PEPPERDINE
School of Public Policy

New Course Descriptions
MMEPS
Spring 2027

MMEP 639.01 Special Topics in the Middle East: Religious Dynamics in the Middle East (2 units)
Johnnie Moore
Open to all students
In-Person Washington, DC, Campus

No region of the world has been more consistently misread by analysts who treated religion as background noise. The Middle East is the birthplace of the three Abrahamic faiths, and religion is frequently the structuring force of identity, legitimacy, law, territory, and war. Policymakers who cannot read that force accurately make predictable, costly errors: they miss the religious logic of a regime's behavior, mistake sectarian conflict for ethnic or economic grievance, misjudge the staying power of movements they expected to fade, and design agreements that ignore the actors most capable of breaking them.

This seminar takes religion seriously as a variable in Middle Eastern politics and U.S. policy.

MMEP 659.01 Special Topics of America's Role in the Middle East: Economics Statecraft and the Middle East (2 units)
Richard Nephew
Open to second-year students
In-Person Washington, DC, Campus

Governments employ all manner of foreign policy tools in their pursuit of their national interests (e.g., military force, diplomacy, etc.) Economic statecraft refers to the collection of incentives, disincentives, authorities, and requirements that are economic in their nature and/or have economic effects. For example, trade embargoes impose economic consequences on countries that are so targeted. They can be enforced either with their own economic force (e.g., a threat to embargo those who break the embargo) or other forms of coercion. But, all of this falls in the realm of "economic statecraft" because of the primary usage of economic interests for policy leverage.

This course will look at the wide range of tools that exist, how they have been applied in the Middle East over the last century, and what might be their future.