Syllabus

Introduction to Arab Culture: Race, Ethnicity and Gender Issues
AAPTIS 331
Winter 2010

Semester Credits:  4
Instructor:   Prof. Raji Rammuny (raram@umich.edu)
Class Time:  MW, Section 1 LEC; 3:00-4:00 pm, Auditorium 4, MLB
MW, Section 2 DIS; 4:00-5:00 pm, Ashley Bisutti
MW, Section 3 DIS; 4:00-5:00 pm, Frank Castiglione
MW, Section 4 DIS; 5:00-6:00 pm, Ashley Bisutti
MW, Section 5 DIS; 5:00-6:00 pm, Sarah Mirza
MW, Section 6 DIS; 6:00-7:00 pm, Mary Ismail
MW, Section 7 DIS; 6:00-7:00 pm, Sarah Mirza
MW, Section 8 DIS; 4:00-5:00 pm, Mary Ismail
MW, Section 9 DIS, 6-:00-7:00 pm, David Hughes
MW, section 10 DIS.4.00-5.00 pm, David Hughes

Office Hours:  Prof.Raji M. Rammuny MW 2:00-3:00 pm
GSIs Office Hours

I.  Course Description

This course will offer a general mosaic survey of the linguistic, geographical, historical, social, religious, cultural, and artistic aspects of the modern Arab world. Special attention will be given to the Arabic language, family, gender relations, the Arab experience in the U.S., Arab American relations, the role of the past and of social change, and Arab art and music. A good deal of the course is specifically intended to increase students' sensitivity to racial bias and sharpen awareness of multicultural issues. Ideally, the course is intended to increase tolerance and understanding by providing students with a realistic view of the cultural contours of the modern Arab World and the richness of the Arab cultural heritage. The course material will be explored through lectures and videos supported by listening and viewing guides in addition to discussions based upon the assigned readings and lectures. There will be emphasis on developing effective outlining, writing, and oral presentation skills, as well as the responsible use of resources, including Internet researching. Moreover, the course is accompanied by an interactive web-site utilizing the University of Michigan's Course Tools software. All resources will be web-based, and students will post some of their assignments to the web. Grades will be based upon class attendance and participation, weekly short essays, and a final paper.  

This course satisfies the Humanities requirement, the Race and Ethnicity requirement and the Upper Level Writing Requirement.

11.  A Welcome Note

We would like to extend our warmest welcome to you and say ahlan wa sahlan (Arabic for “welcome”). We are in for an exciting semester and are sincerely looking forward to guiding you in the exploration of one of the world’s richest cultures. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns please do not hesitate to speak with the course instructor, Professor Raji Rammuny or the GSIs.

III.  Expectations

Read this document thoroughly. You are responsible for all information contained herein, and familiarizing yourself with its contents will help you successfully perform up to the standards set by the instructor. Every student is expected to complete all assigned readings for each unit prior to
the lectures, submit all assignments on time, regularly attend class, participate in classroom discussion, and make use of the interactive Course Tools web site. For every two unexcused absences, the student’s attendance and participation grade (10 points) will be dropped by one point. If you have questions or need clarification on any of these points, please ask.

IV. Goals:
Students who successfully complete this course can be expected to have:
1. Acquired general knowledge and realistic view of the linguistic, geographic, historical, social, cultural, political, and artistic aspects of the Arab world today;
2. Learned to interpret specific cultural, religious, and social customs involved in Arab-Muslim behavior and practices;
3. Raised their consciousness regarding diversity, stereotyping, and prejudice;
4. Developed analytical study skills, including critical reading, use of Internet resources and listening, outlining and note taking, as well as effective writing and public speaking.

V. Course Structure
Generally, we will divide our meeting time equally between lecture, viewing, and discussion. On Mondays, we will spend the first hour in lecture with the second hour devoted to discussion. On Wednesdays, we will view a video selection for the week’s unit and devote the second hour to discussion. It is imperative that all students bring a copy of the unit’s Listening Guide and Viewing Guide to each class session. These documents are available on the Course Tools web site (see below) and should be printed out to be filled out by students in class.

VI. Course Grade:
1. Written reports 70%
2. Term project 20%
3. Attendance, participation in class discussion, & use of interactive web sites. 10%

VII. The Course Tools Web Site:
1. There is no course pack for this course. All assigned readings are available on the AAPTIS 331 Course Tools web site located at https://ctools.umich.edu/. Only students on the current class list of AAPTIS 331 will be able to access this site. Your name will automatically be added to this list upon registration. All you need to log onto the site is your unique name and UMICH (Kerberos) password.

