BUSB2024

The Dynamics of Business in the Middle East

Course Description

The course, which is presently delivered by the Centre for Arab and Islamic Studies on behalf of the ANU College of Business and Economics, provides an overview of business in the Middle East and an examination of specific issues for companies doing business in the region. The course focuses most on the Arab countries of the Middle East, but with some attention paid to Turkey, Israel and Iran as well. Specific topics include the Middle Eastern business environment, the cultural specifics of the region that impact on business, the legal framework, and specific strategies in international and cross-cultural marketing, human resource management, labour relations, logistics, and finance. Strategies for dealing with the public sector in the region also are covered, given the role of bureaucracies and state-owned enterprises in the region. The aim of the course is to enhance students' understanding of the Middle Eastern business environment and the ways in which various dynamics impact on business operations of firms in the region.
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<th>Semester and Year</th>
<th>Semester 1, 2015</th>
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<td>Prerequisites</td>
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<td>Incompatible Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Convener</td>
<td>A/Prof. Matthew Gray</td>
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**Office Location:**  
Centre for Arab & Islamic Studies  
College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS)  
Room 2.10, CAIS Building  
127 Ellery Crescent  
[ANU map reference EF32. The CAIS building is opposite the Baldessin Precinct Building (#110) on Ellery Crs, not far from the Chancelry Building (#10)]

**Phone:**  
02 6125 1062  
(x51062 on campus)

**Email:**  
m.gray@anu.edu.au

**Consultation hours:**  
- Mondays 2.00pm-4.00pm  
- Wednesdays 3.00pm-5.00pm  
- Other days and times may be available but please email to make an appointment

**Bio and research interests**  
The political economy of the Middle East; Gulf studies, especially politics, political economy, and international relations in the Gulf; country interest in particular in the Arab Gulf states, Iraq, Syria, and Jordan.

**Tutor(s) (optional):**  
N/A

**Student Administrators**  
Research School of Management  
Room 1088, Level 1, LF Crisp Building 26  
Office hours: Monday–Friday 9.00am–5.00pm  
T: 02 6125 6737 or 02 6125 9839  
E: enquiries.rsm@anu.edu.au
COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the requirements for this course, students will be able to demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the various factors that influence the business environment in the Middle East, including the political and economic environments;
2. A knowledge of the business culture of the Middle East and how this is related to the wider cultures of the region;
3. An understanding of several specific issues in Middle Eastern business; among these might include the dynamics of business leadership, human resources, marketing, banking and finance, logistics, e-business, and public relations; and
4. The ability to communicate their understanding of and knowledge about the above in a clear and concise way and in both written and oral formats.

Research-Led Teaching

This course brings into its coverage and the learning approach several research-led features and characteristics:

- The course convener includes in the course content some of his and/or others’ very recent and current research findings and theoretical concepts and arguments, giving students the opportunity to engage with several emerging ideas in Middle Eastern political economy and business;
- Many of the course activities, and the course assessment, using enquiry-based learning formats that pose real-world examples of business issues and which require students to engage with and address these scenarios using scholarly approaches, methodologies, and sources, honing their research skills and analytical judgment in the process; and
- Regular group work in the weekly workshops encourage students to collaborate with each other in locating basic data, applying and assessing material, and refining and defending their ideas and arguments, enhancing their teamwork-based research skills.

Continuous Improvement

We use feedback from students, professional bodies and staff to make regular improvements to the course. In response to this feedback, design improvements from the previous version of the course include:

- A change in the assessment, removing a mid-semester exam and replacing it with continuous, shorter assessment pieces;
- A major essay has also been removed in 2015, replaced by the group presentation/paper and a higher mark for the final examination;
- A refinement of some weeks’ material, to bring out the themes more strongly and to engage the students in multiple way: e.g. some of the films and group work is the result of student feedback in 2013 and 2014; and
- The movie shown in Week 8 was trialled in 2012 and after excellent feedback was made a core element of the course as of 2013. It has since proved popular. It is a very different way of showing students some of the themes from the course.
Requisites

The course does not assume that students have prior study of business or of the Middle East, but students with no background on the Middle East should acquaint themselves with the basic history, culture and politics of the region prior to the start of the course, and students with no background in business or economics should make sure they understand basic terms and concepts. See the ‘Recommended Reading’ section later in this outline.

