

WOMEN IN THE MIDDLE EAST
PSCI 497-GDRS 400
Spring 2021

Dr. Ozum Yesiltas

Ferguson Social Science Room: 147

Ozum.Yesiltas@tamuc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to some of the current debates on women in the Middle East. We will particularly explore the rhetoric of “us” versus “them,” “East versus West” by studying questions of feminism, Orientalism, religion, and identity. We will analyze the rise of women’s movements in the region and the ways in which Muslim women are represented in Western political discourse.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate an awareness of gender differences among various regions, peoples, and cultures in the Middle East.
- Place current events and debates pertaining to women and gender in the Middle East in a broader historical perspective.
- Conduct advanced-level research and create, sustain, and present an argument based on that research in well-written essays.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Please refer to D2L to access all the reading material for the class.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

This is a fully online class. You’re required to follow the course requirements on D2L on a regular and timely basis. Grading rubrics will be provided on D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Reflections: Students are required to write weekly reflections (about 500-750 words) that critically engage each week’s seminar question. The seminar question for each week can be found on D2L. Weekly reflections should not be summaries. Instead, they should make a clear argument that responds to the seminar question based on the readings. You may compare and contrast the readings, critique the readings, offer fruitful alternative approaches, suggest new research questions that emerge from the readings, connect readings to current events, etc. Whatever style you follow, the requirement is to provide a well thought out response to the seminar question. These reflections are due **every Sunday, 11.55 pm.**

Online Debates: We will have 3 online debates about certain topics/questions on women and gender in the Middle East. Students will form debate teams and each team will advocate for a pro or con position on the designated debate topic. The topics will be specified by the professor and announced to the class ahead of time.

Short Papers: Students are required to complete two short papers based on the course readings. Short paper topics and due dates can be found on the course schedule on D2L. Short papers are expected to be around 1500 words (or about 5 pages) in length. A detailed guidelines and grading rubric for this assignment can be found on D2L.

Final Exam: The final exam will be in take home format and will be posted on D2L on **April 25** and will be due **April 27, 11.55 pm**. It will be composed of essay questions based on topics covered throughout the semester.

Format Requirements: All assignments must be double-spaced, typed and written with Times New Roman, 12-point font. Sources for each assignment must include books, academic articles and news pieces. All sources must be cited properly and listed in a bibliography or in footnotes/endnotes format. You may use any academically accepted format for citations. Failing to properly cite is plagiarism and leads to an F for the class.

GRADING

Your final course grade will be determined by your performance on the following components:

Course Requirements	Weight
Weekly Reflections	20%
Debates	15% (5% each)
Short Papers	30% (15% each)
Final Exam	35%
Total	100%

GRADE SCALE

90-100 = A
80-90 = B
70-80 = C
60-70 = D
Below 60 =F

MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-ups are allowed under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. Please request your make-up prior to the deadline. Documentary proof for your request might be required based on the circumstances. Post-deadline submission of assignments without an excuse will lead to loss of points.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. I expect everyone to be respectful of each other's perspectives and opinions while posting comments to discussion forums. Offensive/disrespectful comments will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is required to be responsible for honestly submitting research and work that is original and is the sole work of the individual. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs when a student purposefully or unintentionally takes information directly from a source without proper citation. If you are unclear about the ethics of an academic action, please consult me through email or make an appointment for a zoom meeting.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

A&M-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Texas Senate Bill-11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02R1.pdf> (and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

TAMUC'S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

A&M-Commerce requires the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories. Exceptions may be made by faculty where warranted. Faculty have management over their classrooms. Students not using face-coverings can be required to leave class. Repetitive refusal to comply can be reported to the Office of Students' Rights and Responsibilities as a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments.

COURSE SCHEDULE (The readings for each week are available on D2L)

Week 1 January 11-17

Gender and Orientalism: Introduction

Week 2 January 18-24

Problems in the Study of Middle Eastern Women

Week 3 January 25-31

Problems in the Study of Middle Eastern Women (continued)

Week 4 February 1-7

Reflections on Feminism and Islam in the Middle East

Week 5 February 8-14

Reflections on Feminism and Islam in the Middle East (continued)

Debate 1

Week 6 February 15-21

Feminism and Nationalism: Incompatible?

Week 7 February 22-28

Feminism and Nationalism: The Mobilization of Women in Palestine

Week 8 March 1-7

Feminism and Nationalism: The Mobilization of Women in Kurdistan

First Short Paper due: March 14, 11.55 pm.

Week 9 March 8-14

Representations of Muslim Women in Western Media: The Veil

Week 10 March 15-21

Representations of Muslim Women in Western Media: The Afghan Women
Debate 2

Week 11 March 22-28

Representations of Muslim Women in Western Media: The Kurdish Female Fighters

Week 12 March 29-April 4

Women and the Arab Spring: What is Arab Spring?

Week 13 April 5-11

Women and the Arab Spring: Tunisia

Week 14 April 12-18

Women and the Arab Spring: Egypt & Libya

Week 15 April 19-25

Debate 3

Second Short Paper due: April 25, 11.55 pm

Week 16 December 7-11

Final Exam due: April 27, 11.55 pm