

INST 4850-001/5500

Instructor: Dr. Özlem Altıok

Fall 2019

Office: GAB 468

Monday & Wednesday 2-3.20 pm

Email: Ozlem.Altiok@unt.edu

Classroom: GAB 310

Office hours: M 1-2 pm, and by appointment

To access our course on Canvas, log in at <https://unt.instructure.com/>

Course Description and Objectives

This course is a reading intensive course on the modern Middle East, a “cradle of civilization,” located at the juncture of Africa, Asia and Europe. Designed primarily for advanced undergraduate students and graduate students, it covers a wide time span.

We will begin the course with the emergence of Islam in 7th century Arabia, the age of empires, and the important changes of the nineteenth century, which ushered in the period of European colonialism. We will focus on state policies that have limited and/or expanded human rights, and in particular women's rights in the region. In addition to the required books listed below, we will be reading contemporary articles. The countries we will study include Turkey, Iran, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Palestine/Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia.

In addition to the two required books by James Gelvin and Leila Ahmed, you will be reading articles and other pieces most of which are readily available online. I include the URLs in this syllabus for your convenience (see the Weekly Reading Schedule below). If the reading is not specified as Gelvin or Ahmed on this syllabus, and when there is no URL associated with it, you will need to find it under the "Required readings not readily available online" Module on our Canvas page.

Canvas is the learning management software we will use for this course. You can log in at <https://unt.instructure.com/>

Expectations, requirements and grade breakdown

- 1. Attendance and participation (10 points):** You should attend class regularly and be on time.
- 2. Analytical summary (10 points):** Each student submits a summary for only one week's readings the Sunday before our first class meeting for that week.
- 3. Quizzes (20 points):** Two quizzes, 10 points each, on September 25 and October 16
- 4. Midterm exam (20 points):** On October 23 in Sage Hall Room 330

5. Research paper (20 points): Due by 11:59 pm on November 30, 2019

6. Final exam (20 points): Open book, take-home exam, due by 11:59 pm on December 9, 2019

7. Reflection paper required only of graduate students (20 points): Graduate students will need to write a 1200-word paper (approximately 2 single-spaced pages) discussing how what you learned in this course will guide your academic or professional career. More on this below.

A graduate student will need to have 91% of the 120 points out of which they will be evaluated in order to get an A, and 81% of the 120 points to get a B.

Grading scale: I will use numerical scores, which will translate into letter grades as follows:

A (91-100); B (81-90); C (70-80); D (60-69); F (<60)

Please submit your papers using the Assignments tab on our Canvas page

<https://unt.instructure.com/>

Late submission policy: For every day that your paper is late, you will lose 20% of the total points assigned to the paper. In addition to knocking off points, I will likely not provide feedback on the work that is submitted more than a day past the due date. In short, you would be wise to abide by the due dates.

1. Attendance and participation (10 points)

You must attend class regularly, and be on time. You should not miss more than two classes without a legitimate and documented excuse. Here are the highest letter grades you can expect to make in this class if you have the indicated number of unexcused absences:

0-2 absences: A

3-4 absences: B

5-7 absences: C

8-9 absences: D

If there are circumstances that prevent you from regular participation (e.g. travel related to work or a family emergency) talk to me as early as you possibly can, and I will try to make arrangements. Most likely, I will ask that you submit extra work to make up for what you miss. You should read or view the assigned material and be prepared to answer questions in class. The detailed schedule of readings is included in this syllabus.

2. Analytical summaries (10 points)

Each student will submit a critical summary of that week's assigned readings. The student(s) submitting the summary for that week are responsible to lead class discussion.

Your summary should describe the main arguments advanced in each of the assigned reading material.

- Do not just summarize readings. Put the main arguments as you understand them *into your own words*.

- Discuss how each of the assigned readings relate to one another. And how they relate to the material covered in the previous week(s).
- State what you find most convincing, provocative, useful (and if you wish, most unconvincing, dull or useless) in the article/chapter/piece/blog. What idea struck you as being fresh or interesting?
- Ideally, your analytical summary should not exceed 1000 words in length, excluding the name of the author and the title of each of the pieces you discuss. Submit these entries via <https://unt.instructure.com/> using Canvas' Discussion tab for the appropriate week.

These analytical summaries are always due on Sunday by 5 pm, the day before our class meeting on Monday. At the end of your summary, you must pose 2 or 3 critical questions that the reading raises for us as a class. All students are expected to respond to at least one of the questions raised by another student every week (whether or not they submit summary essays for that week). You may also include (very briefly) in your essay what you do not understand or find confusing in the reading. These weekly short reactions should be about 100-500 words, and submitted by noon on Monday.