Student Feedback

All CBE courses are evaluated using Student Experience of Learning and Teaching (SELT) surveys, administered by Planning and Statistical Services at the ANU. These surveys are offered online, and students will be notified via email to their ANU address when surveys are available in each course. Feedback is used for course development so please take the time to respond thoughtfully. Course feedback is anonymous and provides the Colleges, University Education Committee and Academic Board with opportunities to recognise excellent teaching and to improve courses across the university. For more information on student surveys at ANU and reports on feedback provided on ANU courses, visit http://unistats.anu.edu.au/surveys/selt/students/ and http://unistats.anu.edu.au/surveys/selt/results/learning/

COURSE SCHEDULE

(A detailed course schedule is provided in the latter part of this course guide)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Summary of Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Course introduction and historical overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Trade, investment and globalisation in the Middle East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Religion, culture and business practices</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Politics, conflict, change, and the risk environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>International business and investment in the Middle East</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Banking, Islamic finance and capital markets</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Leadership and human resource management in the region</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Issues in marketing, sales and advertising</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Logistics, operations and e-business</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Public relations, the problems of corruption, and issues of communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Current issues in Middle Eastern business / Australia-Middle East trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Course conclusion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Examination period, Thursday 4 – Saturday 20 June inclusive</td>
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## COURSE ASSESSMENT

### Assessment Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Title / Task</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Linked Learning Outcomes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Combined marks of up to five short assessments done at random in workshops</td>
<td>30% of the total course assessment</td>
<td>Varies – at least seven pieces of short assessment, each marked out of 6%, will be conducted at random in workshops in Weeks 3-13 inclusive: the 30% mark is the sum of the five best marks</td>
<td>All of LOs 1-3 and the written aspect of LO4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Group presentation at a workshop and an accompanying paper</td>
<td>20% of the total course assessment (10% for a workshop presentation + 10% for a written paper)</td>
<td>To be decided in the Week 1 workshop</td>
<td>LO4 plus at least one of LOs 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>50% of the course assessment</td>
<td>To be held in the S1 examination period (4-20 June inclusive)</td>
<td>All of LOs 1-3 and the written</td>
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Details about assessment may change during the first two weeks of semester, based on student consultations. Any changes to the proposed assessment will be posted on Wattle by the end of Week 2 of the course, but please ensure that you check with the lecturer if you are unsure about any changes.

### Participation

Attendance at, and active participation in, the weekly workshops is expected. There are regular pieces of small assessment conducted in workshops, and students who are absent from more than two workshops risk their final course mark being affected where they miss one or more of these assessments. The workshops will also provide students with valuable advice that will assist their performance in the group assessment task and the final examination. Finally, some aspects of the workshops (e.g. films, guest lectures, and group discussions) may not be recorded or otherwise accessible beyond the workshop.

Students who cannot commit to attending most workshops are, therefore, placing themselves at a disadvantage, and should consider whether taking the course this semester is advisable; it may be better to undertake it in a future year.
Assessment Task 1: Combined marks of up to five short assessments done at random in workshops

Details of task:
- Short assessments will be conducted in workshops, in both random weeks over Weeks 3-13 inclusive and at random times during the workshops
  - A minimum of seven such assessments will be conducted during the semester.
  - Each assessment will be marked out of a maximum mark of six (6).
- The format of these assessments will vary; they may include:
  - A quiz/test consisting of several short answer questions
  - A quiz/test consisting of several multiple choice questions
  - A quiz/test based on a single question requiring a medium-length answer
- Each assessment will be brief, taking between five and fifteen minutes to complete depending on its format
- The content of these assessments will be chosen from either:
  - The readings set for the week in which the assessment is conducted, or
  - Content from the week previous to the one in which the assessment is conducted (this could be the readings for that week, or the lectures, group presentations, or key material from films, presentations, etc)
- Each student is given a mark out of 30% for Assessment Task 1. A student’s total mark will be calculated by taking the highest results of up to five (5) of these assessment pieces, with each being worth up to 6%. Where a student has completed less than five pieces, the total of the pieces completed will be used to calculate the total mark.