2. Features of the Course Tools Web Site:
The Course Tools web site is very user-friendly and intuitive and should be very easy to navigate once you become familiar with some of its basic features:
• The web-site is designed to provide you with a whole range of resources such as audio/video files and URL’s of Internet sites relevant to each week’s topic as well as the links to your assigned readings. These resources are listed under the resources option in the menu bar.
• All announcements will be posted on the web site, so it is a good idea to check it often.
• The schedule option in the menu bar gives you a calendar-view of all class sessions, due dates, and events.
• The assignment option is one of the most important items in the menu bar. You should check it every Wednesday for your next assignment and relevant links.
• Students have the opportunity to create a personal profile in the participants feature. This information will be accessible to everyone on the class list and will facilitate communication between instructors and students as well as amongst students.

VIII. Assignments (all deadlines are final – no exceptions are made):

1. Weekly Reports
The weekly report should demonstrate students having assimilated the material presented in lectures, videos and readings as well as the online-resources offered. They make up the greatest portion of the course grade, as no exams will be given for this material. They ascertain that work for the course is evenly distributed throughout the semester. For this reason, it is crucial that each assignment be turned in on time. If you have questions, bring them up during discussion or through email correspondence with your GSI before the submission of the paper.

While there are thirteen units in the semester, only seven written reports are required. Your essay should be at least 2-3 pages (about 700 words) long. Each report may be done twice, an initial draft and a final draft. This is meant to improve writing skills, and you are encouraged to submit both. The initial draft is due the Monday after the unit is completed; it will be evaluated with comments provided throughout. The final draft, if needed, is due the following Monday. It will be graded and this new grade, if an improvement, will replace the old one. If no final draft is turned in, the grade for the initial draft will stand as is. Students are especially encouraged to utilize this opportunity for revision in addition to individually consulting with your instructor or GSI for assistance and guidance in composition. If a student submits more than 7 reports, we’ll select the best 7.

Note that this system is fairly flexible, but that flexibility includes a responsibility. Written assignments are due on time; late assignments will be corrected, but not graded. No one will be tracked down and reminded to submit their work.

All papers should conform to the following guidelines: typed in double-space with a 12 pt. font and 1” margins. You should include your name, class number, date, unit topic, and assignment number in the upper right-hand corner of the paper.

You can access samples of “A” papers under the resource list for the first day of class to orient yourself to the style required. Do remember that you must cite your sources for the weekly report and your final project (see below) as this will count towards the style-component of your grade. You are also encouraged to consult one of the two manuals of style used for this class:
• University of Chicago The Chicago Manual of Style, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982- (There are many editions in the campus libraries, but the reference sections have the latest edition).

Weekly reports will be graded on the following 10-point scale:
• Content: 3 points
• Organization / Structure: 2 points
• Mechanics: 2 points
• Analysis: 3 points
Point totals will be converted into a letter grade as follows:

- 9.7-10  A+  8.7-8.9  B+  7.7-7.9  C+  6.7-6.9  D+
- 9.3-9.6  A  8.3-8.6  B  7.3-7.6  C  6.3-6.6  D
- 9.0-9.2  A-  8.0-8.2  B-  7.0-7.2  C-  6.0-6.2  D-

What makes an ‘A’ paper?
Generally, papers receiving a grade of ‘A’ display the following characteristics:

a. **Content**: The topic is appropriate for the assignment and all the important points of the material are covered. It is apparent that the writer has understood and assimilated the material.

b. **Structure and Organization**: It is clear that the topic is well thought out and carefully developed with effective and appropriate supporting detail. The paper fully anticipates reader needs in terms of organization and presentation of information, and the formal elements of introduction, body and conclusion are easily identifiable. A thesis statement is presented, developed, and supported with appropriate main and sub-points, and the flow of ideas is logical and fluid.

c. **Mechanics**: Correct grammatical structures are used throughout and there are no or very few faults with respect to spelling, punctuation or presentation. Sentences are clear and well constructed, and mastery of standard paragraphing technique is apparent. It is obvious that the writer has command of standard literary English as used in academic papers, and employs language that is appropriate for the topic, purpose and reader.

d. **Analysis**: The paper synthesizes and interprets important points, constructs new ideas or perspectives on the topic at hand, or creatively articulates ideas in a novel or synthetic interpretive context.

