

**GENDER POLITICS IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD
SOC 336G**

Professor Mounira Maya Charrad
Unique number : 44673
Fall 2015; GAR 0.132
TTH, 11 am – 12.30 pm.
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The University of Texas at Austin will provide upon request academic accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. For more information, call the office of the Dean of students at 471 6259.

University of Texas Honor Code: The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. Any student found guilty of scholastic dishonesty may receive an “F” in the course and be remanded to the appropriate University of Texas authorities for disciplinary action. For more information, view Student Judicial Services at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

Student Privacy: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that student privacy be preserved. Thus the posting of grades, even by the last four digits of the social security number, is forbidden. All communication will remain between the instructor and the student, and the instructor will not be able to share details of the student’s performance with parents, spouses, or any others.

Documented Disability Statement: The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

Global Cultures Flag: This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Writing Flag: This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers’ work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Course Description: The course is devoted to the study of gender politics in the Islamic world. It is designed to help students gain a better knowledge of the Islamic world and, at the same time, increase their understanding of major sociological concepts such as gender, social organization, culture, and politics. It shows how culture is mediated by politics, resulting in diverse interpretations of the cultural tradition and in different policies with respect to gender. We start by examining the themes and issues that are part of the common denominator of the

Islamic tradition. We then consider how the diversity can be explained and what factors contribute to it. The focus is on women's rights, which have been a key political issue in several countries and internationally.

Course Requirements: Students are encouraged to take an active role in discussing readings and raising questions. I expect students to attend class and to complete the assigned readings prior to coming to class. The requirements for the seminar are a take home midterm (4 pp.), a research paper (8-10 pp) and a presentation on the readings accompanied with a written summary (400 words each). The research paper is developed in stages during the course of the seminar on a topic chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor. Students are encouraged to do research on a topic of interest. They may conduct the research on their own or in teams. Examples of topics include will be discussed in class.

Grading Breakdown:

- Mid-term Take Home: 30 percent
- Presentations on the Readings: 20 percent
- Class Participation: 10 percent
- Research Paper: 40 percent

Grading System: is based on + and -. Overall semester averages will earn the following letter grades:

93-100: A	90-92: A-	80-82: B-	63-66: D
87-89: B+	83-86: B	70-72: C-	60-62: D-
77-79: C+	73-76: C	67-69: D+	0-59: F

Texts/Readings:

- E.W. Fernea, *Guests of The Sheik: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village*. Anchor, (GS) 1965.
 - M. M. Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco*. Berkeley: Univ of California Press, 2001 (SWR)
 - Fadela Amara, *Breaking the Silence: French Voices from the Ghetto*. Berkeley: UC Press 2006 (BTS).
- Articles** will be placed on Canvas.

Audiovisuals:

Audiovisuals are an integral part of the course and will be covered in the exams.

Note: Prominent scholars in the field and members of the Austin community engaged in relevant work will be invited as our guest lecturers. The dates for their visit to the seminar will be announced in the course of the semester depending on their availability. If any change is made to the syllabus, updated versions will be provided on Blackboard in the course of the semester. Make sure to check.

Additional Information:

- You are encouraged to study together and do collaborative projects, but anything you write can only be your own.
- Turn off cell phones.
- There will be no incomplete.
- Keep on your computer and a back up device until the end of the semester a file of every piece of writing you hand in.
- Attendance is mandatory; more than two unexcused absences will be reflected in the final grade. Students are held accountable for all lecture material.

- Excuses for missed exams will be considered only in rare, genuine circumstances and with proper medical documentation. If you are unable to bring a medical statement, provide a **typed note** in the form of a letter addressed to the instructor explaining the reasons for your absence.
- If a makeup exam must be taken for medical reasons, it will consist only of essay questions.
- There are no extra credit provisions for this course.
- Exams will include questions on the reading, lectures, videos and class discussions.

Wk 1. Aug 27. **INTRODUCTION**

Discussion: Images of Women in the Islamic World that prevail in the West?

Wk 2. Sept 1, 3. **ORGANIZATION OF TEAMS**

Library Research: Organization of teams for presentations and preliminary outlines.

Wk 3. Sept 8, 10. **CRITIQUE OF ORIENTALISM**

- Lila Abu Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving: Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others." *American Anthropologist* 2002. 104 (3): 783-790.
- Mounira M. Charrad, "Gender in the Middle East: State, Islam, Agency." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2011.

Wk 4. Sept 15, 17. **CONTENTIONS AND GLOBAL ISSUES**

- Mounira M. Charrad, "Contexts, Concepts and Contentions: Gender Legislation in the Middle East." *Hawwa: Journal of Women in the Middle East and the Islamic World*. 2007. Vol. 5 (1): 55-72.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE (1000 words). INDICATE THE TOPIC, THE MAIN POINT YOU THINK YOU WANT TO ARGUE, THE SECTIONS OF YOUR PAPER, THE CONTENT OF EACH SECTION, YOUR METHODOLOGY, AND AT LEAST 5 SOURCES. ORGANIZE THE PROPOSAL ACCORDING TO THE PARTS INDICATED ABOVE. LOCATE AT LEAST 5 SOURCES IN PRINT (BOOKS OR ARTICLES IN SCHOLARLY JOURNALS) AND 5 ON THE WEB OR IN POPULAR LITERATURE FOR YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT. HAND IN THE LIST OF SOURCES.

Wk 5. Sept 22, 24. **EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE HISTORY OF IRAQ**

- GS, Parts 1 and 2.

Wk 6. Sept 29, Oct 1. **ISLAMIC LAW**

- SWR, Preface, chs.1 and 2.

Wk 7. Oct 6, 8. **FAMILY STRUCTURE**

- SWR, chs 3 and 4.

Oct 6: Take Home Exam Due in Class

Wk 8. Oct 13, 15. **HOW SOME STATES EXPAND WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

- SWR, ch. 9

Wk 9. Oct 20, 22. **WOMEN DURING AND AFTER THE ARAB SPRING: STRUGGLES AND AGENCY**

Articles posted on Canvas

FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER DUE.

Wk 10. Oct 27, 29. **HOW MUSLIM WOMEN CLAIM THEIR HERITAGE AND THEIR CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS.**

BTS, Part 1, and Appendixes.

PEER REVIEW OF YOUR PAPER.

Wk 11. Nov 3, 5. **WRITING CENTER VISIT**

Nov 3: Writing Center

Nov 5: **Presentations on Research Paper** (4)

Wk 12. Nov 10, 12. **VEIL CONTROVERSIES**

Nov 10: **Presentations on Research Paper** (4)

Nov 12: Guest lecture TBA

Wk 13. Nov 17, 19. **Presentations on Research Paper** (8)

Wk 14. 24.

- Nov. 24. Leila (UT DVD 474): Issue of Polygamy past and present.
- Nov 26. Thanksgiving.

Wk 15. Dec 1, 3. **WRAPPING UP AND CONCLUSIONS**

Take away points and issues for further inquiry.

RESEARCH PAPER DUE.