Assessment Task 2: Group presentation at a workshop and an accompanying paper

Details of task:
- In Week 1, or later as necessary, students will be asked to form groups of 3-4 and for that group to prepare a brief workshop presentation for a set week and on a set question from the course outline.
- Each group should make a presentation at an agreed workshop:
  - The presentation should be in a format and style agreed with the course convener at least one week in advance
  - The topic should be agreed with the course convener in advance, but may be drawn from one of the questions posed for the week, or it may be a summary or contrast of one or more of the week’s readings, or it may take another form as agreed
  - It should be of 10-15 minutes’ duration in total (i.e. plan on 3-4 minutes per group member, with 3-4 members in a group)
  - All members of a team should play a role in the presentation
- Each group should also submit a written paper on the topic of their presentation:
  - This should go beyond the presentation content: it could be a more detailed examination of one aspect of the presentation, or a follow-on piece looking at an additional related issue, or an assessment of additional or alternative sources where the presentation was a literature review of the course readings, or another format as agreed.
  - The written paper can be presented in an essay format, or as a more commercial-style or government-style report, or in some cases, in another format or with other content as agreed.
  - The paper should be roughly 1,500-2,000 words in length (i.e. plan on 400-500 words per team member, with 3-4 members in a group), or if it incorporates other formats, be of a comparable size, length, and sophistication, requiring a similar amount of effort to a written piece
  - The written paper should identify briefly, at the end, how the workload for the written component was split between the team members
The written paper must be submitted in two ways: a hard copy must be provided at the same workshop as that in which the group presentation is conducted, and an electronic copy, identical to the hard copy, must be uploaded to Wattle the same day.

- Each student is given a mark out of 20% for Assessment Task 2. A mark out of 10% is given for presentation and a mark out of 10% for the written paper.
  - The presentation mark is based on a mark out of 5% for the team overall (i.e. this mark is shared by all team members) and a mark out of 5% for the team member individually.
  - Both parts of the presentation mark are based on how fully and cleverly the topic is addressed or the question answered, the analytical quality and sophistication of the content, the effort that is evidenced to have gone into the presentation, and the clarity, precision, and engagement of the delivery.
  - The mark for the written paper out of 10% is for the team overall (i.e. this mark is shared by all team members), unless the team members note that the work was not evenly shared.
  - The mark for the written paper is based on how fully and cleverly the topic is addressed or the question answered, the analytical quality and sophistication of the content, the effort that is evidenced to have gone into it, and the technical quality of the paper.
  - Some written feedback will be provided on both the presentation and the paper.

Assessment Task 3: Final (end-of-semester) Examination

Details of task:
- The final examination will be scheduled for during the first semester examination period (Mondays-Saturdays in the period Thursday 4 - Saturday 20 June 2015 inclusive).
- The final examination:
  - Will be a 150 minute (two-and-a-half-hour) exam, plus 15 minutes reading time.
  - Will consist of different types of questions, e.g. short answer questions, medium-length answer questions, essay questions, scenarios or case studies, etc.
  - It will cover material from across the entire course: e.g. readings, lectures, films, content from group activities, guest lectures, etc.
  - Student suggestions on the structure of the exam are very welcome, and will be sought in one of the classes as well.
- The final examination will be marked on the basis of the following:
  - How accurately and fully the questions are answered, relative to the expected length and level of detail of the response. It is impossible to obtain a good mark without meeting this criterion.
  - The strength and clarity of any argument, analysis or assessment required in the question and/or accuracy of the points made in support thereof (this criterion will depend on the actual format of the exam).
  - The originality and insightfulness shown in some questions, as applicable.
  - Technical quality is not a criterion, but exams must be legible.
- Full details about the content, format, and style of the examination, and some hints on the types of questions and topics to expect, will be provided no later than in the workshop in Week 13.
- The final examination will count for 50% of the final course mark/grade.