2. **Final Paper**

Your final project of **10 –12 pages** is considered a **research** paper with a short **bibliography** that reflects the additional work you have done on one of the weekly topics that especially caught your interest. While it is meant to be an extension of any of the ten weekly reports already written, a mere quantitative expansion should be avoided in favor of a more qualitative enhancement based on research and critical thinking.
IX. Class Schedule:

INTRODUCTION
Wed. 1/6: Orientation

UNIT 1
Mon. 1/11 Lecture: The Arabs – A Historical Survey

Wed. 1/13 Video: The Arabs Now

Mon. 1/18 Martin Luther King Day. No Classes. University Symposia

UNIT 2
Wed. 1/20 Lecture: Stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims.

Paper #1 Due

Mon. 1/25 Video: Reel Bad Arabs

UNIT 3
Wed. 1/26 Lecture: The Arabic Language

Paper #2 Due
Assignment: Research on Arab countries

UNIT 4
Mon. 2/1 Lecture: Geography of the Diverse Arab World

Paper #3 & Revision of Paper #1 Due

Wed. 2/3 Student Geography Presentations

UNIT 5
Mon. 2/8 Lecture: Islam (Religious influence on Arab culture)

Paper #4 & Revision of Paper #2 Due

Wed. 2/10 Video: God’s Warriors

UNIT 6
Mon. 2/15 Lecture: Arab-Islamic Civilization (Influence on West)

Paper #5 & Revision of Paper #3 Due

Wed. 2/17 Video: Islam: Empire of Faith

UNIT 7
Mon. 2/22 Lecture: Arab Family and Customs (Diverse ethnic practices)

Paper #6 & Revision of Paper #4 Due

Wed. 2/24 Coffee Hour: Arab Cuisine (Sample sweets and recipes)
UNIT 8
Mon. 3/8  Lecture: Arab Women (Gender issues)
         *Paper #7 & Revision of Paper #5 Due*
Wed. 3/10 Video: Women and Islam; In Our Own Skin

UNIT 9
Mon. 3/15 Lecture: Arab-Americans (Cultural and Ethnic Diversity)
         *Paper #8 & Revision of Paper #6 Due*
Wed. 3/17 Video: Arabs in America (Cultural and ethnic diversity)

UNIT 10
Mon. 3/22 Lecture: Politics in the Arab World (Identity versus religious issues)
         *Paper #10 & Revision of Paper #8 Due*
Wed. 3/24 Guest Lecturer

UNIT 11
Mon. 3/29 Lecture: Arab American Relations (Conflicting perceptions)
         *Paper #11 & Revision of Paper #9 Due*
Wed. 3/31 Video: Frontline video
         Assignment: Student research of ethnic groups

UNIT 12
Mon. 4/5 Student Presentations: Minorities in the Arab World
         *Paper #9 & Revision of Paper #7 Due*
Wed. 4/7 Guest Lecturer: Prof. Moulouk Berry “Shi’a”

UNIT 13
Mon. 4/12 Lecture: Arab Art and Music (Arab conceptions of Art & Music)
         *Paper #12* & Revision of Paper #10 Due
Wed. 4/14 Video: Musical Instruments of the Arab World

ARAB DANCES: DABKI LESSON
Mon. 4/19 Coffee Hour: Arab Food and Recipes
         Group debriefing on the Arab Culture Course
         *Paper #13* & Revision of Paper #11

Friday. 4/23 Final paper due - 4:00 PM

*Note: No revisions for Papers #12 and Paper #13*
A SPECIAL NOTE:

All work submitted for this course must be original with the student in whose name it is submitted. Essays written for another course, or to be submitted for another course, are not acceptable without the express consent of the instructors involved. Please read the College's Code of Academic Conduct on plagiarism. You are responsible for making yourself familiar with this document: you may access it on the web at: wwwlsa.umich.edu/saa/publications/bulletin/chapter4/conduct.html. As a rule of thumb for the purposes of this course: if you draw three or more consecutive words from a source, credit it. If you draw a major idea from another source, even if you paraphrase it, credit it. We have our ideas and our integrity to share with one another, and if we do not in fact have these, we do not have a University.