Your summary must be analytical in the sense that it **should**

- i) demonstrate that you engaged with the arguments presented in the material, and that you can talk intelligently about the strength and weaknesses of those arguments;
- ii) tie back to other readings and class discussions, and to the larger question of how the arguments advanced in the reading enhance your understanding of the issues and challenges in the contemporary Middle East.

Last, but certainly not least, these summaries should use proper English, and be free of spelling and grammar errors. Where relevant, you may link the concepts or examples discussed in the reading to your own life experiences, long-held beliefs, daily practices, etc. Whether or not you submit a summary on a given week, you are expected to complete assigned readings and participate in class discussions every week.

Again, every week, I expect everyone to pose one question or respond to one raised by another student. You should submit these (100-500 word reactions/questions/comments) by noon on the Monday we meet as a class.

3. Quizzes (20 points) September 25 and October 16; the “Weekly Reading Schedule” below lists dates and what each of the quizzes covers.

4. Midterm exam (20 points) Short essays and multiple-choice questions. On October 23 during regular class time in Sage Hall Rm 330.

5. Research paper (20 points) Due on November 30. Decide your general topic by September 29th. Talk to me if you need guidance in picking your topic. These papers should be about 3000

words (~12 double-spaced pages long), and make use of *at least* 5 scholarly sources (books and peer-reviewed publications) and 5 other relevant sources (NGO reports, news articles, etc.)

6. Final exam (20 points) Take home essays, open book, due by 11:59 pm on December 9, 2019.

7. For graduate students only (20 points) Graduate students are expected to submit a 1200-word reflection paper, which can be a general essay linking your existing interests to the concepts and debates (authoritarianism, nation-building projects, state feminism, US foreign policy, Islamism, etc.) covered in this class. Alternatively, it could be more specific and focused. For instance, you could submit a preliminary proposal for your master's thesis. In crafting your reflection paper, refer to some specific concepts and/or themes we discussed, and cite at least three readings from our syllabus.

Office Hours

I will be in my office (GAB 468) between 1 and 2 pm on Mondays. Alternatively, you can email me for an appointment. In addition, if you email me with your questions, I will make every effort to answer them within two business days. As a general rule, do not wait until the last day to ask me a question about an assignment or exam.

Academic Honesty

Trust and honesty are central for learning to occur, and I hope that you do not need a reminder about that. However, in the interest of making expectations clear let me state that I will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Please be aware that you commit plagiarism if you:

- reproduce verbatim (or almost verbatim) another author's words, without using quotation marks and/or without providing a citation; or
- use another's ideas (even if you don't use their precise words) without providing citation.

I adhere to and enforce UNT's policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16 is located at http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf I will address violations of academic integrity in this course in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy. APPEALS: Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16 "Student Standards of Academic Integrity."

Disability Accommodations

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking 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 an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time,

however, ODA notices of 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 accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda> or call 940.565.4323.

UNT Writing Lab

If writing is not your *forte*, and you want to produce well-organized, well-written papers for this class or others, take advantage of the Writing Lab on campus <http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/>

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, know that we have resources to help you. 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. You can contact **Esther D. Oppong, M.S., NCC**, UNT's Student Advocate at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648.

Other useful resources on campus

https://www.unt.edu/sites/default/files/piw_resource_sheet.pdf

Revisions to this syllabus

It is your responsibility to attend class and to follow Canvas announcements to keep abreast of any changes to the reading schedule or assignments. Please make sure that you have managed your Canvas email account such that your Canvas email forwards to the email address you most regularly check.

I may revise the schedule depending on class discussions, contemporary developments, and to accommodate a guest lecturer's schedule. I will give you advance notice of such changes.

Required books

James Gelvin. 2016. *The Modern Middle East*. 4th edition. Oxford University Press.

Leila Ahmed. 1992. *Women and Gender in Islam*. Yale University Press.

Recommended books

Tamim Ansary. 2009. *Destiny Disrupted. A History of the World through Islamic Eyes*.

Nikkie Keddie 2012. *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present*. Princeton University Press.

Weekly reading schedule

Week 1: August 26 (Monday): Approaching our subjects

Readings listed after the “W” will be discussed at our Wednesday meetings:

- **W:** Edward Said. 1979. *Orientalism*. New York, Vintage Books: 1-28, esp. 1-15 (Canvas)
- Cynthia Enloe. 2014 [1989]. Ch. 1. “Gender Makes the World Go Around” in *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* (pages 1-36 posted on Canvas). It may also still be available here: <http://www.omnifoo.info/images/Enloe%20Feminist%20IR.pdf>

Week 2: September 2 (no class on Monday): Introduction to basic beliefs and practices in Islam

