ECONOMICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Syllabus

We will discuss socioeconomic development in the Arab world in comparison to other countries in the less and more developed worlds, with secondary attention to Iran and Turkey.

Lectures: You are responsible for all the material and announcements in the lectures. Lecture slides for each section of the course outline will be posted on TritonEd after the section is completed. All lectures will be podcast.

Timeline and grading:

April 16: Quiz covering basic information about the Arab world ......................... 10% of grade
May 7: Midterm exam (covers first half of course) ............................................. 30% of grade
May 30 (due date): Brief presentation of comparative data ................................. 20% of grade
June 10: Final exam (covers second half of course) ........................................... 40% of grade

Midterm and final exams will be open notes. Any printed matter is acceptable, including lecture slides. Electronic devices other than calculators are forbidden. No makeup exams will be given.

One of the goals of this course is for you to become familiar with how to use publicly available data to check facts and satisfy your curiosity about the Middle East. To further this goal I ask you to prepare a brief set of slides (that would take you less than five minutes to present) that make an interesting comparison of Arab countries, Iran or Turkey with each other or with relevant other countries. (Do not include Israel/Palestine because it is covered well in other courses at UCSD.) The slides can be self-contained, or you can provide no more than one page of descriptive notes. The most general database in which you can look for data is World Development Indicators (http://databank.worldbank.org/data/Databases.aspx), but there are lots of other more specific ones such as those in section VIII of the course outline. You must submit a first draft to the TA, Wei-Lin Chen (wec155@ucsd.edu), for approval before submitting a final draft. Late submissions of the final draft will not be accepted.
COURSE OUTLINE

The readings marked with an asterisk (*) are required; unmarked readings are recommended. If no URL is given, the material is available on e-reserves. There is no text for this course, but a number of readings (available on e-reserve) will be assigned from:


I. Overview

A. Measuring Development

*http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/HDI*

B. Human Development in the Arab World: The recent past


C. Democracy and the “Arab Spring”


II. Historical Perspective


III. International Trade, Natural Resource Rents, and Foreign Direct Investment

A. Trade


B. Natural Resource Rents and OPEC


C. Foreign Direct Investment


IV. Human Resources

A. Education


B. Health


http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-11251-0_6 (obesity in MENA)

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3992784/ (diabetes in MENA)


C. The Demographic Transition


V. Gender Gaps


VI. Income Distribution, Poverty, Migration, and Unemployment

A. Income Distribution and Poverty


B. Migration and Remittances


C. Public and Private Expenditure to Reduce Poverty


http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/455431468275110287/pdf/805150PUB0Incl00Box379806B00PUBLIC0.pdf
D. Unemployment and Underemployment


*Feng, Ying; Lagakos, David; and Rauch, James. 2018. “Unemployment and Development.” https://www.nber.org/papers/w25171


VII. Environmental Challenges


IX. Political Economy

A. Corruption and Bureaucratic (In)efficiency


B. Politically Connected Firms
