# GIM Middle East Syllabus

Winter 2017

**Tuesdays, 6:30 – 9:30 PM**

Professor Karen Hunt Ahmed

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Office hours: Jacobs Center, room 5234,

Tuesday 5:30 – 6:15 or by appointment

**GIM Program Objectives**

The GIM Program enables Kellogg students to:

* Gain an understanding of the economic, political, social, and culture characteristics of a country or region outside the United States.
* Learn about key business trends, industries, and sectors in a country or region outside the United States.
* Conduct international business research on a topic of interest.
* Further develop teamwork and leadership skills.

**Course Description and Objectives**

The region known as the Middle East, with particular emphasis on the political and economic alliance of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, has grown exponentially over the past forty years. From its roots as a sparsely inhabited desert region to a major global center for energy, financial and consumer commerce, the rise of the Middle East has profound implications for international business. This class will introduce students to the cultural, political and economic history of the region and its rise to power. In-class readings and discussions will be supplemented by in-country (region) research and meeting opportunities.

Objectives:

* Gain a working knowledge of the history and politics of the Middle East as it pertains to business opportunities in the region.
* Gain a working knowledge of the economic climate of the region, with particular emphasis on GCC countries.
* Gain a working knowledge of the culture and society of the region, especially as it pertains to tourism, consumer markets and expatriate life.
* Provide opportunities to interact with organizations in the region to further hands-on knowledge of the region.
* Research topics of interest in depth, supplemented by in-country research opportunities.

**Attendance Policy**

Due to the nature of the GIM program, attendance for all GIM classes is mandatory, as is participation in the 10--day field trip. Attendance on the first day of class is also mandatory. If a student misses more than one class throughout the term, one letter grade will be deducted from his or her final grade. Exceptions may be made by the faculty member in cases of extreme circumstances.

**Role of the In-Country Advisor**

Throughout your GIM trip, you will be accompanied by an in-country advisor, Matthew Temple, who is a staff member at Kellogg. The in-country advisor is responsible for the integrity and quality of the in-country experience. Among other logistical roles during the trip, he or she will be assessing each student’s level of participation during the plenary meetings and will be assigning 15% of the students’ overall grade.

**Kellogg Honor Code**

The students of the Kellogg School of Management regard honesty and integrity as qualities essential to the practice and profession of management. The purpose of the Kellogg Honor Code is to promote these qualities so that each student can fully develop his or her individual potential. Upon admission, each student makes an agreement with his or her fellow students to abide by the Kellogg Honor Code. Students who violate the Kellogg Honor Code violate this

agreement and must accept the sanction(s) imposed by the Kellogg community.

The Kellogg Honor Code is administered by students and is based on the concept of self-government. The efficacy of such a student-administered honor code is dependent upon a high degree of dedication to the ideals of honesty, integrity and equal opportunity reflected by the code. The Kellogg Honor Code requires that each student act with integrity in all Kellogg activities and that each student hold his or her peers to the same standard. In agreeing to abide

by the code, the Kellogg students also agree to report suspected violations. By not tolerating lapses in honesty and integrity, the Kellogg community affirms the importance of these values.

**Course Materials**

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| **Books:** |
| Arabian Sands, Wilfred Theisiger |
| Dubai & Co., Aamir Rehman |
| Contemporary Islamic Finance, Karen Hunt Ahmed |
| \*\*Articles and cases will be assigned and posted as appropriate; Typical reading assignment will be about 60-100 pages per week. |
| **Please note**: I plan to have 3 guest speakers this quarter. I am in the process of confirming them so dates may change as needed. Assignments will be finalized before Winter Break. |

**Course Schedule and Assignments**

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| **Week 1** | **January 3, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Introduction to Culture of the Middle East |
| *Assignment* | Read: Arabian Sands |
| *\*\*Please Note* | Weekly topics are subject to change based on speaker availability. |

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| **Week 2** | **January 10, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Political Climate |
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| *Assignments:* | TBD; \*\*Schedule IPG meetings for Week 3 |

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| **Week 3** | **January 17, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Oil/Energy |
| *Speaker:* |  |
| *Assignments:* | TBD |
| *Additional:* | Project Proposals due |

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| **Week 4** | **\*January 31, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Financial Centers and Islamic Finance |
| *Speaker:* |  |
| *Assignments:* | TBD |

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| **Week 5** | **February 7, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Real Estate |
| *Speaker:* |  |
| *Assignments:* |
| *Additional:* | Background Research Review due |

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| **Week 6** | **\*February 21, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Consumer Markets |
| *Speaker:* | Aamir Rehman (subject to confirmation) |
| *Assignments:* | Read: Dubai & Co.; \*\*Schedule IPG meetings for Week 7 |

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| **Week 7** | **February 28, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Tourism/Transportation |
| *Assignments:* | TBD |
| *Additional:* | In-country research plan |

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| **Week 8** | **March 7, 2017** |
| *Topics:* | Media and Education; Open topic of interest |
| *Assignments:* | TBD |
| *Additional:* | Final plans for trip |

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| **In-Country Field Research - March 14th – March 22nd** |

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| **Week 9** | **[Tentative date 4/5/17]** |
| *Topics:* | Debrief of In-Country Experience; IPG presentations |
| *Speaker:* |  |
| *Assignments:* | Final project presentations; written report, peer evaluations, and IPG database google sheet information due at 9 AM |

**In-Country Academics**

Students are reminded that GIM is first and foremost an academic program. 15% of your overall grade will be based on your participation in the plenary meetings and engagement in other activities as assessed by the in-country advisor. In order to achieve a high grade, students are expected to not only attend all plenary meetings, but to be actively engaged during the meetings and other learning opportunities in country.