- Karen Armstrong. 2002. *Islam: A Short History*. Selected pages posted on Canvas.
- James Gelvin. 2016. Ch. 1 From Late Antiquity to the Dawn of the New Age in *The Modern Middle East*. 4th edition.
- **W:** Lila Abu-Lughod. 2002. “Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others” *American Anthropologist* 104 (3): 783-90 (find via UNT Library's e-resources)

Week 3: September 9: The role of interpretation in the preservation and inscription of the Qur'an

- Leila Ahmed. 1992. Chapters 1 and 2 in *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*, Yale University Press: 1-63.
- Ch. 3 in *Women and Gender in Islam*
- **W:** Decoding the “DNA of Patriarchy” in Muslim Family Laws
<https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/zainah-anwar-ziba-mir-hosseini/decoding-%E2%80%9Cdna-of-patriarchy%E2%80%9D-in-muslim-family-laws>

Week 4: September 16: Founding Islamic discourses, and why they are relevant today

- James Gelvin. Ch 2. Gunpowder Empires
- Leila Ahmed, Ch. 4 & 5
- **W:** Özlem Altıok. 2015. Muslim Family Laws and CEDAW: A Fact Sheet.
<https://socwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/Muslim-Family-Laws.pdf>

Week 5: September 23: The onset of political and economic transformation: 17-18th centuries

- Gelvin. Ch. 3 & 4
- **W:** Leila Ahmed Ch. 6 (about women's lives from 1400-1800)
- Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1993). *Turkish Embassy Letters*. Introduction, esp. xxvi-xxxiv. Read 57-60 (the *hamam*); 69-73 (freedom of movement); 113-20 (visit to Sultana); 133-37 (a happy captive).
- **Quiz #1** on Wednesday, September 25 (over material assigned for August 26 - September 25th)

Week 6: September 30: The question of modernity & a research workshop

On Monday, September 30th, we will meet during regular class time in Willis Library Room 136 for a “Basics of Research” workshop with librarian Doug Campbell. In addition to Gelvin and Ahmed, read the following short pieces ahead of this workshop:

- Writing a research paper https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/research_papers/index.html
- Genre and the research paper https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/common_writing_assignments/research_papers/genre_and_the_research_paper.html
- Writing a research paper <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/PlanResearchPaper.html>
- Ten steps for writing research papers <http://www.american.edu/ocl/asac/upload/ten-steps-for-writing-research-papers.pdf>
- Gelvin. Chapters 5 & 6
- **W:** Gelvin. Chapters 8 & 9
- Leila Ahmed's Ch. 7

Week 7: October 7: From Empires to Nation-States in the 20th c. Middle East: Focus on Egypt

- Gelvin. Read only the section on Egypt in Ch. 12
- Leila Ahmed 8 & 10 (on the Discourse of the Veil and the Divergent Voices in Egyptian politics)
- **W:** Leila Ahmed Ch. 11 & 12 The Struggle for the Future and Conclusion 208-48
- Ruth Michaelson. “Masters with No Universe: The Seething Anger of Egypt's Students Three Years after the Coup” *The Daily Beast*, June 26, 2016 <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/06/27/the-seething-anger-of-egypt-s-students-three-years-after-the-coup.html>

- Egypt – Events of 2018. Human Rights Watch World Report
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/egypt>
- We will watch this film in class: *Feminism Inshallah*

Week 8: October 14: From Empires to Nation-States: Turkey

- James Gelvin. Revisit section on the Young Turks in Ch. 9 and read Chapters 11 & the section on Turkey in Ch.12
- Deniz Kandiyoti. 1991. “Introduction” & especially “End of Empire” in *Women, Islam and the State*, pp. 1-47 (Canvas)
- **W:** Özlem Altıok and Bihter Somersan. 2015. “Building 'a new Turkey': Gender politics and the future of democracy” www.opendemocracy.net (find online)
- Deniz Kandiyoti. 2016. Locating the politics of gender: Patriarchy, neoliberal governance and violence in Turkey. *Research and Policy on Turkey* Vol 1. Issue 2, pages 103-118.
- Turkey: Events of 2017. Human Rights Watch World Report 2018.
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/turkey>

Quiz #2 on Wednesday, October 16 (over material assigned for September 30 - October 16)

Week 9: October 21: From Empires to Nation-States: Iran

- Gelvin. Section on Iran in Ch. 12 and Chapters 16, 17 & 18
- Iran: Events of 2017. HRW <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/iran>
- Mehdi Hasan. 2019. [Here are Five Lies About Iran...](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/oct/06/iran-women-rights-vote-discrimination) *The Intercept*
- Shirin Ebadi. Iran’s Women are not Afraid. *The Guardian*. October 6, 2009
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/oct/06/iran-women-rights-vote-discrimination>
- One Million Signatures Campaign.
<http://www.sign4change.info/english/spip.php?article226>
- Dina Yazdani. 2018. “Women’s Rights in Iran Teeter between Reform and Backlash”
https://www.fairobserver.com/region/middle_east_north_africa/womens-rights-iran-hassan-rouhani-maede-hojabri-dance-news-81712/

