

**University of Houston Law Center  
Summer Mini Session 2026 Law 6320 Section 12946**

**THE CURRENT CRISES IN THE MIDDLE EAST: SAUDI ARABIA VS IRAN**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**THE CURRENT CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST:  
SAUDI ARABIA VS IRAN**

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course will provide insight into substantive areas of history, religion, politics (regional and worldwide), longstanding relationships, legal systems, human rights and women's rights framed by current events in the most volatile and important region in the world.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Learning Outcomes:

During your time in this course, you will develop competence in the following: • Knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law regulating lawyers' conduct; • Legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication related to legal ethics and professional responsibility; • Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; • Reflection upon how to integrate conceptions of professionalism and the lawyer's role into your career; • Recognition of the trends that will influence the future of lawyers' work; and • Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession.

**PASS/FAIL OPTION**

This course will be offered with a Pass/Fail option.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Since the beginning of civilization, the Middle East has been the hotbed of ongoing conflict. It is to the point where one conflict is almost indistinguishable from another. The current provocation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran could potentially alter the map of the Middle East and have a massive irrevocable impact on the entire world.

This course will begin by examining the issues leading up to the current hostility and continue through the potential outcomes and its potential impact on the world.

This course will be a timely and interesting way to begin to understand the issues involved in this region and how it can impact Houston and the world.

**INSTRUCTIONAL MODE**

The course will be taught in such a way as to allow an easy flow of discussion between the professor and the students. Class participation and preparation is highly important.

This course is designated as a face-to-face course, which means classes are in person by default, but designated classes may occasionally be held as remote classes via Zoom to accommodate other scheduling needs or other unforeseen circumstances. Students will be notified in advance of any classes that will be held remotely and a Zoom link will be posted on Blackboard at the start of the semester that is the Zoom link that will be used for any such classes.

The location of this class will be determined and announced at a later date.

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

This course will be taught predominantly using articles from periodicals (to be distributed).

### **EVALUATION**

Attendance and participation                      50%

Final Exam    50%

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Day</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Course learning outcome</b>	<b>Material</b>
<b>1-3</b>	<b>Introductions Timeline of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Timeline of Iran  Discuss Final Essay</b>	<b>To develop an understanding of the creation and development of the region and particularly the two most important regional powers</b>	<b>Required materials will be distributed in class</b>
<b>4-6</b>	<b>History of Islam Islam in today's world</b>	<b>To present a framework for understanding Islam and its impact, importance and influence on the region and the world</b>	<b>Required materials will be distributed in class</b>
<b>7-8</b>	<b>Constitutional Principles at work in the Islamic World (Kuwait)</b>	<b>To gain insight into how countries in the region merge beliefs and practices of east and west</b>	<b>Required materials will be distributed in class</b>

9-10	<b>Historical Relationship Between KSA and Iran</b>	To become aware of and comprehend the interactions between these countries: past, present and future	Required materials will be distributed in class
11-12	<b>America's Relationships with KSA (and the new Crown Prince) and Iran</b>	To understand the rapidly developing and changing relations between the countries	Required materials will be distributed in class
13-14	<b>The Future of the Region</b>		Required materials will be distributed in class
15	<b>Review</b>		
16	<b>Final Exam Essay Due</b>		

## **CURRENT CRISIS READING MATERIALS**

### **Middle East Primer**

<https://danielmiessler.com/blog/what-every-american-should-know-about-the-middle-east/>

### **Understanding the Middle East-Imperialism**

<https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/key2mideast/chapter/the-impact-of-imperialism-on-the-region/>

**MBS**

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/ILGBQVCUCZ/mohammed bin salman](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/ILGBQVCUCZ/mohammed_bin_salman)

### **KSA Timeline**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14703523>

### **IRAN Timeline**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14542438>

### **The Silk Roads**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vn3e37VWc0k&t=36s>

### **The Belt and Road Initiative**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACbbz0rOv6A>

### **History of Islam-Timeline**

<http://www.religionfacts.com/islam/timeline>

### **The development of Islam (Video)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDxKxnVZtgo&t=86s>

### **The 10 Largest Empires in World History**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhBVaS-Z7AQ>

### **Sharia Law**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-27307249>

### **Inventions by Arabs**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6SIcHMF9Y0>

### **Spain Under Islamic Rule**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGotnIfQaQg>

### **Comprehensive Iran Doc (incl. legal system)**

[https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Iran\\_Legal\\_System\\_Research.html](https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Iran_Legal_System_Research.html)

### **The tension between KSA and Iran**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-42008809>

### **The Difference Between Sunni and Shia Muslims**

<https://www.businessinsider.com/the-differences-between-shia-and-sunni-muslims-2015-10>

