

# Middle Eastern and North African Studies Certificate

## About MENA

The Certificate Program in Middle Eastern and North African Studies (MENA) offers students a background in Middle Eastern and North African languages, cultures, history, and civilization. The program requires one year of either Arabic or Hebrew language courses and a historical survey course. Upper-level courses offer students the opportunity to explore Middle Eastern literature, history, politics, religion, and art in greater depth.

In addition to taking courses related to the Middle East and North Africa, students have opportunities to meet and study with Middle Eastern scholars who regularly visit UWM through a number of institutional partnerships with Middle Eastern universities. Students also may take advantage of study abroad programs that offer credit for academic work in the Middle East and North Africa.

## Why Study MENA?

The Middle East has a long and rich history and is currently a place of much interest because of the critical role the region plays in world politics and economics. The region also defies the generalizations commonly portrayed in the media – it is complex and made up of numerous nations, each with its own political, religious, geographic, and economic structure and traditions.

The Certificate may be of particular interest to students who plan to enter government service or global business, but it is also a valued complement to studies in history, religious studies, political science, economics, geography, foreign languages, anthropology, and other related fields. Knowledge of the Middle East and its peoples, cultures, and history adds perspective and another lens through which to view current events.

## Career Opportunities

An understanding of the Middle East and Middle Eastern people is useful in almost every professional field from health care to journalism, education to business. While government service in the State Department or other federal or state



agency is one of the more obvious choices, there also are opportunities to be found in the private sector at consulting companies, businesses that operate internationally, and nonprofits that focus on humanitarian issues.

A growing population of Americans living in the Middle East also creates opportunities for teachers and, for those with local language fluency, translators.

## Certificate Requirements

Students are required to take:

- 8 credits in a single language sequence from either Hebrew or Arabic.
- One history class chosen from:
  - » Hist 280 – Islamic Civilization: The Formative Period
  - » Hist 281 – Islamic Civilization: The Middle Period
  - » Hist 282 – The Modern Middle East in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries
- Twelve elective credits of which nine credits must be at the 300-level or above.

Some of the options for electives include the following. For the most current full list, see the MENA web site.

- Arabic 164 – Arabs and Islam in America
- Arabic 201 – Third Semester Arabic
- Arabic 202 – Fourth Semester Arabic

*Certificate programs are similar to minors. They are comprised of 15 to 26 credits in a specialized subject matter, and include coursework from different departments. Certificates can be combined with a degree program, or they are available as stand-alone options for individuals who already hold a bachelor's degree from any accredited college or university. Many certificates also will enroll individuals with a strong interest in the topic area but who do not have a degree.*

- Arabic 297 – Summer Study Abroad: Maternal and Infant Health in Morocco: Women’s Rights and Family in Islam
- Arch 533 – Signature Buildings in Geopolitical Context
- ArtHist 315 – Art and Archaeology of Ancient Egypt
- ArtHist 326 – Heretics & Iconoclasts: The Art and Arch of the Christian East
- ArtHist 327 – Islamic Art in Medieval Spain
- Classics 390 – Egyptian Mythology
- CompLit 135 – Experiencing Literature in the 21st Century: “Middle East through Fiction and Film”
- CompLit 231 – Literature and Religion: “The Quran as Literature”
- CompLit 350 – Topics in Comparative Literature: “Arabic Women’s Writing”
- CompLit 360 – Seminar in Literature and Cultural Experience: “Arabic Women Writers in Translation”
- CompLit 533 – Seminar in Trends in Modern Literature: “Development of the Arabic Novel”
- Geog 231 – Geography of Islam
- HebrSt 201 – Third Semester Hebrew
- HebrSt 202 – Fourth Semester Hebrew
- HebrSt 235 – The Dead Sea Scrolls & the Bible
- HebrSt 236 – The Biblical World
- HebrSt 301 – Modern Hebrew Lit I, in Hebrew
- HebrSt 303 – Modern Hebrew Lit I, in English
- HebrSt 321 – The Holocaust & the Politics of Memory
- HebrSt 332 – Women in the Bible
- HebrSt 418 – Modern Hebrew Drama in Translation
- HebrSt 419 – Contemporary Israeli Poetry in Translation
- Hist 274 – Ancient Egyptian Civilization
- Hist 283 – Arab-Israeli Relations: The Search for Peace
- Hist 385 – Political Islam to Zionism: Middle East Intellectual History
- Hist 386 – Africa: The Age of Empire to 1880
- Philos 461 – Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism
- Pol Sci 327 – Politics of the Middle East and North Africa
- Pol Sci 329 – African Politics
- Pol Sci 371 – Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict
- Wmns 300 – Gender and Spirituality: Women and Gender in Islam

## Study Abroad

Studying abroad is not required for the certificate but is an option that should be considered seriously by MENA students. Study abroad is a life-changing experience for

anyone, but particularly for students of language, culture and international history, politics, and economics.



The study abroad experience is about much more than just visiting another country. The experience provides personal, educational, professional, and social enrichment beyond what can be taught in a classroom. While earning credits towards their degree, students simultaneously are building their resumé, seeing new perspectives, building their language skills, gaining self-confidence, and applying classroom theory to real-life situations.

## Center for International Education

UWM offers programs around the globe, including Middle Eastern programs in Jordan, Morocco, and Israel.

The Center for International Education serves the UWM community with international, global, and area studies programs; academic and public lectures and conferences; and student services for international students at UWM and UWM students wishing to study overseas.

For those going abroad, the Center prepares students for the cultural and academic differences they will face in another country. Understanding that study abroad is a financial burden for many UWM students, the Center also consults with students not only on destination options but also on financial aid.

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