Honors 2130 Great Ideas of the East

Syllabus

Echoes of Religion and Shadows of Culture in Middle Eastern Women’s Literature

Spring 2015

Instructors:  Dr. Ryan Thomas
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Meeting Times: 10:30 am - 11:20 am MWF

Location: Stewart Library 227

Introductory Description: This course explores the ways in which the cultural and religious doctrines and practices of sexual difference in the Middle East are reflected in women’s literature and film. The class periods will consist of thematic discussions based upon the assigned readings and films that will allow us to consider Middle Eastern women’s personal, social and ecclesiatical boundaries, and the impact of those cultural and religious constrictions on women’s perceptions of purpose and possibilities.

Texts:


Other Course Materials:

There will be handouts that contain scriptural passages, short stories and poems that will be available through Canvas.
**Supplemental Texts:** (These are not required, but I will be drawing from them in our class discussions and they may prove helpful in writing your papers.


**Learning Objectives:** The student should:

1. Understand Middle Eastern women’s literary reflections of their religious and cultural practices and history as depicted in the assigned reading and cinema.

2. Understand the meta-religious ideas that are reflected in the cultural traditions of Islam and Judaism and the tensions which women within those cultures feel between personal freedom, religious orthodoxy and public and private dissent.

3. Analyze and develop personal and social policy positions about how to approach Middle Eastern women’s issues with free expression and religiosity within Islam and Judaism. These positions and policies should be informed through an understanding of the religious, artistic, cultural and social histories of Islam and Judaism.
4. Express original ideas drawn from your study of the women’s perspectives on the religious and cultural traditions of Islam and Judaism in an article written for a peer audience.

**Grading Rubric:** The following grading rubric will be used to assign grades for each class assignment or paper. Each dimension of described in this rubric has a possible score of 10, which reflects the scores on the two five point scales embedded in each rubric description.

**10 pts. Critical Thinking**
Demonstrates (excellence, proficiency, adequacy, limitations, deficiency) in analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information and ideas from multiple perspectives. (Consistently, Usually, Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely) demonstrates the ability to solve problems, argue logically, apply scholarly and scientific methods, use terminology accurately, and employ information literacy skills.

**10 pts. Knowledge Integration**
Demonstrates (excellence, proficiency, adequacy, limitations, deficiency) in fusing information and concepts from multiple disciplines for personal, professional and civic enhancement. (Consistently, Usually, Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely) demonstrates the ability to evaluate critically one’s own views and those of others and the ability to assess, judge and compare diverse fields of knowledge.

**10 pts. Social Responsibility**
Demonstrates (excellence, proficiency, adequacy, limitations, deficiency) in historical and ethical reasoning and in knowledge of contemporary social and ethical issues. (Consistently, Usually, Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely) demonstrates knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are conducive to responsible civic engagement.

10 pts. Diversity and Effective Communication
Demonstrates (excellence, proficiency, adequacy, limitations, deficiency) in understanding and conveying ideas in diverse contexts, through reading, writing, speaking and listening. (Consistently, Usually, Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely) demonstrates the ability to use resources, technology and skills appropriate to the aural, visual and/or language arts.
10 pts. Civic and Historical Literacy and Social Understanding
Demonstrates (excellence, proficiency, adequacy, limitations, deficiency) in understanding the history, foundational principles, economics, and politics of the countries discussed in the course. Demonstrates (excellence, proficiency, adequacy, limitations, deficiency) in understanding humans, their behavior, and their interaction with and within their physical, social, local and global environments.

Accommodations: If any student feels that they need an accommodation to deal with any of the expectations of this course, they are invited to visit with the instructor or to contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, 181 Student Services Building, 801.626.6413.

Assessment and Grading: All assessment will be based upon participation in class discussions, written work and participation in a class service project. You will be required to complete a 1-2 page review for each movie that we view. The reviews will comprise 10% of your grade. You will be required to write two book reviews of 2-5 pages. These reviews will comprise 10% of your grade. The primary source of the grade for this class will be a paper, written in the form of an article, which presents a novel idea that is informed by some aspect of religious orthodoxy and free expression within Islam. At mid-semester, a first draft of the paper will be required and a grade will be assigned. The final grade will consist of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film Reviews</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Reviews</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Review of Paper</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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Method for continuing Class in the event of an Extended Disruption: With the continuing threat of pandemic Flu or other disruption, we need to consider some ways to continue class in the event that normal class meetings cannot be conducted for some period of time. I will use Canvas to support the distribution of all class materials, including handouts. In the event that we cannot meet in class for an extended time, we will stay in touch via Canvas and I will look at
recording some instructional materials that we can use in lieu of lectures. The submission of the article proposal, first draft and final draft of the articles, as well as the peer review could all be dealt with through Canvas.

**Academic Honesty and Classroom Deportment:** This class will involve discussions of potentially sensitive issues. Everyone in the class is expected to be respectful and civil. The policy on plagiarism is simple: **don’t - cheating will have consequences that may include failing the class.**

**Schedule:**

**Week 1-2: Introduction to Women in the Middle East**
- Handouts

**Week 3-5: AFGHAN WOMEN'S LITERATURE**
- Film: *Syrian Bride*

**Week 6-8: ISRAILI WOMEN’S LITERATURE**
- Film: *The Lemon Tree*

**Week 9-11: IRANIAN WOMEN’S LITERATURE**

**Week 13-15: ALGERIAN WOMEN’S LITERATURE**
- Handouts

**Additional Dates:**
The dates for the book and film reviews will be one week after the completion of the film or book. The first draft of your paper and the peer review will be due in weeks 9-11 on dates that will be identified. The final paper will be due on April 30.