### **The Role of Law and Lawyers in Iran**

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00210862.2018.1467266>

### **The Impact of Nimr al Nimr's Execution by KSA**

<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/01/nimr-al-nimr-saudi-arabia-shiites/422670/>

### **Balfour Declaration (Al Jazeera)**

<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/10/100-years-balfour-declaration-explained-171028055805843.html>

### **Balfour Declaration (Britannica)**

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Balfour-Declaration>

### **Sykes Picot Agreement (Britannica)**

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Sykes-Picot-Agreement>

### **Sykes Picot Agreement (Yale Law)**

[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/sykes.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/sykes.asp)

### **Sykes Picot (New Yorker)**

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/how-the-curse-of-sykes-picot-still-haunts-the-middle-east>

### **IRAN Lowers Temp**

<https://www.shafaaq.com/en/iraq-news/iran-quietly-lowers-the-temperature-with-u-s/>

### **Underground life of women in KSA**

<https://www.thecut.com/2017/09/young-women-living-in-saudi-arabia-interviews.html>

### **Underground life in Iran**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/iran-blog/2014/apr/17/tehran-the-secret-party-town>

### **Iran's Intellectuals go Underground**

<https://newrepublic.com/article/132544/irans-intellectuals-going-underground>

### **Daily Life in Iran**

[Daily Life in Iran - Lonely Planet](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/iran/daily-life)

[www.lonelyplanet.com › background › other-features › nar](https://www.lonelyplanet.com/iran/daily-life)

## Why Iran's youth don't fly the nest

[Why Iran's youth don't fly the nest | World news | The Guardian](#)

[www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com) › [iran-youth-property-job-market](#)

### Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit [uh.edu/caps](http://uh.edu/caps), call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let's Talk location in-person or virtually. Let's Talk are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now? - If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org).

### Title IX/Sexual Misconduct

Per the UHS Sexual Misconduct Policy, your instructor is a "responsible employee" for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and state law and must report incidents of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual intimidation, intimate partner violence, or stalking) about which they become aware to the Title IX office. Please know there are places on campus where you can make a report in confidence. You can find more information about resources on the Title IX website at <https://uh.edu/equal-opportunity/title-ix-sexual-misconduct/resources/>.

### Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations.

Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713)743-5400, or emailing [jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU](mailto:jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU).

## UH Email

Please check and use your Cougarnet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the Cougarnet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your Cougarnet email, login to your Microsoft 365 account with your Cougarnet credentials. Visit University Information Technology (UIT) for instructions on how to connect your Cougarnet e-mail on a mobile device.

## Webcams

Should this course be offered with a remote component (it is not currently), access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on absent consent of instructor for extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness).

## Security Escorts and Cougar Ride

UHPD continually works with the University community to make the campus a safe place to learn, work, and live. The security escort service is designed for the community members who have safety concerns and would like to have a Security Officer walk with them, for their safety, as they make their way across campus. Based on availability either a UHPD Security Officer or Police Officer will escort students, faculty, and staff to locations beginning and ending on campus. If you feel that you need a Security Officer to walk with you for your safety, please call 713-743-3333. Arrangements may be made for special needs.

Parking and Transportation Services also offers a late-night, on-demand shuttle service called "Cougar Ride" that provides rides to and from all on-campus shuttle stops, as well as the MD Anderson Library, Cougar Village/Moody Towers and the UH Technology Bridge. Rides can be requested through the UH Go app. Days and hours of operation can be found at <https://uh.edu/af-university-services/parking/cougar-ride/>.

## Syllabus Changes

Please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible via e-mail.

## Honor Code

The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provisions apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the course syllabus.

## AI Generated Text

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text and other work product (AI Generated Work Product). Examples of the technology include what are known as “generative” large language models (LLMs), and a specific implementation what is well known in the general public is ChatGPT. These systems can generate text and other work product in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI Generated Work Product, appears to have human-mimicking “intelligence” and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for material one might generate themselves. AI Generated Work Product can include computer code or programs as well as human language content and materials.

Your continuing enrollment in this course obligates you to not knowingly prompt, generate, or use any AI Generated Work Product in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Work Product from yourself or others. This obligation includes that your assessment materials in the course be without any contribution from AI Generated Work Product. This obligation specifically extends to not plagiarize any writing required of you for assessment in the course: AI Generated Work Product will be treated as from another/others in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any material generated for this course that is submitted to the instructor or presented in a class session, regardless of whether it is graded content or not. Assessments include mid-terms and final exams. AI Generated Work Product may not be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non-proctored environment, such as a “take-home” final examination.