Assignment Submission

Group presentation written papers should be submitted both online, using Turnitin on the course's Wattle site, and in hard copy, handed to the course convener personally no later than during the workshop at which the group is presenting.
The hard copy:
- Must have a cover sheet, with student ID numbers of all members of the group identified.
- Must include a statement that the contribution of each member of the group (identified by Student ID number) was by agreement and was roughly equal, or alternatively should identify what contributions each member of the group made where this varies. This note on contribution should cover both the preparation of the workshop presentation, as well as to the planning, research, writing, etc the written paper.
- **Students must keep a copy of the written paper:** if the paper is lost or not recorded as received, the onus will be on the student to supply another copy of it.

**Extensions and Penalties**

Where an assignment is submitted after the due date, students are penalised by five per cent of the possible marks available for the assessment task per working day or part thereof.

**Special consideration for assessments**

Students who are unable to submit their assignment by the due date may be eligible for an extension if supported by an application for Special Consideration.

Information on special assessment consideration can be found at: [http://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams/special-assessment-consideration](http://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams/special-assessment-consideration).

Special Consideration applications must be completed before the due date of the affected assessment, or no later than three working days after the due date of the affected assessment.

The application must include all supporting documentation and include a copy of as much of the assignment as has been completed by the due time and date.

Special consideration applications are only submitted online at special.consideration@anu.edu.au. You will be notified by the RSM office if an extension has been approved.

**Returning Assignments**

Details will be provided in due course on how marked written papers for the group presentation can be collected: please refer to Wattle for advice on the date and process. Papers not claimed quickly will be held in the Research School of Management (RSM) office; students will need to present their student card to collect an essay. Essays remaining in the RSM office at the beginning of Week 3 in the following semester will be destroyed.

**Resubmission of Assignments**

No assessment items may be resubmitted.

**Identify your Assignment with your Student Number only**

When submitting your assignment please ensure that it contains your student number in the file name and on the first page. Please do not put your name anywhere in your assignment.
Use of Assignments as exemplars and grade moderation

An important resource for enhancing educational quality is a stock of student work which can be de-identified and used as exemplars for future students in ANU courses, and for grade moderation exercises for teaching staff. If you do not wish your assignment to be used for such purposes please include a note to that effect on the front page of the assignment.

Examinations

One final examination is included in the assessment for the course, and accounts for half of the course assessment and the final mark/grade. See the details above.

Scaling

Your final mark for the course will be based on the raw marks allocated for each assignment or examination. However, your final mark may not be the same number as produced by that formula, as marks may be scaled. Any scaling applied will preserve the rank order of raw marks (i.e. if your raw mark exceeds that of another student, then your scaled mark will exceed or equal the scaled mark of that student), and may be either up or down.

Finalisation of Marks and Grades

After marking is concluded the lecturer will submit a report to the Committee of Examiners for the course recommending final marks and letter grades for each student. The Committee comprises, at a minimum, the Director of the Research School of Management, the lecturer, and at least one second examiner. The lecturer's recommendations are based on the points accumulated by each student and judgments about individual student performance, guided by the ANU Policy on Coursework Assessment.

Referencing Requirements

Either the Harvard or Chicago referencing styles may be used, but style should conform to usual practices and be consistent throughout the essay. Links to documentation on proper referencing methods are available on the course website or from the ANU Library website: http://anulib.anu.edu.au/lib_home.html

READING LISTS

Prescribed Readings

Prescribed readings are listed in the latter part of this course outline, with links provided for many of the readings. Some others are placed, as scans, on the course Wattle site. Other ad hoc readings and/or other material may be posted to Wattle from time to time.

Recommended Reading

The course does not assume that students have prior study of business or of the Middle East, however there is a substantial amount of background material covered in the initial few weeks of the course. Therefore, students who do not have some background knowledge of business or of the Middle East are strongly advised to consult relevant material.

Students with no background in business or related areas should acquaint themselves with basic business terms and concepts.

**TUTORIAL AND/OR SEMINAR REGISTRATION**

No sign-up is required for the workshops, and no classes or tutorials are held apart from the weekly, three-hour workshop.

**COMMUNICATION**

**Email**

As necessary, the course convener will contact students by email. This will only ever be on the student’s official ANU student email address. Information about your enrolment and fees from the Registrar and Student Services’ office will also be sent to this email address. Likewise, students should only communicate with the course convener about course matters using their ANU email account.

