

ELA250.xxx Modern Arabic Literature in Translation
Arab Lit Trans
Habiba Boumlik hboumlik@lagcc.cuny.edu
<http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/ela/faculty.htm>
Semester

Instructor's Information

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Class Schedule: xxx (Room: xxxx) & xxx (Room: xxxx)

Course goals and objectives

Catalog Course Description:

This course provides students with an opportunity to study Modern Arabic literature and to become familiar with the cultures of the Middle East and North Africa. In addition to major literary works illuminating changes in the Arab culture and society, screening of film adaptations of some master pieces of Arabic literary works will offer new perspectives about the lives and experiences of Arab writers. Class discussions will encompass Arab intellectuals and the modernization ideology in the 19th century; writing and diglossia, nation and nationalism; Arabic literature and colonialism; literature and war; patriarchy, sexuality, and religion.

Section Description

This course is a survey of modern Arabic literature in translation. It examines an array of literary writings from the late 19th century to the present and explores social, religious, and historical contexts in which these literary works were created. Readings include fiction, short stories, memoirs and polemical pieces as well as novels by Middle Eastern and North African writers. Particular attention is given to writings investigating contact between the Arab world and the West.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students are expected to be able to: 1. Demonstrate an understanding of major Arabic literary works from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, and an understanding of how these works reflect the characteristics of their authors, times, places, and cultural diversity; 2. Describe the peculiarities and universality of modern Arab fiction; 3. Develop critical skills in reading literary works while analyzing, evaluating, and discussing them independently and comparatively; 4. Increase the ability to work collaboratively with peers in presentations and critical discussions.

Prerequisites: ENC/ENG101

Flexible Core Objectives: Individual and Society

The course bears 3 credits that count as Flexible Core (Individual and Society) of the CUNY's new general education curriculum (Pathways).

In this course students will:

Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.

Interpret translated literary texts holistically in light of the Arabic cultural facts and the historical backgrounds of the time when the literary works were written. Reading translated literature demands integrative analyses of information collected from various sources such as texts, cultural knowledge, historical facts, political circumstances, and geographic facts. The class exercises are designed to achieve such integration of information from varieties of sources through lectures, discussions, and reflective essay writing.

Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.

The class exercises focus on the development of students' analytical skills for translated literary works, with which students read, decode, find patterns, and interpret literature. Students are expected to make systematic analysis of different works of Modern Arabic literature and coherently present writers' perspectives with some evidence from both within the literary texts and outside of the texts.

Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

Students are expected to present their ability to make cogent arguments on selected topics of the modern Arabic literature in the final paper and in the final presentation at the end of the course. Students are required to cite evidence appropriately to support conclusions.

Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of literary analysis exploring the relationship between the individual and society.

Through the lecture and discussion during the class, students are expected to become familiar with Arabic culture, the history of the Arab world, Arabic and Islamic art, and Arab perspectives. Depending students' previous coursework, methodologies and theories drawn from anthropology, history, sociology, political science, and psychology are discussed with respect to the literary texts.

Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of major Arabic literary works from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, and an understanding of how these works reflect the characteristics of their authors, times, places, and cultural diversity.

Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

In the context of the political and cultural changes of the 19th and 20th centuries in the Arab world and the global arena, students will understand and describe the peculiarities and universality of modern Arabic fiction. The role of cultural norm and stereotype within each Arab society will be discussed through analysis and literal interpretation of texts.

Textbook, grading, and other class logistics

Textbooks: The following textbooks are required for this class.

Salih J. Altoma (2005) Modern Arabic Literature in Translation. ISBN: 0863565972

Paul Starkey (2006) *Modern Arabic Literature*. ISBN: 9781589011359

Denys Johnson-Davies (1994) *Modern Arabic Short Stories*. ISBN: 978-0520089440

Grades: Your final grade will be determined based on the following evaluation points.

- **Participation: 5%**
Participation includes participating in class discussions and reading questions.
- **Five Quizzes: 25%**
These quizzes will cover either writers or genres.
- **Two 4-5 page short papers: 40%**
These papers will be interpretive essays using analytical methods discussed in the first week of class or a full report on a novel not covered in class. Possible paper topics will be discussed in class. Students will be asked to provide a hard copy (paper copy) as well as an electronic copy deposited in the course ePortfolio. At least 5 different sources must be cited.
- **Final Paper (6-10 pages): 30%**
This paper will be an interpretive essay using analytical methods or full reports on a novel NOT covered in class and from a time period that students are particularly interested in. Possible paper topics will be discussed in class. Students will be asked to provide a hard copy (paper copy) as well as an electronic deposited in the course ePortfolio. At least 8 different sources must be cited.
- **Grade distributions:** **A:** 95-100%, **A-:** 90-94%, **B+:** 86-89%, **B:** 83-85%, **B-:** 80-82%, **C+:** 76-79%, **C:** 73-75%, **C-:** 70-72%, **D+:** 66-69%, **D:** 63-65%, **D-:** 60-62%, **F:** -59%, **WU:** Unofficial withdraw (≈F), **W:** Withdraw

