

MIR 504

Spring 2022

Turkey and its Neighborhood

Online via zoom
Wednesdays, 18.30-21.00

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This course is an introduction to Turkey's relationships with its neighbors in the Balkans, Middle East, Caucasus and the Black Sea Basin. Even though the course will have a bilateral/thematic focus each week, with readings that are focused on contemporary developments, we will pay particular attention to situate developments within broader historical contexts. In doing so, we will not only take into account the imperial legacies at play across the region (namely Ottoman, Habsburg, Tsarist and Qajar empires and the ever-lasting effects of their violent collapse), but also trace important historical developments throughout the twentieth century that are key to the making of Turkey and the region around it. As we will see, some of the dynamics that are at play in shaping foreign policy choices today are as much historical as contemporary. Students will develop by the end of the course more informed understanding of Turkey in its neighborhood, with an ability to discuss the long-lasting interstate disputes some of which are at times as old as the countries in question.

Assignments, Requirements, Evaluation

1) Attendance

Students are expected to be present in each session. You can be absent without an excuse only once. Each unexcused absence will drop a letter grade (e.g. from AA to BA) unless you are absent on the grounds of documented medical emergencies.

2) Readings and Participation (30 percent)

There are three readings assigned for each week. You are required to come to class having read the required reading as well as one of the optional readings. The instructor will make the weekly readings available via Google Drive. Active participation in discussions is a requirement for this course.

3) Draft Papers (10 percent)

Students are encouraged to choose a final research paper topic early on in the semester. This could be a topic that is of personal interest to you or a theme you would like to pursue further. You could choose a country pair, for example, examining Turkey's relationship with a country of your choice. You may choose to do a paper on a historical or a more contemporary period.

If you would like to discuss your paper topics, feel free to schedule individual meetings with me (in-person or online). We can also discuss it via email; i.e. however it is easier for you. You should fix a paper topic by **March 30** at the latest. Rough drafts of the research papers will be due on **May 6**.

4) Presentation (20 percent)

Students will present their final paper projects in Weeks 11 & 12. I will organize this ahead of time and I will prepare the list of presenters alphabetically. The purpose of these presentations is to receive feedback from your classmates. Each presentation will be 5 minutes long, followed by a discussion.

5) Final Paper (40 percent)

Students are expected to turn in their final paper on **June 11**. It should be at least 10 pages long, double-spaced, with footnotes.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, February 23

Introductions

Week 2, March 2

Turkey and the West: From Partners to Rivals?

(Required) Magdalena Kirchner and Stephen J. Flanagan, “Turkey’s Relations with Europe, the European Union, and NATO: Reaching an Inflection Point,” in *Turkey’s Nationalist Course: Implications for the US-Turkish Strategic Partnership and the US Army* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2020) pp. 151-77.

Choose one of the two:

İsa Çamyar and Halit Mustafa Tağma, “Why Does Turkey Seek European Union Membership? A Historical Institutional Approach,” in *Turkish Studies*, 11:3 (Sept. 2010) pp. 371-86.

Aslı Aydıntaşbaş and Kemal Kemal Kirişçi, “The United States and Turkey: Friends, Enemies, or Only Interests?” *Brookings Institute Turkey Project Policy Paper*, no. 12 (April 2017) pp. 1-27.

Week 3, March 9

Turkish-Russian Relations: Between Enmity and Cooperation

(Required) Anika Binnendijk, “The Russian-Turkish Bilateral Relationship: Managing Differences in an Uneasy Partnership,” *Turkey’s Nationalist Course: Implications for the US-Turkish Strategic Partnership and the US Army* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2020) pp. 107-31.

Choose one of the two:

Şener Aktürk, “Relations between Russia and Turkey Before, During and After the Failed Coup of 2016,” in *Insight Turkey*, 21:4 (Fall 2019) pp. 97-113.

Paul Kubicek, “Strictly Pragmatism? Prospects for a Russian-Turkish Partnership,” in *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 23:2 (2021) pp. 233-50.

Week 4, March 16

Turkey and the Balkans: Empires Lost, Relations Altered?

(Required) M. Hakan Yavuz, *Nostalgia for the Empire: The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020) pp. 203-35.

Choose one of the two:

Dimitar Bechev, “A Rival or an Awkward Partner? Turkey’s Relationship with the West in the Balkans,” in *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, (2022) pp. 1-14.

Ronald H. Linden and Yasemin İrepoğlu, “Turkey and the Balkans: New Forms of Political Community,” in *Turkish Studies*, 14:2 (2013) pp. 229-55.

