Instructor: Iman Mersal  
Tues & Thurs, 3:30 - 4:50 PM  
Office: Arts 242C  
Fax: 492-9106  
Place: HC 1 3
Office Hours: Mondays 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM  
Thursday 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
or by appointment

E-mail: imersal@ualberta.ca
Course Website: eClass

Course Prerequisite: none
Course-based Ethics Approval: not required
Community Service learning component: none
Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material available: representative exam material to be distributed in class.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course offers a critical introduction to postcoloniality as represented in expressive culture—literature, cinema, music—of the Arab world. Such culture offers a rich source of representations of the Arab colonial past and post-colonial present, and serves also as a means of introducing students to a variety of topics, theories, and debates within the field of post-colonial studies. The focus will be on four central themes and their implication in identity formation across the Arab world:

1. The Discovery of the West and the Onset of Colonialism.
2. Tradition and Modernity.
3. Colonialism, Post-colonialism, and Questions of Identity.
4. Feminism, Gender, and Sexuality.

During the course of the semester we will read autobiographies, novels, short stories, poetry and intellectuals’ interviews; students will also be introduced to Arab films, TV programs, and music. These materials have been selected not only on the basis of their literary and artistic value, but also their textual, cultural and historical engagement with the four themes. Authors include Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, Rifa’a al-Tahtawi, Naguib Mahfouz, and Salwa Bakr (Egypt); Tayeb Salih (Sudan), Ghassan Kanafani and Mahmoud Darwish (Palestine), Hanan Al-Shaykh (Lebanon), Inaam Kachachi, Buthayna al-Nasiri, Alia Mamdouh and Sargon Boulus (Iraq), Assia Djebar (Algeria).
Students are expected to complete the required readings and viewings in advance, attend every class, and participate fully in classroom discussions in order to receive the maximum participation grade. All readings are drawn from required texts, available in the SUB bookstore, or online, as explained below. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Explore some of the essential questions of modern Arab culture, including issues concerning modernity, traditions, colonialism, identity, and sexuality.
* Formulate and explore relevant new questions on their own.
* Identify the output and significance of some of the most important intellectual, literary, and artistic figures of modern Arab culture.
* Situate different artistic genres, movements, and productions within their respective historical and cultural contexts.

Beyond the scope of MLCS 399, students will enjoy reading texts and watching films from the Arab world, while continuing to ask critical questions about how such expressive culture reflects core social issues, and how it relates to corresponding expressive arts elsewhere in the world.

**Texts:**

**Available in the SUB bookstore:**

2. Tayeb Salih. *Season of Migration to the North.*

**Online required reading:**

4- Mahmoud Darwish’s poems.
5- Sargon Boulus’s poems.
8- Three short stories by Inaam Kachachi, Buthayna al-Nasiri, Alia Mamdouh from (Denys Johnson. *Under The Naked Sky: Short Stories from the Arab World*).
9- Selected poems from Arab female poets.

**Online required films:**

4- *Umm Kulthum, A Voice Like Egypt*. Documentary (1996). Director: Michal Goldman, (67 minutes)
Films (to be shown partly in class)
1 - Mahmoud Darwich - As the Land is the Language. Documentary (1997). Director: Simone Bitton. (60 minutes)

Online optional reading:
4 - Interview with Naguib Mahfouz from The Paris Review, Summer 1992. (23 pages).

Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>January 8</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Unit one: the discovery of the West and the onset of colonialism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>January 10</th>
<th>Required readings: Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, &quot;Marvelous legacies of biographies and events” in Louis Awad: The Literature of Ideas in Egypt, pp.8-24. (online)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Required Reading</td>
<td>Optional Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Unit two: tradition and modernity**

|------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Unit Three: Colonialism, post-colonialism, and questions of identity.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>February 5</th>
<th>Required Reading: Tayeb Salih, <em>Season of Migration to the North</em></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 14</td>
<td>Required Reading: Mahmoud Darwish’s poems. (online).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>Watching in class: Mahmoud Darwich - As the Land is the Language. Documentary (1997). Director: Simone Bitton. (60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 26</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Week - no classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>February 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit Four: Feminism, gender and sexuality in Arab society.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Required Reading: Salwa Bakr. “That Beautiful Undiscovered Voice” pp. 57-70. (online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>March 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Required Reading: Hanan al-Shaykh. The Story of Zahra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>Required Reading: Hanan al-Shaykh. The Story of Zahra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, March 15, Individual meetings (to discuss presentations and final papers)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Required Reading: Hanan al-Shaykh. The Story of Zahra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>Required Watching: West Beirut. (Online). (105 minutes).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
March 28

Guest Lecture: Writer Yasser Abdel latif
Required reading:
Sound Traching (online)
Poems (Online)

Week 13

April 2

Special Lecture on Arab Spring

April 4

Oral presentations

Week 14

April 9

Oral presentations

(*) Instructor may readjust this schedule if needed according to class situation and level.