**Assessment**

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| **Research Project** | **70%** |
| Background Research | 10% |
| In-Country Research Plan | 10% |
| In-Class Presentation | 10% |
| Written Report | 25% |
| Peer Evaluation | 12% |
| IPG Database Google Sheet | 3% |
| **Participation** | **30%** |
| In-Class Participation (attendance, discussion, engagement) | 15% |
| In-Country Participation (plenary meeting participation, student role, overall participation; determined by GIM advisor) | 15% |

**GIM Research Project**

The core of the GIM class is an independent research project. Groups of 4 to 6 students will select an international business, economic or management issue on which to study in depth and present. The students begin secondary research at the start of the course, incorporating perspectives from the class readings and speakers. They will also spend considerable time in-country speaking with resident experts, gathering local data, and testing their hypotheses and recommendations in the field. In general, the project should be based on original research that contributes to an intellectual body of work but also strives to have practical applications for the market.

*(Students must schedule at least* ***five*** *IPG meetings throughout their trip with* ***at least*** *one meeting in every city that class visits on a business day. Students are not obligated to schedule meetings in cities that the class visits only for the weekend.)*

***Research Topics***

Student teams typically develop their own research projects, though they will refine their topics with the help and advice of their faculty member. Good GIM projects are generally built around interesting, clear, and relatively narrow research topics. Some titles from successful projects from recent years have included “How Uniqlo’s Brand Positioning and Marketing Strategy Allow the Company to Thrive in China’s Fast Fashion Market” and Expanding Wine Sales to Middle-Class Brazilians: A Proposal to Concha Y Toro.” Weak GIM projects often have excessively broad or unfocused topics such as “An Overview of the Brazilian Beverage Industry.”

***Project Report Structure***

Final reports should be at least fifteen pages in length, excluding exhibits. Groups may choose from the following report formats:

* Traditional analytical research paper – A research question is described; competing answers to the question are discussed; evidence collected on the trip is used to argue for or against the alternative answers.
* Industry analysis – A particular industry is surveyed in order to examine a narrowly focused, well-defined topic pertaining to the competitive dynamics of the industry. An example would be an analysis of a market entry opportunity presented to a foreign multinational.
* Business recommendation report – A consulting report recommending specific strategic, operational and organizational actions to solving a clearly defined business issue (e.g.: strategies for overcoming cold-chain logistics and distribution challenges in India.).
* Business or industry case study – A case for eventual classroom use developed with a clear underlying business question in mind. Teams pursuing this option are encouraged to work with Case Publishing before and after the trip to ensure a high quality product that may eventually be used in the classroom.

***Project Deliverables***

* **Research Project Proposal** – Each project group will submit a 2-page description of their proposed research topic, including:
  + A description of the specific and narrowly-focused research question(s) to be addressed
  + Description of the topic’s importance, timeliness, economic, or social significance
  + Identification of possible in-country visits with companies, governmental agencies, NGOs, etc.
* **Background Research Review** – Before departing for the in-country portion of the class, each project team must submit a review examining secondary information relevant to its research topic. This review may serve as a first draft of the background section of the final project report.
* **In-Country Plan** – This is a detailed matrix of five or more investigative research meetings arranged in country. The best plans will include day/time/location of meeting; name/description of organization; name/title/bio of interviewee; agenda and interview guide for each meeting.
* **In-Class Presentation** – During the final class, each project group will make a presentation in class summarizing their research findings. The purpose of this deliverable is to allow faculty members and students to learn about and provide feedback on the project groups’ final findings. It is suggested that each team be given 15 minutes to present and 5 minutes for audience questions and suggestions.
* **Written Report** – The final report, generally 20-25 pages long before exhibits and appendices, prepared according to one of the formats discussed above. In addition to turning in their papers to their professors, students should submit an electronic copy to the Global Programs Office on the agreed upon date.
* **Peer Evaluation** – Each member within the project group will assess every other member’s contributions to the project, including their own, with a confidential peer review form that takes into account each member’s intellectual contribution, initiative and organization, workload contribution and overall contribution.
* **IPG Database Google Sheet** – Maintained by the Global Programs’ Office, the IPG Database Google Sheet serves as a repository for IPG contact information shared amongst GIM students. About a week before final reports are due, the GPO will be sending out a link to the sheet for each IPG group to fill out with information about their contacts. Please note that the requirement for filling out the google sheet is due at the same time as the written report.