This course will endeavor to answer the following questions - the order the items are listed does not indicate their importance nor the way they may be dealt with. What would make someone dance with joy in the street when thousands of innocent Americans were killed? Was September 11th the action of a few deranged individuals, or is it just the beginning? Is it true the world has changed forever? What causes people to turn to terrorism to achieve their goals and is it possible to defeat terrorists? Shortly after 9-11, U.S. Senator Patty Murray suggested to class of high school students in Vancouver, Washington (! paraphrase) that they should ask why is it that Osama bin Laden is looked to as a hero in so much of the world? Although her comment raised a fire storm it is a good question, for not to think about such things is to bury one’s head in the sand and never resolve the issue. The answer most frequently given to Senator Murray’s question is America’s foreign policy. What is it about U.S. foreign policy that enrages so many people? Is it possible for the United States to bring democracy and stability to the Middle East? Can the United States take action, in a coalition, or alone, to carry on military actions in the Middle East without incurring more hostility in the region? Why is the United States involved at all? What factors are behind the growing militancy of Islam? What is Islam? Why can’t Arabs and Jews live peacefully, they are after all “cousins” speaking a related language (Arabic and Hebrew are Semitic tongues) and they trace their ancestry to the same individual - Abraham? If the Soviet Union, and earlier the British, couldn’t control Afghanistan, how successful can the U.S. expect to be? Part of every dollar you spend on gasoline goes to Saudi Arabia that in turns supports groups like the Taliban - what’s going on here? To answer these and other questions will be not an easy task as the roots of bitterness go deep and stretch far from the very distant past to the present and will go on into the future impacting people wherever they live. It has been said, “the crises of today are shaped by the way people behaved towards each other then.”

Amos Oz, one of Israel’s better known authors wrote: “What does the Israeli see when he looks at the Arab? Frequently he sees the shadow of his persecutors and oppressors in the grim past: Cossacks, dressed now in Arab robes and head cloths, come to continue the work of pogrom-makers** in previous generations, to murder, rape and pillage.

"What does the Arab see when he looks at the Israelis? Frequently he sees in them the shadow of his former persecutors and oppressors. Not persecuted Jews trying to be a nation like all the rest, but a continuation of the wily, arrogant, European colonialist and imperialist, come to enslave the East and exploit its wealth by means of technological superiority.

The shadow of the past hangs over the whole conflict. It is Europe, which shed the blood of Jews, persecuted and annihilated them, Europe which oppressed and humiliated and exploited the Arabs, that is responsible for the situation where Israelis and Arabs are unable to look into each other's eyes and souls without seeing a shadow of the past......... In the lives of individ-
uals and of nations the fiercest conflicts of all are often those between two victims of the same persecutor. The Arabs and the Israelis are two nations who have suffered anguish and humiliation at the hands of Europe. It is tragic that each looks at the other and sees only the face of their common enemy."

This course goes beyond the Middle East for it is as much about the United States as it is about the Middle East. The United States is seen in much the same light as other Europeans by the Arabs. The destiny of the United States and the Middle East are inextricably linked now, as well as in the future, as the United States leads the fight in the war on terrorism in what is one of the most volatile regions in the world. The issues raised can not be resolved in isolation. To overcome anger, it is necessary to understand its roots. In this course we are not seeking solutions to the challenges, as there may well be none. Our objective is to explain and make sense of a hairy situation.

Our Approach To The Topic

The course is divided into three general interrelated parts: The Roots of Madness or how it all begin. (2) Islam, meaning, sects, contributions, rise of radicalism and terrorists. (3) The role of the United States. These topics are not set in concrete, they are tentative and subject to change for either of the following: (1) I like to play off of class interests and discussions that may send the class in directions that cannot be foreseen in advance and (2) the Middle East is a volatile region where unexpected events can occur that may need our attention.

Responsibilities In This Class Are Divided As Follows:

THE INSTRUCTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY is to give you the most interesting, informative, fair and exciting class of your college career. I give 100%+ and I expected that from each of you.

THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY are as follows:

1. You expect your instructor to be in class everyday, I expect you to be in class everyday.
2. All cell phones and any other electronic equipment is to be turned off during class and their use is not allowed during exams.
3. Any behavior that distracts others from what is being presented in class will not be tolerated!
4. Please refrain from the use of scented personal products in this class. An increasing number of people suffer from Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), whereas this is not a scent free class room, let us be considerate of those who suffer from MCS. Your cooperation is expected as well as appreciated.
5. Ask questions, questions and more questions. That is what education is all about. Do not let the class get away from you. When things get muddy, and even if if they don't, ask questions.

BEWARE

This Course Contains Potentially Controversial And Sensitive Material. Keep the following in mind throughout the quarter.

First: I do not want a course that is safe and says little! Some of the ideas and concepts to be discussed are the type about which some people may hold very definite opinions that may generate passionate emotional feelings. What we must not lose sight of is that controversy exists simply because there are two sides to every issue. Our task, as an educator is to present as fairly as possible, given the limits of the scope, time, and space restrictions within which we must work, both sides of each issue under discussion.
Please keep in mind that the objective of this course is to try and understand the challenges that exist in the Middle East from the prospective of the people of the region. No two people see the world in exactly the same way, we all construct our own models of the world. Even those that profess the same religion argue about how to interpret things. It is very difficult then to see and understand the world from someone else's viewpoint, especially when that viewpoint is different. But that is precisely what we must do, if we are going to understand the Middle East.