For identity and privacy reasons, emails sent from non-ANU accounts may not be answered.

**Announcements**

Students are expected to check the Wattle site for this course regularly: it is recommended that they do so at least twice a week. Announcements about this course, e.g. changes to timetables, notifications of cancellations, as well as all relevant course materials, will be placed on the Wattle site. Notifications of emergency cancellations of lectures or tutorials will be posted on the door of the relevant room.

**Course URLs**

More information about this course may be found on:

POLICIES

ANU has educational policies, procedures and guidelines, which are designed to ensure that staff and students are aware of the University’s academic standards, and implement them. You can find the University’s education policies and an explanatory glossary at: https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/index.htm.

Policy information on examinations and assessments can be found on the College of Business and Economics website at: http://cbe.anu.edu.au/students/student-information/examinations-assessment/

Students are expected to have read the Code of Practice for Student Academic Integrity before the commencement of their course.

Key policies include:
- Student Assessment (Coursework)
- Student Surveys and Evaluations
- Assessment of Student Learning
Week 1: Course introduction and historical overview  
(Thursday 19 February)

- This week consists of a set of introductory lectures for the full three hour workshop period, with breaks in between.
- Themes/topics of the lectures are:
  - The first lecture will cover an overview of the course and administrative details, as well as some introductory concepts
  - The second and third lectures will provide a general background on the Middle East for those with no previous study of the region, broadly covering its economic geography, politics, society, etc

Readings:
No set or required readings.
Students with no background on the Middle East should acquaint themselves with the basic history, culture and politics of the region. Suggested texts are parts of one or more of the following introductory books:

Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East* (Penguin, various/multiple editions and years).
**Week 2: Trade, investment and globalisation in the Middle East**

(Thursday 26 February)

- This week provides a background on trade, investment and globalization in the Middle East, covering various dynamics related to these issues.
- There is a long lecture, or two shorter lectures, at the start of the workshop; some of the questions considered are:
  - What factors in Middle Eastern history, and now, have shaped current trade/investment dynamics?
  - What economic policies have been tried in the region, and what has worked or failed?
  - How integrated, or not, is the Middle East in the international economic system?
  - How has oil affected the region’s trade and investment environment?
  - How has the Middle East responded to globalisation? How do you think this response has impacted its economic structures and performance?
- There is then a group discussion and debate on the current state of the Middle East’s economies.

**Activity and preparation:**

- **Students should prepare some basic facts and thoughts on two states, one a wealthy oil exporter in the Gulf and the other a lower-income non-oil republic, including having a basic grasp of their modern histories and economic structures at mid-20th century and now. These ideas will be used to inform and shape the group discussions.**
- Questions to be addressed in the group discussion include:
  - What specific problems did your chosen countries inherit at independence?
  - How did these problems differ, and in what ways were they similar?
  - Why has a development model proved so elusive in the Middle East region as a whole?

**Readings:**


Beverley Milton-Edwards, *Contemporary Politics in the Middle East*, 2nd Ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006), Ch. 3 (pp. 73-101)

Week 3: Religion, culture and business practices

(Thursday 5 March)

- This week is about culture, broadly defined, and how it relates to and influences business, especially in international trade and business across borders and cultures.
- It commences with a 90-100 minute lecture covering:
  - What are Middle Eastern, Arab, Persian, Turkish and Jewish “cultures”?
  - What dangers are there in generalising about culture and business? Is “culture” a loaded term best avoided? Or are shared identities, values, customs still important?
  - How do various forms of identity impact or reach into the business world?
  - How do characteristics in the social realm affect the business realm, including corporate culture and inter-firm relations?
- This will be followed by either a guest lecture or a set of short documentary films on issues related to business and culture, plus a discussion of a related issue.

Readings:
Abbas J. Ali, Business and Management Environment in Saudi Arabia: Challenges and Opportunities for Multinational Corporations (Routledge, 2009), Ch. 8 (pp. 128-141).

