ARABIC STUDIES
(Div I, with some exceptions as noted in course descriptions)

Chair: Professor Magnus Bernhardsson


On leave Fall/Spring: Assistant Professor L. Nassif.
On leave Spring only: Senior Lecturer H. Edwards.

Middle Eastern and Maghrebi Studies is a vibrant, growing, and important field in the United States and around the world. Students wishing to enter this rich and varied discipline can begin with a major in Arabic Studies at Williams. The major is designed to give students a foundation in the Arabic language and to provide the opportunity for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study of Arab, Islamic, North African and Middle Eastern literatures, art, film, history, religion and politics.

THE MAJOR IN ARABIC STUDIES

Students wishing to major in Arabic Studies must complete ten courses, including the following six courses:

- ARAB 101-102 Elementary Arabic
- ARAB 201 Intermediate Arabic I
- ARAB 202 Intermediate Arabic II
- ARAB 301 Advanced Arabic I
- ARAB 302 Advanced Arabic II
- At least one elective course, either in Arabic literature, arts, or culture, or in Arabic history, religion, politics, economics, etc.

Students must also take at least one 400-level ARAB course, in addition to three other courses in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies in Arabic Studies or affiliated units. At least one of these courses should be from the arenas of language and the arts (DIV I) and at least one from politics, religion, economics, history, etc. (DIV II). Students should consult with the Department to confirm that electives are authorized.

Students who place into more advanced language courses may substitute additional courses, adding up to a total of at least nine courses.

Up to four courses from approved study abroad programs may be counted toward the major.

THE CERTIFICATE IN ARABIC

The Certificate in Arabic demonstrates that a student has acquired a working foundation in the language. The sequence of eight language and culture courses is designed to supplement a student's major at Williams by enabling the student to expand their knowledge in a related field.

Required Courses

- ARAB 101
- ARAB 102
- ARAB 201
- ARAB 202
- ARAB 301
- ARAB 302
- At least one elective course, either in Arabic literature, arts, or culture, or in Arabic history, religion, politics, economics, etc.

Students must earn a cumulative grade average of B or higher in the sequence of seven courses.

Students who enter Williams with previous training in Arabic may be exempted from up to two of the required seven courses. Thus, in order to earn a certificate, a student must take no fewer than five courses (including three language courses) after enrolling at Williams.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN ARABIC STUDIES

Prerequisites
Honors candidates in Arabic are required to have maintained a GPA of 3.5 in the major to qualify for submitting a thesis proposal. In addition, candidates must demonstrate a strong interest in a specific topic for which an appropriate faculty advisor will be available in the senior year.

Timing

Students wishing to pursue a thesis in Arabic are strongly urged to secure an advisor by the end of the week after Spring Break in their junior year. By May 15th of their junior year, candidates must submit to the Program Advisory Committee a one- to two-page proposal and a preliminary bibliography. The Advisory Committee will inform candidates by June 1 whether they may proceed with the thesis and advise them about any changes that should be made in the focus or scope of the project. The summer before the senior year will be spent compiling a more detailed bibliography and preparing for the process of writing the thesis.

In their senior year, candidates will devote two semesters and the winter study period to their theses (ARAB 493-W31-ARAB 494). By the end of the Fall semester, students will normally have undertaken substantial research and produced the draft of at least the first half of the project. At this point students should also have a clear sense of the work remaining for completion of the thesis. In the course of the Fall semester, students will also have chosen and met with a second reader for the project, who will provide additional guidance and read the final thesis. By the end of Winter Study, students should have completed a draft of the entire project. At that time, the Comparative Literature Advisory Committee, together with the advisor, will determine whether the project may continue as an Honors Thesis, or whether its first portions (ARAB 493-W) will be graded as Independent Studies.

The second semester of independent thesis work will be spent revising as necessary. The completed thesis in its final form will be due one week before the last day of classes. At the end of the Spring term, the student will make a public presentation of the final project, to which members of the Advisory Committee will be specially invited.

Characteristics of the Thesis, Evaluation, and Major Credit

The topic of the thesis must have to do with some aspect of Arabic language, culture, history, politics, etc. and will be worked out between the thesis writer and her/his advisor. It is also possible to write a thesis that consists of an original translation of a significant text or texts; in this case, a theoretical apparatus must accompany the translation. The complete thesis must be at least 50 and at most 75 pages in length, excluding the bibliography.

The advisor will assign the grades for the thesis courses (ARAB 493-W-494); the Advisory Committee will determine whether a candidate will receive Honors, Highest Honors, or no honors.

For students who pursue an honors thesis, the total number of courses required for the major-including the thesis course (ARAB 493-W-494)-is 10, i.e., one of the thesis courses may substitute for one elective.

STUDY ABROAD

FAQ

Students MUST contact departments/programs BEFORE assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?

Yes, in many cases, though students should be sure to contact the department.

What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?

Course title and description, and complete syllabus including readings/assignments. We may need specific information (assigned readings) to determine whether the course counts for Div I or II major credit.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?

Yes, four.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?

No.

Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?

No. Students can receive credit toward the major’s language requirements from for-credit summer language programs like Middlebury, etc. These count toward the 4-course maximum.

Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)

Yes. Make sure you have the needed number of Div I and Div II courses for the major. Know the difference.
Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn’t:

- It has happened, but we try to be as flexible as possible.

**ARAB 101 (F) Elementary Arabic**

This is the first course in the year-long Beginning Arabic sequence. It will help you establish a foundation of communicative competence and understanding of the Arabic language and culture. The course adopts an integrated-skills approach with a focus on “formal Arabic” (or so-called Modern Standard Arabic), the language of formal writing and speech in Arab countries, while simultaneously familiarizing you with one variety of spoken Arabic. The course focuses on day-to-day situations and familiar topics.

**Class Format:** lectures, five hours a week

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation is based on tests, daily homework, active class participation, a skit, a culture portfolio, and engagement in a variety of co-curricular activities

**Extra Info:** students registered for ARAB 101 and 102 are required to attend and pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit is granted only if both semesters (ARAB 101 and 102) are taken

**Extra Info 2:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** students considering a major in Arabic Studies

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Fall 2018**

LEC Section: 01  M-F 10:00 am - 10:50 am  Radwa M. El Barouni

**ARAB 102 (S) Elementary Arabic**

This is the second course in the Beginning Arabic sequence. It builds on the foundation of Arabic competence that you established in Arabic 101, and will continue to develop your competence in Modern Standard Arabic and one variety of spoken Arabic. The course will continue to focus on day-to-day situations and familiar topics from the immediate environment while expanding the range of topics and authentic materials, and broadening the scope of linguistically-based and culturally-based tasks and course expectations.