Weekly schedule (subject to change)

Week	Topic
Week 1	Course introduction and requirements: Overview of Arabic literary works and methods of analysis of fiction 19th Century Fiction– Egypt Lecture and discussion Distribution of discussion questions for the reading
Week 2	Autobiographical Essays Taha Hussein, <i>An Egyptian Childhood /The Days</i> (1932)
Week 3	In-class screening: Edward Said on “Orientalism” Fiction Naguib Mahfouz, <i>Children of the Alley</i> (1959) Quiz 1 (5%)
Week 4	Fiction Naguib Mahfouz, <i>The Beggar</i> (1965) First draft of short paper 1 due
Week 5	Novels Ghassan Knanafani, <i>All That's Left to You</i> (1966)
Week 6	Fiction: anthologies

	Hanna Mina, <i>Fragments of Memory</i> (1975) Quiz 2 (5%)
Week 7	Fiction: Novels Abd al-Rahman Munif, <i>Endings</i> (1977) In-class writing assignment Short paper 1 due (20%)
Week 8	Short Stories Ulfat Idilbi, <i>Sabriya</i> (1980) Quiz 3 (5%) First draft of short paper 2 due
Week 9	Short Stories Elias Khoury, <i>City Gates</i> (1981) Quiz 4 (5%)
Week 10	Drama Nawal el Saadawi, <i>The Fall of the Imam</i> (1988) Short paper 2 due (20%)
Week 11	Poetry Salih al-Tayyib, <i>Season of Migration to the North</i> (1967) Quiz 5 (5%)
Week 12	Women and Literature Mansoura ez-Eldin, <i>Maryam's Maze</i> (2004) Discussion of Final Paper
Final	Final Paper due (30%)

Policies

Classroom policies: The following policies have been instituted to ensure an optimal learning experience for all students:

- Please arrive on time.
- Please turn your cell phone to silence during class.
- Please turn off your cell phone during the exam and the quiz.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. The absolute maximum of unexcused absences is 5 hours. Students who miss more than the allowable number of class hours may receive an F in the course for non-attendance. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning process; therefore, after ten minutes students are marked absent for that hour.

Missed Work

If a student is absent, he/she must come to the next class having done the reading and homework for the day, and he/she is responsible for the missed work. Students are encouraged to get the phone numbers of at least two classmates so that they can always come to class prepared.

Name _____

Phone # _____

Name _____

Phone # _____

Valuing LaGuardia’s Diversity: As a college community we represent a world of perspectives on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, and nationality, to name a few. I concur with **the College’s Declaration of Pluralism**, if you have any suggestions in helping me to create a welcoming classroom environment, please tell me.

Rules for Personal Conduct: You are expected to obey the rules and regulations of the College about conduct. Disorderly or indecent behavior is not appropriate in a college setting. It is a violation of college rules and is not acceptable.

The academic dishonesty policy: As stated in the catalog: "Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in the City University of New York and is punishable by penalties ranging from a grade of 'F' on a given test, research paper or assignment, to an 'F' in the course or suspension or expulsion from the College. Academic Dishonesty includes:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism
- Internet Plagiarism
- Obtaining Unfair Advantages
- Falsification of Records and Official Documents
- Misconduct in Internships (117)

Policy on assigning the grade of Incomplete: As stated in the college catalogue: "The Incomplete grade may be awarded to students who have not completed all of the required course work but for whom there is a reasonable expectation of satisfactory completion. A student who is otherwise in good standing in a course defined as complying with the college attendance policy and maintaining a passing average but who has not completed at most two major assignments or examinations by the end of the course may request an incomplete grade. To be eligible, such a student must provide, before the instructor submits grades for the course, a documented reason, satisfactory to the instructor, for not having completed the assignment on time. Instructors giving IN grades must inform students in writing of the conditions under which they may receive passing grades. Departments may designate certain courses in which no incomplete grades may be awarded." (120).

Declaration of pluralism: The Education and Language Acquisition Department embraces diversity. We respect each other regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, disability and social class. For detailed information regarding the policy, please refer to Student Handbook 2011-2012 (p.89).