Also recommended:
Week 4: Politics, conflict, change, and the risk environment

(Thursday 12 March)

- One lecture of up to two hours, on the issues surrounding politics, social/cultural issues, political risk, and related themes, and how companies – especially foreign companies – can minimize such risks.
- Issues and questions covered include:
  - What is the risk profile of the Middle East?
  - How important is the threat of war or conflict?
  - What political risks exist for business?
  - What strategies do foreign firms use to minimise risk?
  - Are things like social change, demographics, and gradualist economic reform a risk or threat for business?
  - This week will also include, in the lecture, a background discussion of political systems and military conflict in the region
- This will be followed by a one-hour group discussion and debate.

Activity and preparation:

- **Students should prepare a brief assessment of risk issues for one of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or Turkey, and be ready to discuss this in groups and more widely at the workshop.**
- Small discussion groups will be formed by country, and groups asked to develop some specific ideas and observations on political risk (or an aspect of it) in/for that country.

Readings:


Also recommended:


Week 5: International business and investment in the Middle East
(Thursday 19 March)

- This week covers the broad commercial and investment environment in the Middle East.
- First, there is a 90+ minute lecture, covering questions such as:
  - What sorts of investments are most common in the region?
  - What prompts a foreign firm to enter a Middle Eastern market? What sorts of hurdles do they face, and how general or unique are these?
  - Do the economic liberalisation efforts of some states bode well for greater FDI? Or have there been problems with such reforms, and if so, of what sort?
  - What impacts has the global financial crisis of 2008 onwards had on investment to and from the region?
  - How do oil prices and energy politics shape the economic and commercial environment in the region?
  - How have states tried to "brand" their countries/economies? Has it worked?
- This is followed by a 60+ minute group discussion and debate:

Activity and preparation:

- Students should prepare a brief set of thoughts on the investment environment in one of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or the UAE, and be prepared to discuss this in groups and more widely. Consider the country’s economic profile, investment laws, its trading rules, how safe property rights and other protections are, how “business friendly” its government and their policies towards foreign firms seem, etc.
- On balance, would you advise for or against investing in the country you have looked at? Why or why not – or if the answer depends on the economic sector or other conditions, explain these.

Readings:


Svitlana Khyeda, "Foreign Direct Investment in the Middle East: Major Regulatory Restrictions", *Insight Turkey*, 9, 2, 2007, pp. 73-104.


Also recommended:


Week 6: Banking, Islamic finance and capital markets
(Thursday 26 March)

- This week is focused on the banking and finance sector in the Middle East. Other issues, such as managed funds and high-value individual financial services, will be briefly discussed if time permits.
- It begins with a single (lengthy) lecture on some of the themes of the week, including a discussion of questions such as:
  - What are the characteristics of (conventional) banking and finance in the Middle East?
  - What is Islamic finance (sometimes called “Shari’a-compliant finance”) all about? What accounts for its rise in popularity in recent decades? What does it mean for banking in the Middle East, and for the region’s economic and trade dynamics more broadly?
  - What challenges does the region face in developing its capital markets (especially its stock markets, but with attention now starting to turn to the development of its debt markets as well)?
  - What other capital raising and financing options and characteristics does the region possess?

Activity and preparation:

- To prepare for a group activity this week, students should think about the Middle East as a region for portfolio investment: If you were making investment decisions for a managed fund at a major financial firm in Australia, and the firm wanted to have a product with exposure to frontier/high risk investments, how much emphasis would the Middle East receive from you (compared to other such emerging and high risk markets), and why? Prepare a brief set of thoughts on this.
- If necessary, have a look at some Australian financial firms (large banks, investment companies, etc) and their managed funds products or similar products that have an exposure to riskier emerging or frontier markets, to get an idea for how these products are structured, priced, and marketed.
- In the workshop, a set of questions will be presented as discussion topics based around this scenario of an Australian managed fund investor looking at the Middle East region as a (small) part of one or two of their higher-risk products.

Readings:

[For an overview of some of the banking and finance issues in the region, read:]

Plus look at some relevant websites, to get an up-to-date idea of how these markets work and how they have been performing in 2014 and 2015 thus far, e.g. look at http://www.arabianmoney.net/category/gcc-stock-markets/ and/or https://www.zawya.com/middle-east/financial-markets/ for relevant articles.]