**Class Format:** lectures, five hours a week

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation is based on tests, daily homework, active class participation, a presentation, a writing portfolio, and engagement in a variety of co-curricular activities

**Extra Info:** students registered for Arabic 101 and 102 are required to attend and pass the sustaining program during the winter study period; credit is granted only if both semesters (ARAB 101 and 102) are taken

**Extra Info 2:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** ARAB 101

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** students considering a major in Arabic Studies

**Expected Class Size:** 15

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Spring 2019**

LEC Section: 01  M-F 10:00 am - 10:50 am  Radwa M. El Barouni
ARAB 111 (F) Movers and Shakers in the Middle East (WI)
Crosslistings: LEAD150 / HIST111 / ARAB111

Secondary Crosslisting

This course examines the careers, ideas, and impact of leading politicians, religious leaders, intellectuals, and artists in the Middle East in the twentieth century. Utilizing biographical studies and the general literature on the political and cultural history of the period, this course will analyze how these individuals achieved prominence in Middle Eastern society and how they addressed the pertinent problems of their day, such as war and peace, relations with Western powers, the role of religion in society, and the status of women. A range of significant individuals will be studied, including Gamal Abd al-Nasser, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Ayatollah Khomeini, Muhammad Mussadiq, Umm Khulthum, Sayyid Qutb, Anwar Sadat, Naghuib Mahfouz, and Huda Shaarawi.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, short essays, and a final paper
Prerequisites: first-year or sophomore standing; juniors or seniors with permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students, and then sophomores who have not previously taken a 100-level seminar
Expected Class Size: 15-19
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives; HIST Group E Electives - Middle East; JWST Elective Courses; LEAD Facets or Domains of Leadership;
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 201 (F) Intermediate Arabic I

In this course we will continue to study the Modern Standard Arabic and one variety of spoken Arabic. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to hold conversations in Arabic with some fluency on a variety of topics while developing an increased vocabulary and cultural appreciation of Arabic-speaking countries.

Class Format: lecture; the class meets four hours a week with the fourth hour a conversation section
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on quizzes, tests, homework, and active class participation
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: ARAB 101-102 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01 MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am Radwa M. El Barouni
CON Section: 02 W 2:10 pm - 3:00 pm Radwa M. El Barouni

ARAB 202 (S) Intermediate Arabic II

As a continuation of ARAB 201, this course will expose students to Modern Standard Arabic and one variety of spoken Arabic while increasing their cultural literacy in Arab civilization. Our main textbook will be Al-Kitaab fi Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya Part II but outside materials from diverse media such as television and newspapers will also be included. Class will be conducted in Arabic.

Class Format: lecture; the class meets four hours a week with the fourth hour a conversation section
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation is based on quizzes, homework, and active class participation
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: ARAB 201 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
**ARAB 207 (F) The Modern Middle East (DPE)**

Crosslistings: JWST217 / ARAB207 / HIST207 / REL239 / GBST101 / LEAD207

This survey course addresses the main economic, religious, political and cultural trends in the modern Middle East. Topics to be covered include the cultural diversity of the Middle East, relations with Great Powers, the impact of imperialism, the challenge of modernity, the creation of nation states and nationalist ideologies, the discovery of oil, radical religious groups, and war and peace. Throughout the course these significant changes will be evaluated in light of their impact on the lives of a variety of individuals in the region and especially how they have grappled differently with increasing Western political and economic domination.

**Class Format:** lecture

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation, two short papers, quizzes, midterm, and final exam

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Enrollment Preferences:** History & Arabic majors, and Jewish studies concentrators; completion of course admission survey if overenrolled

**Expected Class Size:** 30-40

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB. DPE: This course introduces students to the incredible diversity of the Middle East and offers a critical assessment of difference, power, and equity in the Middle East. In particular it will explore how people of different backgrounds and in different situations have responded in diverse ways to the problems of the day. Students will acquire the critical tools to assess a number of interpretations of the past and how to understand and appreciate the many narratives in the Middle East today that have profound political and cultural implications.

**Attributes:** GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives; HIST Group E Electives - Middle East; JWST Elective Courses; LEAD Facets or Domains of Leadership

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**ARAB 209 (S) Saharan Imaginations (DPE) (WI)**

Crosslistings: COMP234 / ARAB209 / ENVI208

**Primary Crosslisting**

Literary representations of the Sahara challenge facile assumptions about this undertheorized place. Literature furnishes a unique opportunity to gain more awareness of the organization of life in the desert and the ways in which its inhabitants have found harmony between their humanity and the Sahara's biodiversity. This course offers students the opportunity to engage in close readings of novels through the theme of the Sahara and Saharan space. Reading through the ethics of human mobility and actions in the desert will help students to understand how myth, memory, history, coloniality/postcoloniality, and a strong sense of ethics are deeply intertwined in the Sahara sub-genre of Maghrebi and Middle Eastern literature. Whether grappling with transcontinental issues of climate change, biodiversity cannibalization or overexploitation of natural resources, the Saharan novel invites us to think critically about the politics of space and place as well as mobility and spatial control as they relate to this supposedly dead nature. Students will be initiated to the ecocritical dimension of Maghrebi and Arabic literature and the discourses underlying it through the prism of the Sahara.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation, short presentation, short weekly responses on GLOW, midterm exam, and final paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Arabic Studies majors and certificate students
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WI)
Distribution Notes: DPE: Students will gain critical awareness of the imbrication of power, hegemony, economic injustice, and colonial policies in the disruption of indigenous conceptions of the Saharan space. Students will also be able to question representations of the Sahara as a dead or empty space by engaging with locally produced alternative conceptualizations of place. Finally, students will produce written assignments that address issues of power and environmental discrimination.

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Brahim El Guabli

ARAB 210 (S) The Challenge of ISIS
Crosslistings: HIST210 / REL240 / ANTH210 / ARAB210 / GBST210
Secondary Crosslisting
What is ISIS and what does it want? Using historical and anthropological sources and perspectives, the course considers the origins, ideology and organization of the Islamic State. Beginning with an examination of early radical movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood, the Afghan mujahidin and Taliban, and al-Qaeda, the course will go on to investigate how ISIS derives important aspects of its ideology and organization from these earlier movements and how it deviates from them. We will look at unique aspects of the movement, such as its use of social media, its extensive destruction of ancient historical sites, its staging of spectacles of violence, and its recruitment of Muslims from Europe and North America. We will also examine the ideological constitution of the movement, including its attitude toward and treatment of non-Muslims, its conceptualization of itself as a modern incarnation of the original Islamic caliphate, the ways in which it justifies its use of violence, and its apocalyptic vision of the present-day as End Time. Finally, we will evaluate current responses to ISIS, in the West and among Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere, in terms of their effectiveness and strategic coherence.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: blogs (4 main blog posts, responses to at least 3-4 other blogs each week) (30%); analytic paper or class history paper (35%); 2 midterms (35%)
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 40
Expected Class Size: 40
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives; HIST Group E Electives - Middle East
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 215 (S) The Veil: History and Interpretations (WI)
Crosslistings: ARAB215 / WGSS110 / HIST110
Secondary Crosslisting
This tutorial will consider the history and the changing meanings of the veil (hijab) and its many manifestations (e.g. burqa, chador, niqab), starting with the earliest religious traditions and the status of women in Islamic law. We will then proceed to examine imperialist and orientalist representations of gender in the Middle East, the rise of Islamic feminism and finally consider the emergence and return of the veil in recent years in the Middle East, North America, Asia and Europe.
Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: each week each student will either write a 5- to 7-page essay on assigned readings or offer a 2-page critique of their partner's paper; by semester's end each student will have written a minimum of 40 pages
ARAB 222 (F)  Photography in/of the Middle East  (DPE)