Week 5, March 23

Turkey and Caucasus: Friends and Foes

(Required) James Hoobler, “Turkey’s Relations with the Caucasus and Central Asia: Unrealized Ambitions,” *Turkey’s Nationalist Course: Implications for the US-Turkish Strategic Partnership and the US Army* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2020) pp. 133-49.

Choose one of the two:

Bülent Aras and Pinar Akpınar, “The Relations between Turkey and the Caucasus,” in *Perceptions*, 16:3 (Autumn 2011) pp. 53-68.

M. Hakan Yavuz and Vasif Huseynov, “The Second Karabakh War: Russia vs. Turkey,” in *Middle East Policy*, 27:4 (Winter 2020) pp. 103-18.

Week 6, March 30

Turkish-Iranian Relations: Continuities and Divergences

(Required) Nihat Ali Özcan and Özgür Özdamar, “Uneasy Neighbors: Turkish-Iranian Relations since the 1979 Islamic Revolution,” in *Middle East Policy*, 17:3 (Fall 2010) pp. 101-17.

Choose one of the two:

Alirreza Nader, “Turkey’s Relations with Iran and Iraq: Enduring Rivals or a New Modus Vivendi?” *Turkey’s Nationalist Course: Implications for the US-Turkish Strategic Partnership and the US Army* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2020) pp. 49-66.

Iain William MacGillivray, “The Paradox of Turkish-Iranian Relations in the Syrian Crisis,” in *Third World Quarterly*, 41:6 (2020) pp. 1046-66.

Week 7, April 6

Politics of High Seas in the Mediterranean

(Required) Kıvanç Ulusoy, “The Cyprus Conflict: Turkey’s Strategic Dilemma,” in *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 18:4 (2016), pp. 393-406.

Choose one of the two:

Nikos Christofis, “Securitizing the Aegean: De-Europeanizing Greek-Turkish Relations,” in *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, (2022) pp. 1-18.

Nael Shama, “Egypt: Threats and Interests in the Eastern Mediterranean,” in *The Scramble for the Eastern Mediterranean: Energy and Geopolitics*, ed. Valeria Talbot (Milan: ISPI, 2021) pp. 61-76.

Week 8, April 13

Turkey and the Middle East: Before and After the Arab Spring

(Required) Hugh Roberts, “The Revolution that Wasn’t,” in *London Review of Books*, 35:17 (12 September 2013).

Choose one of the two:

Jeffrey Martini, “Turkey and the Arab World: Mixed Views and Interests,” *Turkey’s Nationalist Course: Implications for the US-Turkish Strategic Partnership and the US Army* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2020) pp. 67-79.

Hüseyin Işıksal, “Political Chaos in Iraq, ISIS, and Turkish Foreign Policy: The High Cost of the Westphalian Delusion,” in *Turkey’s Relations with the Middle East: Political Encounters after the Arab Spring*, eds. Hüseyin Işıksal and Oğuzhan Göksel (Cham: Springer, 2018) pp. 83-104.

Week 9, April 20

Ideology or Opportunities? Contours of Neo-Ottomanism

(Required) Matthew S. Cohen, “Ahmet Davutoğlu’s Academic and Professional Articles: Understanding the World View of Turkey’s Prime Minister,” in *Turkish Studies*, 17:4 (2016) pp. 527-43.

Choose one of the two:

Nicholas Danforth, “Ideology and Pragmatism in Turkish Foreign Policy: From Atatürk to the AKP,” in *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, 7:3 (2008) pp. 83-95.

Umut Uzer, “Glorification of the Past as a Political Tool: Ottoman History in Contemporary Turkish Politics,” in *Journal of the Middle East and Africa*, 9:4 (2018) pp. 339-57.

Week 10, April 27

Challenges Ahead: Prospects of Peace and Conflict

(Required) Chas W. Freeman Jr, “The Fadeout of the Pax Americana in the Middle East,” in *Middle East Policy*, 28 (2021), pp. 23-30.

Choose one of the two:

Ayhan Kaya, “Right-Wing Populism and Islamophobia in Europe and their Impact on Turkey-EU Relations,” in *Turkish Studies*, 21:1 (2020) pp 1-28.

Dan Smith and Florian Krampe, “Climate-Related Security Risks in the Middle East,” in *Routledge Handbook on Middle East Security*, eds. Anders Jagerskog, Michael Schulz and Ashok Swain (New York: Routledge, 2019) pp. 199-210.

Spring Break, May 2 – May 6

Drafts of Final Papers due May 6!

Week 11, May 11
Presentations

Presentations of final paper projects

Week 12, May 18
Presentations

Presentations of final paper projects

Week 13, May 27 – June 11
Finals Week

Final papers due June 11