[On Islamic banking and finance, read:]

Additional readings:


*Head office of the Qatar National Bank, Qatar's largest bank, October 2011.*
Week 7: Leadership and human resource management in the region
(Thursday 2 April)

- This week looks at the issues related to human resources in the Middle East, including the styles and patterns of leadership common in the region, the status and dynamics of human resources management, industrial dynamics, and other similar/related issues.
- The week begins with a pair of lectures, covering:
  - Approaches to the concept of leadership in scholarship, and issues of leadership and decision-making styles in the Middle East;
  - The factors shaping human resource management (HRM) in the region in recent decades and the changes in HRM in that time;
  - Whether any particular Middle Eastern country is a “model” for HRM best practice;
  - Gender, leadership, and management;
  - What unique problems or challenges foreign firms operating in the region face, in comparison with domestic ones, and how these issues can be addressed.
- Some brief documentary films may be shown as well, on issues of leadership, HRM, and how these link to other dynamics such as culture, values, and political economy.
- There will then be a group discussion on a leadership conundrum in the region.

Activity and preparation:

- The group activity this week is on a scenario related to workplace cultures and a human resources problem; this will be used to drive group and/or wider discussion and debate.
- **To prepare, look at the strategic consulting industry and get a basic idea of how consulting firms are structured, what they do, how they operate, etc.**
  - Have a look also at websites on consulting as a career, which may be of use and provide some insights into the cultures of these firms, e.g. see http://careers.theguardian.com/management-consultancy-advice, http://www.bostonconsulting.com.au/careers/working_at_bcg/strategy_consulting.aspx, and http://www.wetfeet.com/articles/career-overview-management-consulting.

Readings:


Also recommended:

[Mid-Semester Break, 3-19 April inclusive]
- The mid-semester break commences in effect on Good Friday 3 April, and runs to Sunday 19 April, with classes resuming as of Monday 20 April.
- There are no classes in this period, and no set work for the break period either.

Week 8: Film
(Thursday 23 April)
- There are no set readings for this week.
- This week a film will be shown (probably *Syriana* [2005], if most students have not seen it previously). The showing of a film is designed to illustrate some issues related to the Middle East, in a different way to the lectures, readings, and activities in other weeks.
Week 9: Issues in marketing, sales and advertising
(Thursday 30 April)

- This week covers the principles and issues of marketing, advertising, and selling products and services in the Middle Eastern market, stressing the differences between the region and western markets like Australia.
- It begins with a ~90 minute lecture, covering questions such as:
  - How is marketing conducted in the Middle East? How does it vary from the West?
  - How does sales and distribution usually work in the Middle East?
  - How are decisions made in the Middle East by consumers? How is consumer behaviour similar to, and different from, elsewhere in the world?
  - What unique problems or challenges do foreign firms face when marketing and selling their products in the Middle East? Are these different to domestic firms? What strategies can best be adopted to deal with these issues?
  - The lecture this week will include a number of examples of advertising from the region, including several case studies of different television ads.
- There will then be a 60-90 minute group activity and discussion.

Activity and preparation:

- The topic for discussion this week revolves around a marketing and advertising dilemma related to the Middle East, specifically on how to promote and advertise a product in the conservative social setting of the Gulf. Students will be asked to discuss and identify possible solutions/ideas in response to a scenario. To prepare: Look online at some advertisements from the Middle East and think about how these vary from advertisements in the West and to get some ideas on their approaches and style.

Readings:


Also, have a look at the marketing and sales advice online provided by the Australian Trade Commission (Austrade) (http://www.austrade.gov.au/Country/default.aspx) and the US Department of State’s Country Commercial Guidelines (http://www.buyusainfo.net/z_body.cfm?dbf=ccg1%2Cbmr11%2Cmrsearch1&search_type2=int&avar=19999&region=Middle%20East&logic=and&loadnav=no) and consider some specifics of key countries such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Israel, etc

Also recommended:

Aamir A. Rehman, Dubai & Co.: Global Strategies for Doing Business in the Gulf States (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), Ch. 6 (pp. 159-183).