Crosslistings: ARAB222 / ARTH222

Secondary Crosslisting

Since its invention, photography has been globally disseminated and locally inflected, serving diverse documentary and expressive purposes around the world. In the Middle East, the powers and pleasures of the medium have been valued by colonial forces, indigenous populations, photojournalists and artists; the resulting images merit aesthetic and art historical appreciation even as they grant visual access to the hierarchical dynamics operative in individual communities and transcultural contexts. The course will explore photographic practices in different zones of the Middle East—e.g., the Holy Land, Egypt and the Persian sphere—by attending to individual photographers and case studies. This tightly focused approach will support, in turn, a consideration of the formative impact of visual representations in particular circumstances—what work do photographs do? Who resists and who benefits? The general goal will be to appreciate diverse styles and perspectives that underlie renderings of the Middle East.

Class Format: lecture/discussion meeting twice a week

Requirements/Evaluation: midterm, final, GLOW Posts and term project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

ARAB 224 (S)  Second Language Learning: The Learner, the Classroom, and the Social World

Learning a second language is one of the most exhilarating, rewarding, and eye-opening experiences of a life-time. Millions of people around the globe embark on a journey of exploration of target languages and cultures while reflecting on the self and home culture(s) in the process. This course introduces you to core issues related to the learning of a second language. What are the processes involved in learning a second language? What does it mean to know another language? Is second language learning similar to first language learning? Why are some language learners more successful than others? What individual variables do learners bring to the learning process? How can classrooms facilitate second language learning? How do learners perceive teachers’ feedback? How does the specific socio-cultural context impact language learning? How does learning about the target culture feed into language learning? How does the learner’s identity evolve in the process of second language learning? These are some key second language learning questions that we will examine in this class. Readings are drawn from studies on the learning of different languages.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, assignments, article presentation and leading a class discussion, language learner interview, a research paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
ARAB 227 (F) Language and Society: What Does Your Speech Say About You?

Crosslistings: ARAB227 / ANTH227

Primary Crosslisting

Sociolinguistics is the study of how aspects of society influence the way language is used by the society members. In this course, we will examine the inter-relationships between the way language is used in various social contexts affecting that usage. How and why do languages change? How does language reflect a person's identity? How does language intersect with power relations among individuals within a society? Does language vary according to gender? How are language varieties formed, and what determines their status within speech communities? How and why do speakers code-switch among different varieties? These are some key questions that we will examine in this class, drawing on readings that focus on different languages.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, response essays, assignments, article presentation, variation paper, final exam

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: seniors, students who need to fulfill Arabic major or Anthropology major requirements, students interested in linguistics

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH

Attributes: Linguistics

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 230 (F) Who was Muhammad?

Crosslistings: ARAB230 / GBST230 / REL230

Secondary Crosslisting

Considered the Messenger of God, Muhammad is a central character of the Islamic tradition and has been the object of love and devotion for centuries. Recent outbursts sparked by controversial cartoons depicting Muhammad have made clear that he remains a revered and controversial figure even today. This course takes a critical historical perspective to the biographies of Muhammad, the founder of Islam. Rather than focus on the "facts" of his life, we will think about the ways in which historical context, political interests, and shifting conceptions of religion have influenced the way in which Muhammad has been imagined and remembered. We will also consider the ways in which Muslim and non-Muslims biographies of Muhammad are intertwined and interdependent, often developing in tandem with one another. By exploring Muslim and non-Muslim, pre-modern and modern accounts of Muhammad's life, we will think about the many ways in which Muhammad's life has been told and re-told over the centuries. In this course we will consider some of the following depictions of Muhammad: Muhammad as the object of ritual devotion; Muhammad as statesman and military leader; Muhammad's polygynous marriages and his young wife, Aisha; Muhammad as social reformer and revolutionary. Course readings will include pre-modern biographies (in translation) as well as contemporary Muslim and non-Muslim biographies.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: reading responses, 3 short essays (3-4 pages double-spaced), and final exam

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: Religion majors
ARAB 234 (F)  What is Islam?  (DPE)
Crosslistings: ARAB234 / GBST234 / REL234 / HIST208

Secondary Crosslisting
This course introduces students to Islam as a varied and contested historical tradition. The course will trace the historical development of Islam, focusing on religious and intellectual thought, political developments, and the practices and lived lives of Muslims. We will begin with situating the rise of Islam within the context of late antiquity, followed by an examination of the life of Muhammad, and the rise of Muslim empires. These developments will form the framework through which we investigate the theological, philosophical, legal, mystical, and literary writings of Muslims from the classical to the early modern periods of Islamic history. The main aim of the course is to develop a framework for understanding the historical developments through which Muslims have constructed ideas about normativity, authority, and orthodoxy in debates around Islam. Sources will include pre-modern historical and religious texts (in translation).

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: reading responses, two essays, final exam
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: Religion majors (or those considering Religion as a major), then Arabic Studies and History majors

ARAB 236 (S)  Reading the Qur’an  (WI)
Crosslistings: ARAB236 / REL236 / COMP213 / GBST236

Secondary Crosslisting
In the nearly 1500 years of Islamic history, the Qur’an has been a central source of spiritual insight, ethical and legal guidance, sacred stories, and theological principles. Considered the divine word of God, the Qur’an is central to devotional life. This course will explore the Qur’an as a text that is always in a state of production. We will focus significantly on close readings of the text of the Qur’an, in addition to pre-modern and modern Qur’anic exegesis. The course will begin with a historical account of the revelation and collection of the Qur’an, placing the form and content of the text in the context of 7th century Arab society and the life of the Prophet. We will then study Qur’anic commentaries to discuss how Muslims have drawn theological, legal, philosophical, and mystical meaning from the Qur’an. We will pose some of the following questions: What do the different exegetical methods tell us about the intertextual nature of the Qur’an? How have these shifting notions affected the meaning made from Qur’anic verses and passages? What role do interpretive communities play in determining what the Qur’an says? Lastly, through an exploration of the art of Qur’an recitation, calligraphy, and Qur’an manuscripts, we will explore the ways in which the Qur’an is also an object of devotion in Muslim life.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, weekly reading responses, 3- to 4-page midterm paper, and a final project with a media component and a 4- to 6-page analytical essay
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Religion and Arabic Studies majors

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or GBST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB or COMP

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 242 (S) Women, Gender, and Sexuality in Islam
Crosslistings: WGSS242 / REL242 / ARAB242