Second, as a student you must not accept any course as dogma and no point of view as absolute. You must: (1) question your instructor, (2) question the materials that are presented, or assigned in class; (3) question the viewpoints expressed in the class from whatever the source, and (4) question the "facts" used to back up the "truth". Napoleon is reported to have said, "that history is the fable agreed upon". The dictionary defines a fable as 'a myth, fiction or an untruth'. Henry Ford, is reported to have stated that "History is bunk". There is an element of truth in both statements. The point is this: that you must make up your mind as to the truth of anything, after reading, listening, researching, analyzing and thinking about the course material. That is what it means to be a student and what education is all about. If at the end of the quarter you still maintain the position you held when you entered the class - well and good. This means that your ideas have been reinforced and you are a stronger person. If, on the other hand, you have changed your position, or rearranged your priorities - well and good, for this means you are a stronger person. If, however, nothing has taken place in your thinking, then one of us has failed in their job - I DO NOT LIKE TO FAIL IN MINE.

Third: the positions taken and the opinions expressed in this class, from whatever source, do not represent those of the Seattle Community College District, North Seattle Community College, or the newly formed Math-Science-Social Science (MS3) division of the college, or any other persons or organizations associated with the college or the State of Washington. They are strictly the sole responsibility of your instructor.

What Type Of Material Should You Concentrate On For Exams?

Do not memorize the following type of material unless specifically instructed to do so. What is expected is listed in the Study Questions/Learning Objectives that go with each course chunk.

Statistical Information is used for comparison purposes only. For example, it is adequate to know that Israel is a very small country. In 1967 Israel was 3 times the size of King county, if one includes the occupied territories of the West Bank, which some Israelis do, then Israel is about 5 times the size of King county. Some Israelis (a small minority) also claim the country of Jordan as part of the Promised Land. The Palestinians claim the West Bank as their country and some include all of Israel is part of a Palestinian State. Size is often open to question and interpretation.

The Metric System appears (Systeme Internationale, abbreviated as SI) in places throughout the text along with the English system for two reasons: (1) to accommodate foreign students unfamiliar with the English system used in the United States and (2) to give American students a sense of the metric system. You are not required to know either for game/examination purposes.

The names of geographical features as many are known by several names. There are three reasons for this: (1) after independence a lot of countries have discarded the names bestowed on places by the Europeans and are returning to their traditional names; (2) transliterating from foreign languages into
English can create problems in how to spell words in English (we will return to this challenge); (3) the Israelis, for example, refer to what the Palestinians (and most of the world) call the West Bank as Samaria and Judea - biblical names for the area. Learn only those indicated in the study questions/learning objectives. What is important is to know the geographic significance of some feature not who calls it what.

Most of the dates mentioned in the text are to help you put things in perspective. The dates that may appear on games/exams are listed in the study questions/learning objectives. Islam calculates time differently than the West does, in many places throughout the text I have used both the Islamic and the Western date. You are not required to know the Islamic date for any event.

A number of historical personalities are discussed throughout the text. Those you will be held responsible for are listed in the study questions/learning objectives.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS LEARNING CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY. THESE REMAIN UNCHANGED WITH PLACE OR TIME AND ARE THE ESSENCE OF THE COURSE. THE BOLD LETTERING IN THE TEXT INDICATES THE IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

Student Evaluations

There will be at least (4) four but no more than (5) five examinations. My goal is a short exam about every three weeks. You will be given ample forewarning - at least several days - of the date of each. Exams will consist of 25 to 35 multiple choice questions. Final grades for the class will be issued on the basis of a curve with the highest grade (or grades if they are to be close to call) getting the 4.0. The highest grade will set the benchmark from which other grades will be calculated as shown below. In general students can keep track of their own progress on the following basis:

- If your accumulative points are within 5% of the top grade/s; your grade will be between 3.5-3.9.
- If your accumulative points are within 10% of the top grade/s; your grade will be between 3.0-3.4.
- If your accumulative points are within 15% of the top grade/s; your grade will be between 2.5-2.9.
- If your accumulative points are within 20% of the top grade/s; your grade will be between 2.0-2.4.
- If your accumulative points are within 25% of the top grade; your grade will be between 1.5-1.9.
- If your accumulative points fall below 25% of the top grade/s your score will most likely result a grade of less than 1.0.

NOTE: on exam day students will provide themselves with a scan-tron form (that may be purchased in the NSCC bookstore) and a number 2 pencil.

My policy is to return exams the following class period for this reason no make ups are allowed without making prior arrangements with your instructor.

I am the first to agree that exams are not necessarily the best way to evaluate what a student has earned. If you feel that your test scores do not reflect your learning let us talk about it and see what can be done to make up for that deficiency. Please note that this window of opportunity closes by the end of the seventh (7) week of the quarter!!

GOOD LUCK AND DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL ON ME FOR HELP OR JUST TO SHARE IDEAS.