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation.</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm (February 28).</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two reading reports (Due Feb 16 &amp; March 28).</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation (April 2, 4, and 9).</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper (April 15).</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course requirements:

- Regular class attendance; active participation.
- Completing weekly reading and watching assignments on time, in order to participate in class discussions effectively.
- Every student will be responsible for presenting one of the readings (schedule TBA)
- Midterm, **February 28. 25%**.
- **Two reading reports, 5% and 500 words each.** Each report to answer one of the questions posted by the instructor online. First set of questions will be posted on February 7; the report is due February 16. Second set of questions will be posted March 19; the report is due March 28.
- Individual meetings (to discuss final papers and presentations), **March 15**.
- 15 minute oral presentation on your research paper topic, **April 2, 4, and 9**.
- Paper on your research topic (15 pages, double spaced, 12 pt, 1” margins) elaborating your presentation, based on class readings plus at least 5 additional scholarly sources relevant to
your topic. Citation MLA. The paper is due April 15 before midnight, by email, in both Word and PDF formats. Email subject must be: “<Student Name> – Final paper”

Grading:
Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, Evaluation Procedures and Grading System). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student’s level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>97-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>93-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>65-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>60-64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0-59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Required Notes:
“Policy about course outlines can be found in the Evaluation Procedures and Grading System of the University Calendar.”

Student Responsibilities:

Academic Integrity:
“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”
All students should consult the Academic Integrity website. If you have any questions, ask your instructor.
An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the Academic Discipline Process.
Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that the use of on-line translation to complete assignments constitutes a form of cheating as the student’s own understanding and work is therefore not reflected. Also, students in language courses should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, excessive editorial and creative help in assignments is considered a form of cheating that violates the Code of Student Behaviour.

Learning and Working Environment:
The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students, faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy has been or is being violated to:
- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that directs discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.
For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the Office of the Student Ombuds. Information about the University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures is described in UAPPOL.

Territorial Statement:
“The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.” (from the beginning of the Calendar).

University of Alberta Sexual Violence Policy:
The Sexual Violence Policy was approved by GFC in June 2017. It plays a vital role in ensuring a safe and respectful learning and working environment. As defined in the policy, sexual violence is any sexual act or act of a sexual nature, or act targeting sexuality, whether physical or psychological, committed without consent. Sexual violence is a complex and serious problem in society and on university campuses. Sexual violence can affect individuals of all gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations, as well as those from all ages, abilities, racial, cultural and economic backgrounds. Through this policy, the University of Alberta recognizes its responsibility to reduce sexual violence in the University community. The university aims to do so by fostering a culture of consent and support through education, training and policy. The University recognizes the possible effects of trauma on those who have experienced sexual violence and supports the efforts of individuals to seek support and recover.
To read the policy in more detail, please visit:  

Recording of Lectures:
Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:
Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections Attendance and Examinations of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result. Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the Code of Student Behaviour.
In this course, students are expected to attend class regularly, finish required reading and film viewings on time, participate actively in class discussions.
Regular attendance is mandatory; unexcused absences and lateness will negatively impact your grade.
If absence is due to severe illness or any other considerable reason, student should inform the instructor before the beginning of class (even by e-mail).
Tardiness or early leaving the class is counted as an unexcused absence.
No excuse will be accepted if the instructor is not informed before class, unless in case of emergency. The instructor may accept a reasonable excuse for absence with no penalty twice throughout the course, otherwise frequent excused/unexcused absences (with no emergency reasons) will impact your grade.
In case of unexcused and unjustified absence from exam, the instructor may not accept to reschedule this particular exam.

- In case of unforeseen circumstances that may lead to class cancellation, students will be notified in advance during previous classes or by e-mail (in case of an emergency). So please do NOT leave class before consulting your emails.

Disclaimer:
Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:
The best all-purpose website for student services is: https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students.

Accessibility Resources: (1 – 80 SUB)
The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the Accessibility Resources webpage.

The Academic Success Centre: (1-80 SUB)
The Academic Success Centre offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

The Centre for Writers: (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)
The Centre for Writers offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

Health and Wellness Support: There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the Health and Wellness Support webpage.

Office of the Student Ombuds:
The Office of the Student Ombuds offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.