Secondary Crosslisting

The figure of the Muslim woman is an object of intense scrutiny in Western society. Claims that Muslim women are oppressed and the incompatibility of Islam and feminism abound. This course will consider women and gender roles in the Islamic tradition and how Muslim women have interpreted and negotiated these discourses. We will explore questions of masculinity, femininity, and sexuality across various historical periods as well as through contemporary Muslim feminist scholarship and literature (including film and novels). We will begin with insights into the politics of representing Muslim women, exploring how Muslim women are depicted in popular culture and media and ask the crucial question: do Muslim women need saving? We will then explore: how Muslim women have claimed religious authority through scriptural interpretation; how they have negotiated their position in Islamic law both historically and in contemporary Muslim societies; and the lives of pious women in Sufism--the mystical tradition of Islam. We will conclude with Muslim feminist scholarship and recent works on Islamic masculinities. Throughout the course, emphasis will be placed on the diversity of interpretations in Islam around women, gender, and sexuality and on Muslim women's own articulations about their religious identity and experiences. Some of the topics covered in this course include: marriage and divorce, slavery, modesty and veiling, and homosexuality.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation (including a presentation on the reading materials), short weekly reflections, and one final research paper (10-15 pages)

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Religion, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and Arabic majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01 TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm Saadia Yacoob

ARAB 243 (F) Islamic Law: Past and Present
Crosslistings: REL243 / WGSS243 / ARAB243 / HIST302

Secondary Crosslisting

From fear of the Shari'a to its implementation in so called "Islamic countries," Islamic law is perhaps best associated with draconian punishments and the oppression of women. Islamic law is ever present in our public discourse today and yet little is known about it. This course is designed to give students a foundation in the substantive teachings of Islamic law. Islamic law stretches back over 1400 years and is grounded in the Quran, the life example of the Prophet Muhammad, and juridical discourse. Teetering between legal and ethical discourse, the Shari'a moves between what we normally consider law as well as ethics and etiquette. The course will explore four key aspects of the law: its historical development, its ethical and legal content, the law in practice, and the transformation of Islamic law through colonialism and into the contemporary. Specific areas we will cover include: ritual piety, family and personal status law, criminal law, and dietary rules.

Class Format: seminar
ARAB 249 (F) Trauma and Memory in Maghrebi and Middle Eastern Literatures (DPE) (WI)
Crosslistings: ARAB249 / COMP249

Primary Crosslisting

Arabic literature produced in the Maghreb and the Middle East has always engaged with the socio-political concerns of different Arab societies. Whether caused by the colonial state(s) or by post-independence leadership, trauma has been a central theme in Maghrebi and Middle Eastern literature for a long time. Using a combination of memoirs and fictional works, this course aims to raise students’ critical awareness and aesthetic appreciation of literary representations of the multiple traumas inflicted on people and societies in the Maghreb and the Middle East. The different novels assigned in this course will be read against seminal literature on memory and trauma studies to answer the following questions: how does Arabic literature remember? In what ways does Arabic literature engage with the past sequelae of colonialism, dictatorship, war, and displacement? How do Arabic novelists and memoirists dialogue with memory and trauma theory even though Arabic scholarship has given a short shrift to trauma and memory ethics and aesthetics? What events or experiences are pivotal to collective and individual traumas represented in Maghrebi and Middle Eastern literature(s)?

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active participation, short presentation, short weekly response papers, mid-term exam, and final paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Arabic Studies majors and certificate students

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WI)

Distribution Notes: DPE: Students in this course will learn how to identify and analyze gender, class, and power-related aspects of traumatic memory. The different readings assigned in this course will help students develop critical skills to examine how various forms of power and social inequality play out in memories of war, political detention, forcible disappearance, and social ostracism in the Maghreb and the Middle East.
the development of Arab feminist consciousness? In addition to the memoirs, we will look at women’s blogs and watch films that focus on first-person narrative to discuss related topics, such as, visual testimonies, virtual political participation and feminist resistance in the technosphere. Required texts may include: Fadwa Tuqan (A Mountainous Journey: An Autobiography), Fatima Mernissi (Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood), Leila Ahmed (A Border Passage: From Cairo to America--a Woman's Journey), Fadia Faqir and Shirley Eber (In the House of Silence: Autobiographical Essays by Arab Women Writers), and Jumanah Haddad (I Killed Scheherazade: Confessions of an Angry Arab Woman), as well as critical essays and selections from autobiographical writings that reflect the diversity of Arab women in the Middle East and the diaspora.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, several short response papers, three short papers (3-5 pages), and a final paper (7-10 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: none

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under HIST or WGSS

Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 257 (F) Iran, Islam, and the Last Great Revolution (WI)

Crosslistings: ARAB257 / PSCI257

Secondary Crosslisting

The title and inspiration for this course comes from Robin Wright's book The Last Great Revolution. Wright argues that the 1979 Revolution in Iran completes the promise of the Modern Era, "launched in the West" but "adopted by or adapted to all other parts of the world." The overthrow of 2500 years of monarchy "paved the way for using Islam to push for empowerment." It is this empowerment, of nations and of ordinary individuals, that stands as the signal quality of modernity. The notion that post revolutionary Iran offers an alternative path to modernity is hardly conventional wisdom in the United States or Europe, where images of men draped in religious passion and women in forbidding black chadors are as common as the belief that the 1979 Revolution set Iran spinning back thirteen centuries in time. If westerners do not view Iran as entirely anti-modern, then at best they see it as a country filled with "paradoxes" and "puzzles," one in which indie rock bands play underground, figuratively and literally beneath the feet of retrograde religious fanatics, or unveiled women attend all-night parties only to slip back into proper hejab the next morning. The class will ask you to consider why these assumptions exist, whether they are the symptoms of a western civilization "clashing" with the east, and if they are exclusive to the United States or Europe. Does there also exist an "orientalism in reverse," a negative gaze of Iranians towards the west and towards their fellow, "backwards" citizens?

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: first short essay, 5 pages (15%); second short essay, 5 pages (15%); research paper, 15-20 pages (30%); participation, including blogs, presentation, and precis (40%)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Political Science majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PSCI; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    M 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm    Shervin Malekzadeh
ARAB 259 (S) Bilad al-Sudan and Beyond: Arts of the Afro-Islamic World
Crosslistings: ARTH259 / AFR259 / ARAB259

Secondary Crosslisting
From the Swahili stone houses of East Africa to the massive earth and timber mosques of the Sahel, the story of Islam in Africa is one of cultural and spiritual hybridity expressed through material form. In this course, students will explore how artistic forms and traditions in Africa have functioned as vehicles of access and integration for Islam, enabling it to assimilate itself with numerous African contexts towards becoming the dominant religious force on the continent. In addition, students will investigate how the forms, functions, and meanings of Afro-Islamic objects across the continent reflect not just one African Islam, but many different iterations, each shaped by the specific frameworks of its cultural context. The contemporary component of the course will examine how modernity in the form of globalization, technology, and Westernization has affected Afro-Islamic artistic traditions, and how these shifts reflect larger evolutions within understandings of Islam in Africa in the contemporary period.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: three reading response papers (2 pages each), class journal, a mid-term exam, and a final exam
Prerequisites: none, although an introductory course in art history or Islamic studies would be useful
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: if the course is oversubscribed, preference will be given to students who have declared a major in Art History or Africana Studies
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH or ARAB; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under AFR
Attributes: GBST African Studies Electives
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 261 (S) Comparative Postcolonial Narratives: Novels from the Arab World, Latin-America and the Caribbean (WI)
Crosslistings: ARAB261 / COMP261

Secondary Crosslisting
In this introductory course to the global postcolonial novel, we will examine novels in translation from the Arab world, Latin America and the Caribbean that are in conversation with each other. Through textual and formal analysis of selected novels in translation, we will ask questions concerning the legacy of the different forms of European colonialism in these distinct geographies. This course has two goals: First, to familiarize students with classical, canonical and popular Arabic, Latin American and Caribbean novels that deal with the history of European colonialism and/or its aftermath. Second, to introduce student to some of the critical trends and theoretical debates concerning the potential and limits of reading these novels as resistance and/or postcolonial literature. In addition to selected critical essays, the readings for this course may include novels by the following writers: Assia Djebar (Algeria), Gamal al-Ghitani (Egypt), Sahar Khalifah (Palestine), Tayyib Saleh (Sudan), Alejo Carpentier (Cuba), Rosario Castellanos (Mexico), Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua), and Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Colombia).

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, three short papers (3-5 pages) and a final 7- to 10-page expansion and rewrite
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: majors or prospective majors in Comparative Literature or Arabic Studies
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 278 (F) The Golden Road to Samarqand
Crosslistings: ARAB278 / ARTH278
The region stretching from present day Iran to India figures prominently in contemporary global culture but it also has a rich and complex history—an amalgamation of Persian, Turkish and Islamic influences. Home to Genghis Khan and Timur (Tamerlane), Akbar the Great and Shah Jahan, it has generated some of the most renowned monuments (e.g. the Taj Mahal and the blue tiled mosques of Isfahan) and refined manuscript painting ever known. We will cover a broad swath of time—from the 10th to the 20th century—concentrating on important centers of artistic production such as Timurid Central Asia and Mughal India. Students will have the opportunity to study original works of art in the college museum collections.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, a short paper, a midterm and a final
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 20
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 280 (S) Islam and Anthropology
Crosslistings: REL346 / ANTH346 / ASST346 / ARAB280

If anthropology has helped to define Islam in global thought, Islam has returned the favor, holding a critical mirror to the anthropological endeavor perhaps more than any other traditional "object" of study. This course examines anthropological studies of Islamic societies for what they teach us both about Islam and about anthropology. We begin with foundational social theorists whose studies of religious phenomena helped give rise to the field of anthropology of religion. We then survey influential efforts to construct "ideal-type" models of Muslim society based on anthropological and historical knowledge, alongside efforts to critique, historicize, and redirect the model-building project (notably by Talal Asad and Edward Said). The second half of the course is devoted to ethnographies that explore, from a variety of perspectives and in several regions (Morocco, India, Egypt, Syria), questions of human agency, hierarchy and resistance, and Islam as discursive resource, ethical project, and embodied community.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly postings, one 5-page paper, one 10-page paper, discussion leading
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 301 (F) Advanced Arabic I

This course is a continuation of Intermediate Arabic. It focuses on expanding the students’ knowledge of vocabulary and grammar while stressing the development of reading, spoken, and written skills in Modern Standard Arabic. The material covered in class will include lessons from the Al-Kitaab series, as well as literary and multi-media works. Emphasis will be placed on increasing cultural literacy. Class is conducted in Arabic.

Class Format: meets four hours a week with the fourth hour a conversation section, time to be arranged
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, completion of all written assignments, quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: two semesters of Intermediate Arabic or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 8
Distributions: (D1)
ARAB 302 (S)  Advanced Arabic II
This course is a continuation of Intermediate Arabic. It focuses on expanding the students' knowledge of vocabulary and grammar while stressing the development of reading, spoken, and written skills in Modern Standard Arabic.

Class Format: lecture
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: ARAB 301 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
LEC Section: 01    TR 8:30 am - 9:45 am     Amal Eqeiq

ARAB 303 (F)  A History of Islam in Africa
Crosslistings: HIST303 / REL303 / ARAB303 / GBST303 / AFR303
Secondary Crosslisting
This course examines the history of Islam in Africa from the seventh century to the present. We will start off by looking at the spread of Islam in different parts of Africa. We will then analyze the social, political, economic, and cultural impact of Islam on African societies, the interaction between Islam and indigenous African institutions, the Islamic revolutions in the nineteenth century, the impact of European colonial rule on Muslim societies, and the development of Islam in the post-independence period. We will also examine how African Muslims reconstructed and asserted their religious identities by localizing Islamic intellectual traditions, healing practices, music, arts, cultural norms, and formal and informal religious festivals. By the end of the semester students should be able to appreciate Islam's common framework as well as its diversity and dynamics within that larger framework and over time.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: two 7-page papers and one 12- to 15-page paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: lottery
Expected Class Size: 25
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Attributes: GBST African Studies Electives; HIST Group A Electives - Africa
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 305 (S)  Nationalism and Nation Building in the Middle East
Crosslistings: ARAB305 / HIST305
Secondary Crosslisting
In 1932, or twelve years into his rule and twelve years after the establishment of Iraq, King Faysal I lamented that there were "no Iraqi people but only unimaginable masses of human beings, devoid of any patriotic idea, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, connected by no common tie."
This course will consider how true the King's statement still holds by evaluating the various attempts at state and nation building in the modern Middle East and the challenges of statecraft. After assessing some of the more influential theories of nationalism, we will explore the historical experience of nationalism and national identity in Iraq, Israel, Turkey, Palestine, Iran, and Egypt. What has been at the basis of nationhood? How did European concepts of nation translate into the Middle Eastern context? What was the role of religion in these modern societies? How did traditional notions of gender effect concepts of citizenship? We will also explore some of the unresolved issues facing the various nations of the Middle East, such as
unfulfilled nationalist aspirations, disputes over land and borders, and challenges to sovereignty. Finally, we will evaluate the role of foreign powers in nation building in the Middle East and consider whether the modern concept of the nation has any validity in the Middle Eastern context.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on several short papers and a "Magnus" Opus (a.k.a. final research paper)

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: History majors and students with a background in Middle Eastern studies

Expected Class Size: 20-25

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Attributes: HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 308 (S) The Nile  (DPE) (WI)
Crosslistings: ARAB308 / HIST308

Secondary Crosslisting

For millennia, the Nile River has sustained civilizations in eastern and northern Africa. It is the only reason that Egyptians have been able to live in the Sahara Desert. It was at the banks of this river that some of the most significant human structures were built and some of the most beautiful artworks conceived. The Nile provided the silt and hence the alluvial soils on which all the great Egyptian empires were founded. Yet now in the 21st century, the Nile River is at a historical turning point. The water level and quality is dwindling while at the same time the number of people who rely on the river is ever increasing. This course will consider the history of the Nile and the peoples and cultures it has sustained. After a brief overview of the role of the river in ancient Egypt, we will explore the modern political and cultural history of the Nile. Who lives along this river and what kind of cultures have developed in the Nile valley? We will evaluate the numerous attempts to manage and control the Nile and the continuous efforts to utilize the river for human development such as agriculture and the tourism industry. At the end of the semester we will consider the relationship of the mega city Cairo with the Nile and whether the tensions among Nile riparian states will lead to "water wars" in East Africa and the Middle East.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: short papers and final project/paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none, though background in Middle East history is preferable

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: History and Arabic Studies majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D2) (DPE) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB. DPE: The course fulfills the DPE requirement because it evaluates the differing experiences of the Nile among different cultural groups. It will evaluate how the central government is constantly trying to change how people use their water and therefore over-determine how people interact with their natural environment. WI:

Attributes: HIST Group E Electives - Middle East; HIST Group P Electives - Premodern;

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Magnus T. Bernhardsson

ARAB 310 (S) Iraq and Iran in the Twentieth Century
Crosslistings: ARAB310 / HIST310

Secondary Crosslisting

Despite being neighbors, the historical experience of Iran and Iraq has been drastically different. In this course we will begin by exploring the creation of Iraq in 1921 and the Pahlavi government in Iran. We will evaluate the revolutions of 1958 and 1978-9 and compare the lives and careers of Saddam
Hussein and Ayatollah Khomeini. The tragic Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88 will also be discussed. Finally, the political future of these countries will be assessed.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, short essays, and a final paper

Prerequisites: none; open to first-year students with instructors permission

Enrollment Limit: 25

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives; HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 322 (S) Islam in Spain

Crosslistings: ARAB322 / RLSP322

Secondary Crosslisting

The presence of Islam—in all its diverse manifestations—is not new to Europe, least of all to Spain. In this course we will focus for the most part on the medieval and early modern periods, and study several works—primarily of literature, though we will supplement with other texts—in which Muslims and Islam have been portrayed in the Iberian Peninsula. We will cover a wide range of perspectives that include Christian and Muslim writers as well as converts on both sides. While the bulk of the course is focused on the period prior to 1700 CE, we will devote the final few weeks of class to the study of Islam in contemporary Spain using fiction, legal debates, and issues related to immigration. Conducted in Spanish

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: two short papers, oral presentations, one final project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: any RLSP 200-level class, or results of the Williams College Placement Exam, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Spanish majors, Arabic Studies majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 330 (F) Thinking Critically: Major Debates in Modern Arab Thought (WI)

Crosslistings: ARAB330 / COMP363

Primary Crosslisting

The aim of this course is to introduce students to some of the major debates in Arab intellectual history in the 20th century and the ways in which they have shaped Arabic Studies as a discipline. We will read a range of texts from History, Religion, Politics, Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Literature, Gender, Sexualities and Women Studies, in order to gain a deeper insight into critical debates about nationhood, modernity, post-coloniality, democracy, feminism, social, political and religious movements, Orientalism and post-Orientalism, and the making of modern Arab subjectivities. In addition to a course packet with selected texts and essays, students are required to read the following books: Ibrahim Abu-Rabi', Contemporary Arab Thought: Studies in Post-1967 Arab Intellectual History (2004), Elizabeth Suzanne Kassab, Contemporary Arab Thought: Cultural Critique in Comparative Perspective (2010) & Tarik Sabry, Arab Cultural Studies: Mapping the Field (2012).

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, three short papers (3-5 pages), and a final 7- to 10-page expansion and rewrite

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19
ARAB 331 (F)  Popular Culture in the Arab World: Youth, Populism, and Politics  (DPE) (WI)
Crosslistings: COMP332 / ARAB331
Primary Crosslisting
Since the uprisings in the Arab world in 2011 and the counter-revolutions that followed, much attention has been paid to the significant role of the "popular" in creating social and political transformations. The voice of the youth and "the street," in particular, emerged as massive sources and sites for political mobilization. But, are these categories identical? Does youth culture equal popular culture? This survey course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the different layers that constitute popular culture in the Arab world since the decolonization of Arab states in the 1950s. Questions that we will ask include: What constitutes "popular culture" in the Arab world? How is it different than folk culture, mass culture, or "high" culture? Who are the key players in the creation and dissemination of "popular" culture? Besides globalization, for example, what other social, political and economic dynamics engulf the definition of the "popular"? What are modes of self-fashioning and representation of Arab identity that characterize this culture? To answer these questions we will examine original sources (with English translation) that include a graphic novel, political cartoon and graffiti, documentaries, TV shows, soap operas, video clips, music, comedy, blogs, news and social media. A selection of essays from anthropology, Arab culture studies, political science, journalism, and online videos will be used to provide historical and critical context for the material discussed in class.
Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, two shorter papers (3-4 pages), two film reviews and critical reflections (1-page), a performance, and a longer final paper (7-10 pages)
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: students majoring in or considering a major in Arabic Studies
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB DPE: As the course description explains, this course engages the concept of the popular through a critical examination of difference, power, and equality in the context of national revolt against colonialism, dictatorship, and socioeconomic injustice in the Arab world since the 1950s. The content will focus on addressing how voices from the margins, particularly the youth, the urban poor, and women, articulated a political language of popular resistance against the dual hegemony of state and colony.
Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives;

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01    MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Amal Eqeiq

ARAB 332 (F)  Islam and Feminism
Crosslistings: ARAB332 / WGSS334 / REL332
Secondary Crosslisting
This course examines the relationship between feminism and Islam, focusing particularly on Islamic feminist scholarship. We will take a genealogical approach to our study of Islamic feminism tracing the different discourses that have informed and shaped the field. The first part of the course will begin with a critical examination of orientalist and colonial representations of Muslim women as oppressed and in need of liberation. We will then explore Muslim responses so such critiques that were entwined with nationalist and independence movements. This historical backdrop is critical to understanding why the question of women and their rights and roles become crucial to Muslim self-understanding and Islamic reform. The second part
of the course will focus on major intellectuals and thinkers who have influenced Islamic feminism. Finally, the last part of our course will explore the breadth of Islamic feminist literature, covering the following themes: 1) feminist readings of scripture; 2) feminist critiques of Islamic law; and 3) feminist theology.

