babul, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

Lan Wu, Assistant Professor of History

Lisha Xu, Senior Lecturer in Asian Studies

Heba Arafah, Five College Lecturer in Arabic, On Leave 2017-2018

Kyae-Sung Park, Five College Lecturer in Korean

Lei Yan, Lecturer in Chinese

Richard Chu, Five College Associate Professor of History

Mohamed Hassan, Five College Senior Lecturer in Arabic

Suk Massey, Five College Lecturer in Korean

Chihiro Hanami, Visiting Instructor in Japanese

Syonara Tomoum, Five College Visiting Instructor in Arabic

The Five College certificate in Middle Eastern Studies is administered by the Five College Committee for Middle Eastern Studies, which includes the program advisors from Mount Holyoke:

Sohail Hashmi, Professor of International Relations on the Alumnae Foundation

Amina Steinfels, Associate Professor of Religion

Heba Arafah, Five College Lecturer in Arabic, On Leave 2017-2018

Requirements for the Major

A minimum of 40 credits:

Four courses (16 credits), equivalent to two years of college-level study of a Middle Eastern language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Persian, and Armenian ¹ 16

Two introductory courses (8 credits) providing an overview of Middle Eastern history: 8

One course (4 credits) must be in the premodern period (pre-1500 CE). The following course(s) fulfill the premodern history requirement:

RELIG-102 Introduction to Islam

One course (4 credits) must be in the modern period (1500–present). The following courses may be used for the modern history requirement:

HIST-111 The Making of the Modern Middle East

IR-211 Middle East Politics

Four elective courses (16 credits): 16

Two (8 credits) must be from Group One: Humanities (language, literature, the arts, history, philosophy, and religion and interdisciplinary courses in these areas) ²

Two (8 credits) must be from Group Two: Social Science (anthropology, economics, geography, international relations, linguistics, politics, sociology, and interdisciplinary courses in these areas)

At least three courses (12 credits) must be 300-level. At least one of the 300-level courses must be a non-language course.³

Total Credits 40

¹ Classes in Arabic and Modern Hebrew are currently taught in the Five Colleges. Additional courses in Arabic and in other languages are offered through the Five College Mentored Language Program. Students may count up to 4 credits toward the major for studying a Middle Eastern language through the Five College Mentored Language Program.

² In order to count toward the major, studio art or performance courses must be supplemented with analytical written work.

³ A course that is taught outside of Mount Holyoke must be approved by the chair of the Asian Studies program to count as a 300-level course.

Additional Specifications

- Any course that devotes 50 percent or more of its substance to Middle Eastern countries, peoples, or issues may be counted toward the major. One course on Middle Eastern diasporas may count toward the major.
- A maximum of 16 lower-level language credits and a total of 24 language credits can be counted toward the major.

Requirements for the Certificate

Because of the wide range of courses available through the Five Colleges, students must design a program that will meet their intellectual, academic, and prospective professional needs in conjunction with a Middle Eastern Studies advisor from Mount Holyoke. Students are encouraged to declare intentions and begin work with an advisor during the sophomore year.

A minimum of seven courses:

Knowledge equivalent to at least two years of college-level study of a Middle Eastern language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Persian, and Armenian¹ 0-4

Two introductory courses providing an overview of Middle Eastern history: 2

One course must be in the pre-modern period (600-1500 CE)

One course must be in the modern period (1500-present)

Five courses from the following groups, including at least one course in each of the following three groups: 5

Group one: Religion and Philosophy

Group two: Literature, Art, and Language study beyond what is required to satisfy the language requirement above

Group three: History and Social Sciences

Total Courses 7

¹ Classes in Arabic and Modern Hebrew are currently taught in the Five Colleges. Additional courses in Arabic and in other languages are offered through the Five College Mentored Language Program. This requirement may be fulfilled through course completion or by examination.

Additional Specifications

- Students are also encouraged to spend time in the Middle East, learning Arabic and other languages and immersing themselves in the culture of the area. Plans for study abroad should be designed in consultation with the student's advisor.
- Courses offered at the Five Colleges in the upcoming semester that qualify for the Certificate are listed on the certificate's website (<https://www.fivecolleges.edu/logic/courses>), as is the application (<https://www.fivecolleges.edu/middleeast/certificate>) students must submit when all requirements have been completed. Courses not listed, whether taken at one of the Five Colleges or elsewhere, must be approved by the committee on the recommendation of the campus advisor.
- Students must receive a grade of B or better in every course counted toward the certificate.
- Contact information: Sohail Hashmi, Professor of International Relations; Amina Steinfeld, Associate Professor of Religion; <https://www.fivecolleges.edu/middleeast/certificate/>.

Most Middle Eastern studies courses at Mount Holyoke are listed below, but students should also consult the catalogue entries or websites of other departments, including art history, history, international relations, politics, and religion.

Middle Eastern Studies majors should also plan to use the rich resources of the Five College Consortium in selecting their courses (listings are available through the Five College Class Schedule (<https://www.fivecolleges.edu/academics/courses>) or individual college websites).

Please consult the chair of the Asian studies program for guidelines regarding Asian languages not taught in the Five Colleges.

Courses Counting toward the Major in Middle Eastern Studies

Art History

ARTH-271	Arts of Islam: Book, Mosque, and Palace	4
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Asian Studies

ASIAN-130	First Year Arabic I	4
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ASIAN-131	First Year Arabic II	4
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ASIAN-232	Second Year Arabic I	4
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ASIAN-233	Second Year Arabic II	4
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ASIAN-271	Arts of Islam: Book, Mosque, and Palace	4
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Critical Social Thought

CST-249CE	Topics in Critical Social Thought: 'Christian Ethics: Premodern, Postmodern'	4
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Gender Studies

GNDST-210SL	Women and Gender in Philosophy and Religion: 'Women and Gender in Islam'	4
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History

HIST-111	The Making of the Modern Middle East	4
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HIST-232CC	Special Topics in Medieval History: 'Conquered and Colonized Christianities: 150-1650 CE'	4
HIST-296ME	Topics: Women in History: 'Women and Gender in the Middle East'	4
HIST-301MC	Colloquium: 'Premodern Christian-Muslim Encounters'	4
International Relations		
IR-211	Middle East Politics	4
IR-222	The United States, Israel, and the Arabs	4
IR-224	The United States and Iran	4
IR-324	Islamic Political Thought	4
IR-333	Just War and Jihad: Comparative Ethics of War and Peace	4
IR-341	Political Islam	4
Jewish Studies		
JWST-150	Introduction to Modern Hebrew	4
Medieval Studies		
MEDST-217CC	Special Topics in Medieval History: 'Conquered and Colonized Christianities: 150-1650 CE'	4
Religion		
RELIG-102	Introduction to Islam	4
RELIG-201	Reading the Qur'an	4
RELIG-207	Women and Gender in Islam	4
RELIG-225CC	Topics in Religion: 'Conquered and Colonized Christianities: 150-1650 CE'	4
RELIG-225CE	Topics in Religion: 'Christian Ethics: Premodern, Postmodern'	4
RELIG-311	Sufism: The Mystic Path in Islam	4
RELIG-337MC	Topics in the Study of Christianity: 'Premodern Christian-Muslim Encounters'	4
RELIG-343	The Sabbath	4

Courses Counting toward the Five College Certificate in Middle Eastern Studies

A list of currently offered courses approved towards the Five College certificate is maintained on the certificate's website (<https://www.fivecolleges.edu/middleeast/courses>).