Film we will watch in class: *Persepolis*

- **Midterm** on Wednesday, October 23 during regular class time in Sage Hall 330

Week 10: October 28: From Empires to Nation-States: Iraq, Syria and Palestine/Israel

- Gelvin. Chapter 13 & 14
- Zach Beauchamp. 2014. How the US, its allies and its enemies all made ISIS possible. Vox. <http://www.vox.com/2014/8/25/6065529/isis-rise>
- Iraq. Events of 2017. Human Rights Watch World Report 2018.
<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/iraq>

- Syria. Events of 2018. HRW World Report 2019. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/syria>
- Israel/Palestine. Events of 2017. HRW World Report 2018. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/israel/palestine>
- Alix Biggs. 2015. "Gender and peacemaking in Israel-Palestine" <http://www.demosproject.net/if-wed-had-women-wed-have-an-agreement/>
- Recommended films: The Birth of Israel (BBC, 2008) and Anna Baltzer: Life in Occupied Palestine

Week 11: November 4: From Empires to Nation-States: Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states

- Gelvin. Section on Saudi Arabia in Ch 12. Also revisit Gelvin Chapter 16 on oil.
- Madawi Al Rasheed. 2013. *A Most Masculine State: Gender, Politics and Religion in Saudi Arabia*. Cambridge University Press (especially pages 175-186 and 280-295 posted on Canvas).
- Saudi Arabia. Events of 2018. HRW World Report 2019. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/saudi-arabia>
- Rosie Bsheer. 2018. *Jadaliyya*. How Mohammed bin Salman Has Transformed Saudi Arabia <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/37696>
- Rothna Begum. 2018. Middle East's Women are Championing their own Change <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/03/07/middle-easts-women-are-championing-their-own-change>
- Skim → Kuwait: Events of 2017. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/kuwait>

Week 12: November 11: From Empires to Nation-States: Tunisia

- [Yacoubi, Imen](#). 2016. Sovereignty from below: State feminism and politics of women against women in Tunisia. *Arab Studies Journal* Vol. 24, Issue 1: 254-274.
- Tunisia: Events of 2018. Human Rights Watch World Report <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/tunisia>

Week 13: November 18: Contemporary Issues in the Middle East

- Gelvin Ch. 15, 17 and 19 (esp. sections on U.S. Foreign Policy)
- Steven A. Cook. 2018. *Foreign Policy* <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/04/20/america-is-having-a-middle-eastern-identity-crisis/>
- Rod Nordland. 2018. Women are Free and Armed in Kurdish-controlled Northern Syria. *New York Times* <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/24/world/middleeast/syria-kurds-womens-rights-gender-equality.html>
- Short on contemporary alliances & conflicts: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2013/08/26/the-middle-east-explained-in-one-sort-of-terrifying-chart/?utm_term=.cdf8a6fd29f6

Week 14: November 25 (Thanksgiving break Nov 27-December 1): Contemporary Issues: Recent politics in light of the legacies of the past

- Shadi Hamid. 2015. Islamists, the Arab Uprisings, and the Failure of America's Do Nothing Policy in the Middle East. *The Atlantic*
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/middle-east-egypt-us-policy/409537/>
- Camille Baker. 2019. From the Mediterranean to Mexico...
<https://theintercept.com/2019/07/10/mediterranean-migrant-rescue-pia-klemp/>
- Baldwin-Edwards. 2005. IOM. Migration in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Read only the first 29 pages of this 46-page report
https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site/myjahiasite/shared/shared/mainsite/policy_and_research/gcim/rs/RS5.pdf
- Migration to Europe Explained in 7 Charts. 2016 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34131911>
- Michael Kaplan. 2016. "EU Turkey Deal and Non-Syrian Refugees: How Afghans, Iraqis and Somalis are Being Hurt by Agreement" <http://www.ibtimes.com/eu-turkey-deal-non-syrian-refugees-how-afghans-iraqis-somalis-others-could-be-hurt-2340449>

~~ Research papers to be submitted via Turnitin by 11:59 on November 30, 2019 ~~

Week 15: December 2: Reflections and review

Take home finals to be submitted via Canvas by 11:59 on December 9, 2019.

Resources to keep abreast of developments in and around the region

General: BBC, Democracy Now, The New York Times, Le Monde, Der Spiegel, Haaretz, etc.

Critical analysis and commentary: Jadaliyya, The Intercept, Middle East Monitor

Academic journals: International Journal of Middle East Studies, Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies