

Arab Cultures in Film & Music

WLLC 3100

Spring 2020

Class	Monday and Wednesday	2:00 - 3:20 pm in LANG 210
Instructor	Caroline Najour	
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Office	LANG 401 L	
Office Hours	Fridays: 8:00 am to 10:00 am & 12.00 - 2.00 pm & by appointment	

Course Description

This course will explore Arab modern histories and cultures through the lens of film and music. Students will examine the roots of some of the most prominent social, cultural, political, and gendered norms often attributed to the Arab World. Through the medium of movies and songs, students will explore the many nuanced layers of intersectionality and major influencers, with a particular focus on the powerful role women have played and continue to play in the region. The class will listen to the celebrated works of legendary female singers like the Lebanese Fairuz and Egyptian Umm Kulthum to understand their lasting cultural significance. Diverse materials from across the region will help students move past any misconceptions of uniformity in the Arab world. From Saudi Arabic, Lebanon, to Egypt and beyond, students will enhance their global competencies and reflect upon the varied life experiences of people from around the Arab World.

Students of this course will be attending a talk of Prof. Nadjé Al-Ali, entitled “Reflections on Politics and Gender in the Middle East.”

Prerequisite

There are no prerequisites for this course. No knowledge of Arabic is required as all the movies will have English subtitles. Also, no knowledge of music is required.

Required Texts

There are no required texts for this course. Supplemental readings and links to movies, songs, and websites will be on Canvas. Students are required to watch the movies outside of class.

Texts and Course Materials

Students will watch the following movies and documentaries, available mostly online through the UNT library:

"Write Down, I am an Arab"
"The Insult"
"Nasser 56"
"Umm Kulthum, A Voice Like Egypt"
"Yacoubian Building"
"Kaptain Raed"
"Ghadi"
"Hassan wa Morkos"
"Where Do We Go Now"
"Scheherazade, Tell Me a Story"
"Cairo 678"
"Baraka meets Baraka"
"Amreeka"

Learning Objectives:

This course fulfills the CLASS requirement for Diversity and Global Issues. At the end of this course, students should be able to do at least three of the following: 1. Identify the origins, influences, and limits of one's own cultural heritage. 2. Demonstrate the ability to learn from and empathize with perspectives and experiences different from one's own. 3. Show an understanding of the interrelationships of the self, local society, and global environments. 4. Describe the impacts of complex, worldwide systems. 5. Explain the reasoning for one's ethical responsibilities within worldwide systems.

- Developing global competence and understanding and appreciating different perspectives by learning about the history, economy, values, beliefs and practices of the Arab world.
- Learning about powerful, public roles Arab women have played.
- Analyzing the form and content of movies.
- Developing research skills.

Grade Distribution

Attendance, Participation and Preparation (15%)

- You are expected to attend all classes and to show up to class well prepared. Your daily attendance and participation grade will be on a scale from 1 to 5. It will be posted on Canvas after each class, so make sure to check Canvas daily to see how well you are doing.
- This is a student-centered class, so most of the class time will be discussions and activities in a collaborative format. To participate actively, you need to watch the required movie before class. If for any reason, you have been unable to prepare for class adequately, make sure to inform your instructor beforehand.

- In case of an absence, please inform your instructor **before and not after the class you will be missing**. The grade for that day's participation will be a "0." The lowest two grades for attendance and participation will not be counted when calculating the final grade at the end of the semester.
- Students are responsible for any class work, homework and for any announcement made during their absence.
- To receive a grade of 5 on participation, students must:
 - come on time, having watched the movie or read anything that was assigned
 - abstain from checking their phones, remain on task, and actively engage in all class activities
- Attendance and participation grades will be deducted for tardiness as follows:
 - Arrival during first 10 mins. of class = 1 Pt.
 - During first 20 mins. = 2 Pts.
 - During first 30 mins. = 3 Pts.
 - During first 40 mins. = 4 Pts
 - If you arrive more than 40 mins. late for class you will receive a "0" for that day's class participation.

Quizzes (25%)

- A short quiz will be given at the beginning of each session when watching a new movie has been assigned in preparation for class.
- The Lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Midterm (10%)

- The midterm will cover films and readings discussed from the beginning of the semester until the midterm. It consists of a short essay that will demonstrate your understanding of the movies discussed.

Presenting a movie and leading class discussion (10 %)

- The assignment involves working in groups of four. All members of the group will receive the same grade.
- Your group will decide on a movie, share a list of questions about the movie you would like your classmates to work on as homework one week before your presentation, start the session with a 10 - 15 minute introduction, and be in charge of the activities and class discussion of the movie throughout the session.
- Write the names of members of your group and the film you have chosen to work on on the google doc "Movie Presentations" on Canvas by the end of Week 3.
- Students need to schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss their presentation at least a week prior to the presentation date.

Creating a short movie (20%)

- Students will work in small groups of two or three to film a 15-minute short movie that explores some of the political, historical, and/or social issues discussed in class. The short movie is due at the end of Week 14; detailed instructions will be provided before spring break. This short movie must highlight students' understanding of the perspectives and experiences of people from the Arab world they have learned about in class.

Final research paper (20 %)

- The final research paper must be a minimum of 10 double spaced pages (font 12) in which students will examine a prominent social, cultural, or political issue reflected upon in one or several of Arab movies. It will require research and a bibliography.

Grade distribution:

Attendance, Participation and Preparation: 15 %

Quizzes: 25 %

Midterm: 10%

Movie presentation (leading class discussion): 10 %

Short movie group project 20 %

Final paper 20 %

Grading Scale

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

List of Major graded Assignments

Week 1: No quizzes

Week 2: Quiz 1

Week 3: Quiz 2

Week 4: Quiz 3

Week 5: Quiz 4
Week 6: Quiz 5
Week 7: Quiz 6
Week 8: Midterm
Week 9: Quiz 7
Week 10: Spring break
Week 11: Quiz 8
Week 12: Quiz 9
Week 13: Quiz 10
Week 14: Short movie group project due
Week 15: Final research paper due
Week 16: No quizzes

Preliminary course outline

This is a preliminary course outline subject to change. Detailed weekly schedules will be posted on Canvas.

Week 1	Introduction to major pertinent historical and social issues
Weeks 2-3	The Palestinian-Israeli conflict and its repercussions Films: "Write Down, I am an Arab" "The Insult"
Weeks 4- 7	Arab Nationalism, and realities after independence: Films: "Nasser 56" "Yacoubian Building" "Kaptain Raed" Umm Kulthum: Her life, legacy and relationship to Arab Nationalism Film: "Umm Kulthum, a Voice like Egypt"
Week 8	Fairuz: Her life and legacy
Week 9-10	Religion and Religious conflicts Films: "Ghadi" "Hassan wa Morkos" "Where Do We Go Now"

Weeks 11-13	<p>Women in Arab Societies</p> <p>Films: "Scheherazade, Tell Me a Story"</p> <p>"Cairo 678"</p> <p>"Baraka meets Baraka"</p>
Week 14	<p>Struggles of Arab Immigrants</p> <p>Film: "Amreeka"</p>
Weeks 15-16	Current social issues in alternative Arab music

Here is a list of important links:

Office of the Registrar— Spring 2020 Registration Guide

<http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide>

This is a link to important dates for adding, dropping, withdrawing, and so forth.

Undergraduate Catalog

<http://catalog.unt.edu/>

This is a link to the official catalog for all undergraduate students.

UNT Policy Manual

<http://policy.unt.edu/policy-by-number/1>

This is a link to the official policy manual for faculty and students.

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

Disability Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class.

Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs:

http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT's Student Advocate and she can be reached through email at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help

[1] This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.