

## Final Exam: Current Controversies in the Middle East

**Overview:** For your Fall Semester Final Exam you and a partner (of your own choosing) will conduct in-depth research, write *individual Research Papers*, and deliver a *joint Oral Presentation* on a modern controversy arising in the Middle East. Your aim is to provide a general introduction to your topic, pose critical research questions, analyze the controversy's larger significance, and explain your views on the issue. Research topics will be selected by lottery from the attached list.

**Part 1 – Research:** Perform research on your topic and issue. A list of useful online resources appears below. Students *may not* rely on Wikipedia as a source for their research paper, and should exercise care in selecting credible sources.

**Part 2 – Research Paper:** Each team member must compose *a separate research paper*, of 2 to 3 typewritten pages in length, which summarizes your research on your topic. Your paper must follow proper MLA format, utilize parenthetical references, and include a list of Works Cited (on a separate page) citing **at least 3 sources**. Be careful to avoid plagiarism; restate ideas using *your own words*; properly cite the sources for your information. Use the following questions to guide your research:

- **What is most essential to understand about your topic?**
- **What is the historical, political, and social context?**
- **Who are the most important people and organizations involved?**
- **What are the most significant events?**
- **What ideas and facts are most noteworthy, surprising, or interesting?**
- **What questions do you have about what you discovered?**
- **How does this issue connect with other topics you have studied previously?**
- **So what? What is the larger significance? Why should we care about this issue?**

**Part 3 – Oral Presentation:** You and your partner must prepare and deliver a 6 minute presentation accompanied by 6 to 8 slides. Use Google Slides to create your presentation. Each slide should contain both images and text. The text on your slides should consist of no more than 4 or 5 bulleted points; **avoid** using complete sentences; summarize key ideas.

A *suggested outline* for your slide show follows. Please adapt this outline in accordance with the content and focus of your research.

- **Slide #1: Introduction.** Introduce your topic and research questions.
- **Slide #2: Geographic Setting** (including map(s) showing the location of key events).
- **Slide #3: Background** (including significant people and organizations).

- **Slides #4-6: Analysis.** Discussion and analysis of the issue.
- **Slides #7-8: Present Your Views and Discuss Larger Significance.**

### **Suggested Research Sources**

- **The New York Times:** <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/world/middleeast/index.html>
- **The Economist:** <http://www.economist.com/topics/middle-east-politics>
- **The Washington Post:** <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle-east/>
- **Christian Science Monitor:** <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East>
- **Al Jazeera America:** <http://www.aljazeera.com/topics/regions/middleeast.html>
- **Your Middle East:** <http://www.yourmiddleeast.com>
- **LibrarySpot.com:** <http://www.headlinespot.com/international/middleeast/>

### **Deadlines**

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| • <b>Selection of Teams and Topics</b>            | <b>Friday, November 30<sup>th</sup></b>   |
| • <b>List of Resources &amp; Research Outline</b> | <b>Thursday, December 6<sup>th</sup></b>  |
| • <b>Research Papers: 1<sup>st</sup> Draft</b>    | <b>Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup></b>   |
| • <b>Research Papers: Final Draft</b>             | <b>Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup></b>  |
| • <b>Storyboard of Slide Show</b>                 | <b>Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup></b>   |
| • <b>Oral Presentations</b>                       | <b>Tuesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> (Wave)</b><br><b>Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup> (Tide &amp; Current)</b> |

## Possible Research Topics

1. Syrian Civil War
2. Syrian Refugee Crisis
3. Future of the Iranian Nuclear Arms Treaty
4. The Internal Politics of Iran
5. Turkey's Political Landscape: The Rise of President Erdogan
6. Civil War in Yemen
7. Yemen's Humanitarian Crisis
8. Tensions Flare in the Gaza Strip
9. The Legacy of ISIS
10. Egypt's Political Turmoil
11. New Leadership for Saudi Arabia: Prince Mohammed Bin Salman
12. Political Implications of the Khashoggi Assassination
13. Changing Women's Roles in Saudi Arabia
14. The Competition for Regional Dominance: Iran v. Saudi Arabia
15. Human Rights Struggles in the Middle East
16. Women's Rights Across the Middle East
17. Architectural Marvels of the Middle East
18. Middle Eastern Oil Politics
19. U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East Region
20. Other topics (with prior approval)