Class Format: 

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly responses, four 2- to 3-page essays

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Religion, Arabic Studies, Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies, History majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 346 (S) Revolutions and Counter-Revolutions: Narratives from the Arab World, Latin America and the Caribbean (DPE) (WI)

Crosslistings: COMP346 / ARAB346

Secondary Crosslisting

This course offers a South-South comparative reading of revolutions and counter-revolutions in the second half of the 20th century in the Arab World, Latin America and the Caribbean. Throughout we will read novels and watch films that focus on histories of social movements, post-independence revolutions, indigenous autonomies, dictatorship, and counter-revolutions with the aim to investigate narratives of people power vs. absolute power, insurgency vs. neocolonialism, utopias and dystopias. A comparative and critical reading of these texts will introduce you to the complex histories of national liberation, state terrorism and democratic imagination in two geographies in the Global South that share similar struggles against Euro-American imperialism. These texts will also familiarize you with an alternative, yet foundational, canon of Arabic, Latin American and Caribbean literatures and cinema, particularly from the post-Sixties generation in the Arab world and the post-Boom Latin American generation. Although this course is conceptualized as a South-South comparative reading of revolution and counter-revolution, it does not adhere to strict geographical parallels between the Arab World, Latin America and the Caribbean. It is mapped, however, according to major critical questions and thematic tropes that inform this topic. For example, how do contemporary Iraqi and Chilean writers and filmmakers write an aesthetic of evil in narratives that investigate the legacy of prolonged dictatorship? How do national novels in Mexico and Palestine depict parallel movements of indigenous resistance and anti-capitalist struggles? What motifs of dystopia are illustrated in narratives about post-revolution civil wars in Argentina and Syria? What histories of popular nationalism and socialism are revealed in feminist memoirs from Egypt and Cuba from the 1960s and 1970s?

Class Format: 

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, two short papers (3-4 pages), two film reviews (1-page), two critical reflections (1-page), a performance, and a final paper (7-10 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D1) (DPE) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB DPE: This course will explore difference, power, and equality through a comparative reading of narratives of dissent and revolt. The novels examines the effects of class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality on social and economic inequalities that ultimately have mobilized revolutions in the Arab world, Latin America, and the Caribbean since the 1960s. Reading narratives of socialist revolutions from the Global South, students will hone skills to address global injustices and neoliberalism

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm    Amal Eqeiq

ARAB 368 (F) Arab Women Writers: Remapping Urban Narratives (WI)
Crosslistings: COMP368 / ARAB368 / WGSS368

Primary Crosslisting

In "The Lover of Blue Writing above the Sea," (1995) a poem written to console a lover after the death of his beloved, Syrian poet, Ghada al-Samman, pens: "If you are sad and burn the edge of my book/I shall come to you/like the genie in my grandmother's Damascene stories..." As these lines imply, the fantastic grandmother's Damascene stories have the power to equally amend broken hearts and restore memories of loss. In this course, we will adopt "the grandmother's Damascene stories" as a conceptual metaphor that guides our line inquiry into the intersection of Arab women's narrative and the city. We will read novels and short stories by Arab women writers about cities and capitals in the Arab world and the diaspora. The goal of this course is not only to familiarize students with prominent Arab women novelists, such as Hoda Barakat, Radwa Ashur, Liana Badr, Raja'a Alem, Alia Mamouh, and Ahlam Mosteghanemi, among others, but also to introduce them to the literary and visual cartography of Beirut, Granada (via Cairo), Ramallah, Mecca, Baghdad, and Constantine, respectively. We will also read short stories about other cities in the world, such as New York, Paris, London, Buenos Aires and Tokyo among other world metropolises. Questions we will address include: How does the city appear as a protagonist? How do Arab women novelists represent nationhood, modernity, memory, love, war, sexuality and religion, among other themes, in their construction of urban narratives? How do these narratives map an Arab feminist metropolis? How do Arab women writers represent cities beyond the Arab world? To answer these questions, we will also look at Arab women's blogs and watch films that focus on the city as a site for spatial articulation of national histories, popular revolutions, and feminist public spheres.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, several short response papers, three short papers (3 - 5 pages), a final performance project, and a final paper (7 - 10 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Arabic Studies majors and Comparative Literature majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under WGSS

Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives;

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 369 (S) Indigenous Narratives: From the Fourth World to the Global South (WI)

Crosslistings: GBST369 / HIST306 / ARAB369 / COMP369

Secondary Crosslisting

In the late 20th century, world literature has witnessed a "boom" in indigenous literature. Many critics and historians describe this global re-emergence of the subaltern and the indigenous in terms of literary justice fostered by post-colonial studies and the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, by the UN General Assembly on December 18, 1992. In this course, we will investigate this "indigenous boom" by reading novels and short stories from the Americas, the Middle East and North Africa from the 1970s to the present. Through these trans-regional and trans-historical peregrinations, our principal goal will be to examine and compare narratives about conquest, settler colonialism, colonial nationalism, indigeneity, sovereignty, indigenous epistemology and philosophy. At the same time, we will consider the following questions: How did pioneering indigenous women writers, such as the Laguna Pueblo Leslie Marmon Silko in the US and the Mayan playwrights of La Forma in Chiapas, Mexico lead the feminist front of the indigenous literary renaissance? How did Palestinian folktales, Tashelhiyt Berber tales in Morocco, and Mayan dream narratives in Mexico and Guatemala produce narratives of decolonial history? What does the aesthetics of magical realism in Arabic, Quechua and Spanish, respectively, as evident in the works of the Kurdish writer Salim Barakat (Syria) and the mestizo writer José María Arguedas (Peru) tell us about the intersection of race, ethnicity, and indigenous epistemology? Ultimately, our goal is to trace how these texts contributed to global indigenous literature and the trans-historical and trans-geographical connections between them.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, several short response assignments (2- 3 pages each), final performance project, and final paper (5- to 7-pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Comparative Literature majors
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP or ARAB; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under GBST or HIST
Attributes: GBST Borders, Exiles + Diaspora Studies Electives;

Not offered current academic year

ARAB 397 (F) Independent Study: Arabic

Class Format: independent study
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
IND Section: 01 TBA Magnus T. Bernhardsson

ARAB 398 (S) Independent Study: Arabic

Class Format: independent study
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
IND Section: 01 TBA Magnus T. Bernhardsson

ARAB 401 (S) Topics in Advanced Arabic I: Contemporary Arab Cinema
Crosslistings: ARAB401 / COMP403

Primary Crosslisting
The Arab world is a fascinating region with rich traditions and vibrant societies. Through an exploration of contemporary Arab cinema, this course will introduce you to issues in modern Arab societies that represent the diversity of the region as well as the shared concerns and challenges. We will analyze select movies and texts, exploring how Arab filmmakers represent social, political, and economic change and realities in their societies. Some topics include nationalism and national identity, gender identities, civil wars, religion, social justice, and the recent revolts. The course will be conducted in Arabic, and we will employ linguistic and paralinguistic analyses of the movies as a means to explore modern Arab thought and cultures.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: essays, presentations, final paper, exam
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: ARAB 302
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 5
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Attributes: FMST Core Courses

Not offered current academic year
ARAB 411 (F) Happy Holidays! A Comparative History of Commemorations and Festivals (WI)
Crosslistings: ARAB411 / HIST411 / REL321

Secondary Crosslisting
What do our holidays tell us about ourselves and our societies? This seminar in religious, political and cultural history is in two parts. In the first half, we will explore the major holidays and festivals that emerged in the Middle East among the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). It will examine how certain events became ritualized and then spread to different parts of the globe and were adapted to specific cultural situations. We will consider the role of myth and commemoration and how various religious holidays are celebrated in different ways around the world. The second part of the seminar focuses on secular holidays with particular attention to the Modern Middle East. Which events are commemorated and how and what are the political implications of these celebrations?

