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:

January 24: Quiz covering basic information about the Arab world ....................... 10% of grade
February 16: Midterm exam (covers first half of course) ........................................ 30% of grade
March 9 (due date): Brief presentation of comparative data ................................. 20% of grade
March 23: 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.

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 VI of the course outline. You must submit a first draft to the TA, Onyi Lam, for approval before submitting a final draft.
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


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


C. Democracy and the “Arab Spring”


II. Historical Perspective


III. International Trade and Resource Rents

A. Trade


B. Resource rents and OPEC


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. Population


D. Gender and Development


V. Unemployment and Underemployment


VI. Public Finance: Urbanization, Infrastructure, and Subsidies


*http://www.enterprisesurveys.org/data/exploretopics/infrastructure*  

VII. Income Distribution, Poverty, and Migration


VIII. Development and the Environment


IX. Political Economy

A. Rent Seeking and Government Failure


B. Politically Connected Firms