Week 10: Logistics, operations and e-business

(Thursday 7 May)

- This week covers two issues in the Middle Eastern business environment: the supply chain process (transport, logistics, infrastructure, etc); and online marketing and operations (covering intranet, internet and other aspects).
- There are two one-hour lectures, one each on these two issues, covering questions such as:
  - How should and does the supply chain process work?
  - The operational and logistics environment in the Middle East, with contrasting examples from various economies;
  - The operational and logistics challenges of doing business in the region;
  - Have regional bodies such as the GCC, and/or rivalry between some economies, helped enhance cross-border trade, investment and human mobility? Why or why not?
  - Internet and mobile penetration in the Middle East;
  - The state of e-business and online sales and marketing in the region; and
  - Issues in designing websites and other online sites/processes.
- The final hour will be used for either a guest speaker (on a topic to be confirmed) or a video (on small business issues in the Middle East).

Readings:


![Egypt’s main Mediterranean port, Alexandria, early afternoon during a dust storm, December 2009.](image)
Week 11: Public relations, the problems of corruption, and issues of communication
(Thursday 14 May)

- This week covers a range of issues that ultimately come down to the principle of corporate image and reputation: how to protect a firm’s image and why this is important, not least of all in the Middle East.
- It begins with a lecture on some key themes across public relations, lobbying, networking, and other communications issues, and then moves on to discuss some of the issues related to corruption in the region and the risks attached to this for international firms in the Middle East.
- The lecture covers questions such as:
  - How do public relations work in the Middle East?
  - How is PR in the Middle East different to in Australia and other Western countries?
  - How valid is the argument that traditional face-to-face or trust-based methods of contact remain strong in the Middle East? If this has some validity, how much?
  - How does business lobbying work in the region? How should foreign firms conduct lobbying efforts in the region?
  - How should foreign firms respond to issues that threaten their public image? What if they are powerless to influence such issues – is there anything they can do?
  - How should firms best handle pressure to engage in corruption? What risks are involved? Are there any positive aspects to corruption?
- A ~50 minute documentary will be shown: Black Money (2009), from PBS Frontline in the US, on the UK-Saudi Al-Yamama project and issues of corruption.
- There will be a brief group activity and/or a general discussion, depending on time.

Activity and preparation:
- There will only be a group activity this week if time permits. No advance preparation is required. A scenario will be presented and debated, on a public relations problem.

Readings:


Also recommended:


Week 12: Current issues in Middle Eastern business and directions in Australia-Middle East trade and investment

(Thursday 21 May)

- This week covers two issues:
  - Current issues in Middle Eastern business, incorporating both issues that are a current academic focus, as well as those of particular interest or importance to businesspeople; and
  - An outline of the profile of, influences upon, and changes in the Australian-Middle East trade and investment relationship.

- It begins with a long lecture, or two shorter lectures, covering:
  - The global financial crisis and the Middle East;
  - The debate over Middle Eastern Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs);
  - The 2011 Arab uprisings and the conflicts and instability that remain from those uprisings;
  - Trends in Islamic finance;
  - Longer-term or established Middle Eastern conflicts – especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the future of Iraq – and how these impact business and various regional economies; and
  - Other current or emerging areas of scholarly research.

- It then looks at:
  - An overview of past Australian-Middle Eastern trade and the commercial relationship; and
  - Current issues with Australian-Middle Eastern trade and investment, including issues with specific countries in the region.

- There will then be time for question and answers and/or a discussion, assessing and debating some of the current and issues outlined in the readings and lectures, and considering what they might mean for Australian trade and investment with the region.

Readings:

[Note: These are likely to change and/or further or other readings are likely to be provided on Wattle closer to the date, as new pieces are published on very contemporary and fluid issues such as the Arab Spring, regional conflicts, changes in oil prices, etc.]


Week 13: Course conclusion
(Thursday 28 May)

- This week begins with a final lecture, which includes:
  - A reiteration of key themes and ideas from the course;
  - Some final advice on approaching, analysing, and working in and with the region in the future; and
  - Exam hints and advice.
- The remainder of the workshop will be kept free for any questions or discussion of remaining topics, or to talk about any topics not covered in the course. Students will be able to nominate the issues they would like to cover and drive this discussion.

Readings:
To be confirmed: if any readings are set, which is unlikely, they will be provided on Wattle closer to Week 13.