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: several short response papers and a 20- to 25-page final paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: seniors, especially History and Arabic Studies majors
Expected Class Size: 12
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB
Attributes: HIST Group E Electives - Middle East;
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 412 Advanced Readings in Contemporary Arabic Literature
This course, taught in Arabic, aims at providing students with a deeper understanding of contemporary Arab literature. By navigating different literary moments, foci and genres, the course will offer a panoramic view of the contemporary literary map of the region. While the course will focus on some mainstream writers such as the Egyptian Naguib Mahfouz and the Sudanese Tayyib Salih, it will also feature stateless and non-canonical writers such as Alaa Al-Sarky and young poets using ‘amiyya' or colloquial Arabic as their main tool of expression. We will read short stories, excerpts from novels, literary critiques, interviews with authors, examples of classical and lyrical poetry, as well as watch a number of movies based on literary adaptations.

Through examining representative literary texts from various parts of the Arab region, students will not only broaden their awareness of the socio-political and cultural dynamics emanating from these works, but will also improve their linguistic and stylistic knowledge of Arabic at more sophisticated levels.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active participation in class, reading responses, presentations, blogs, quizzes, final paper
Prerequisites: ARAB 302 or permission of the instructor
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: Arabic Studies majors and certificate students
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

ARAB 415 (S) Beyond Headlines: Surveying the Arab Landscape through Arabic Media
How does Arabic media represent the Arab landscape? This course will explore Arabic media as a window to the understanding of modern Arab thought and culture. It will discuss Arabic media as a vehicle through which issues of political, historical, social, and economic significance in the Arab world are discussed, debated, and analyzed. Some issues include political and social freedoms, inter-Arab relations, national identity, recent revolts, gender identities, the Arabic language in a changing world, and technology in the age of globalization. The course will explore these issues as represented in the language of print, internet, television, movies, and social media, and we will employ linguistic and paralinguistic analysis of these resources.

Class Format: lecture
ARAB 416 (S)  Arabic Short Stories: Societies, Cultural narratives & Literary aesthetics

In this course we will explore the literary languages of Arabic and as well as various political and socio-economic issues via a selection of short stories that hail from geographically diverse authors. Being attentive to detailed readings of the text, their context, and the environment within which the author composed the text in question, we will weave our way through these short stories, developing the four language skills in addition to cultural competency. Although the course will avoid the monolithic approach of reading these stories as a social document that is a reflection or mirror of their societies, and will be equally concerned with the aesthetics of the Arabic literary narratives, the socio-economic and political issues discussed in the stories will be of relevance to the broader realms of Middle Eastern studies writ large. Tradition vs. modernity, the individual in opposition to the state, and gender issues are just some of the themes that will be discussed. In addition to the short stories provided, the class will engage in complimentary activities and material, like links to open source online videos and articles to expand on our knowledge of specific Arabic cultural and sociological phenomena. In addition to the short stories, there will be a short list of novels from which each member in the class will choose according to their interests. Reading the novel will be a term long project and will entail one-on-one meetings every two weeks with the instructor and will be tailored according to individual needs.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: preparation and active participation, response questions and vocabulary building homework, short 2-page essays, midterm video, and end of term paper (5-7 pages)

Prerequisites: ARAB 302 or by permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Arabic Studies students

Expected Class Size: 4

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01   TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm   Radwa M. El Barouni

ARAB 420 (F)  Current Events from the Maghreb and the Middle East

Students in this course will engage with authentic materials from Arabic media, covering the Maghreb and the Middle East. Using original content from newspapers, magazines, websites, TV channels, podcasts, and specialized news outlets, the course will take students from intermediate high to advanced high level. Through their active engagement with the course materials, students will acquire a very diverse vocabulary, strengthen their mastery of Arabic grammar, and perform advanced linguistic skills in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Moreover, students in this course will be able to produce substantial narratives about complicated and abstract topics, argue for or against an idea, and discuss a variety of topics in MSA. In addition to enhancing students’ listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, close, critical attention will be paid to deepening students’ cultural competence. Students are expected to give three presentations through the course of the semester, write weekly response papers in Arabic, participate in a collective project, and produce a final paper about a topic of their choosing in consultation with the instructor.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active participation, three presentations, collaborative project, final paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: ARAB 302 or permission of the Instructor
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: Arabic Studies majors and certificate students
Expected Class Size: 8
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01    MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Brahim El Guabli

ARAB 480 (F) Interpretations of the Israeli Palestinian Conflict (DPE) (WI)
Crosslistings: JWST480 / GBST480 / ARAB480 / HIST480

Secondary Crosslisting
This tutorial addresses the powerful, competing, and bitterly contested historical narratives that underpin the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Both Israelis and Palestinians appeal to history to legitimize their territorial claims and to justify contemporary action. Special attention will be paid to the interpretations of key historical moments, especially the 1948 and 1967 wars, and on the contrasting views of some of the core issues of the conflict (Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, terrorism).

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: 5- to 7-page essays or 2-page critiques due each week and a final report (3-4 pages) at the end of the semester
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none, though some academic experience with Middle East materials is preferred
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: History majors and Arabic Studies majors and Jewish Studies concentrators
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (DPE) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB DPE: This course challenges students to engage with difference and power in the longstanding Israeli Palestinian conflict though the reading of historical works that have different political motivations. Students will develop tools to comprehend the complexities of perspectives in Israel and Palestine, that often have to do with power and difference. Students will gain a better understanding of nationalism, state power, inequality, victimhood, desperation, corruption, and injustice and will hopefully therefore gain tools to seek equitable solutions to the conflict in the future. WI: As a tutorial, this course is writing-intensive while students employ and develop critical tools to interpret conflicting narratives of history and facts. Each week, students will develop their writing by providing constructive criticism of their partner’s papers. They will also learn how to receive criticism and ways to incorporate those suggestions in their future writings. Students will be given the opportunity to substantially revise their work on a regular basis.
Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives; HIST Group E Electives - Middle East; JWST Core Electives;

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1    TBA    Magnus T. Bernhardsson

ARAB 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Arabic Studies

Senior Thesis: Arabic Studies
Class Format: Independent thesis
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
HON Section: 01    TBA    Magnus T. Bernhardsson

ARAB 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Arabic Studies

Senior Thesis: Arabic Studies
Class Format: Independent thesis
Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019
HON Section: 01  TBA  Magnus T. Bernhardsson