WOMEN AND GENDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Loyola University Maryland
HS 448D.01, Fall 2013
T TH, 3:05pm-4:20pm
Knott Hall, Room 009

Instructor: Dr. Sara Scalenghe
Office: Humanities Center 303
Office Hours: T TH, 12:30pm-2:30pm,
and by appointment
Email: sscalenghe@loyola.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In the Western media, Middle Eastern women are routinely portrayed as oppressed, and Islam is frequently cited as the most significant source of such oppression. But precisely how and to what degree are women oppressed in the region? This upper-level course is designed to provide a nuanced historical understanding of the history of women and gender in the Middle East and North Africa, here defined as the Arab world, Turkey, and Iran. In the first part of the course we will conduct a broad chronological survey from pre-Islamic times to the present day, paying special attention to different interpretations of the foundational texts of Islam (the Qur’an and Hadith), to Western representations of the “Oriental woman,” and to the rise of women’s movements in the region. The second part of the course will comprise an in-depth exploration of some of today’s most contested issues. These include Islamic law, honor crimes, female genital cutting, same-sex sexuality, the veil, and women’s participation in the recent uprisings in the Arab world. Prerequisite: HS101, WR100 or WR101.

LEARNING AIMS
Students who have completed this course shall be able to:
• Demonstrate a solid foundation in the history of women and gender in the Middle East and North Africa.
• Place current events and debates pertaining to women and gender in the Middle East and North Africa in a broader historical perspective.
• Comprehend different historical methodologies.
• Conduct advanced-level research including library and web-based sources.
• Create, sustain, and present an argument based on that research in well-written essays.
• Discern appropriate and inappropriate sources and effectively weigh the use of evidence.

The course supports the Loyola Undergraduate Learning Aims of intellectual excellence, critical understanding, eloquentia perfecta, aesthetics, leadership, faith and mission, promotion of justice, diversity, and wellness (for a detailed description of these aims, please refer to http://www.loyola.edu/undergraduate/academics/learning-aims.aspx).
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Attendance and Participation (10%). You are expected to complete all readings prior to coming to class, and you must be prepared to both answer and pose questions about them. I will call on you! The grade will be calculated as follows. If you participate regularly and thoughtfully: 90-100% (A-/A/A+); if you participate occasionally but thoughtfully: 80-89% (B-/B/B+); if you rarely participate: 70-79% (C-/C/C+); if you never participate: 50-69% (F-/D-/D/D+). In order to participate, you must of course be present. Class attendance is therefore mandatory and will be recorded. If you are absent due to sickness you must bring me a note from your doctor or the Student Health Center. Do not be late for class, as it is disrespectful and disruptive to me and to your classmates and will lower your grade. If you miss one class without documentation, your participation grade will automatically drop to 90% (A-); 2 missed classes: 85% (B); 3 missed classes: 75% (C); 4 missed classes: 65% (D); 5 or more missed classes: 50% (F). If assigned, the film worksheets will count towards participation.

2) Tests (10%). There will be two tests, on September 12 and November 12, respectively. They consist in maps and/or multiple-choice questions, fill-in-the-blanks questions, and short answers. They are intended to test your factual knowledge of the material covered, to ensure that you are keeping up with the readings, and to help you to prepare for the midterm and final exams.

3) Midterm exam (20%), on October 8. Maps, identifications, and essays. A study guide will be provided approximately one week before the exam.

4) Research paper proposal (10%), due on Thursday, October 24.

5) Research paper (30%), about 15 pages in length, due on Tuesday, December 3. Detailed instructions will be provided separately.

6) Final exam (20%), 1pm--4pm on Thursday, December 12, in our regular classroom. Maps, identifications, and essays. A study guide will be provided during the last class.

*** You must complete ALL the assignments in order to pass the course.

Laptop policy
You may bring laptops to class, but for the exclusive purpose of taking notes. I reserve the right to ban laptop use if I see that you are checking your email, Facebook, etc.

About returning papers and exams
While I will make every effort to return your work in a timely fashion, usually within two weeks, please understand that it may not always be possible for me to do so.
Assignments, PowerPoint presentations, outlines, readings, primary sources, and study guides will be posted on Moodle.

The best way to reach me outside of class and office hours is by email at sscalenghe@loyola.edu. I will do my best to respond within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours during the weekend. Given the very high volume of emails I receive daily, please write to me only if there is an urgent matter that cannot wait until the next class or office hours. For example, if you are absent, please refrain from emailing me to ask what was covered in class (check the syllabus, Moodle, or ask your classmates instead). Please include the course number, HS-448D, in the subject heading of your message.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to be familiar with Loyola University’s policies on academic integrity, which is explained in the Student Honor Code (http://www.loyola.edu/academic/honorcode/). Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students caught plagiarizing, or violating the Honor Code in any way, should expect to fail the course and to be reported to the Honor Council. If you submit any work with your name affixed to it, I assume that work is your own and that all sources are indicated and documented in the text (with quotations and/or citations). If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to me.

Student Athletes
If you are a student athlete, please provide me with your travel and game schedule indicating when you will need to miss class to participate in athletic events. While travel for athletics is an excused absence, you will need to make up any missed work. Do send me a reminder email before each missed class.

Students with Disabilities
I will make every effort to support and accommodate students with disabilities. If you already registered with Disability Support Services (DSS) and requested an accommodations letter (and DSS has sent the letter to me via email), please schedule a brief meeting with me to discuss the accommodations you might need in this class. If you need academic accommodations due to a disability and have not registered with DSS, please contact the Disability Support Services Office (DSS) at 410-617-2750/2062 or at DSS@loyola.edu. I also encourage you to familiarize yourself with Loyola’s excellent DSS resources at http://www.loyola.edu/department/dss.aspx.

GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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</tbody>
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3
REQUIRED READINGS
The following book must be purchased and is available at the Loyola bookstore. All other readings, as well as any PowerPoint presentations and videos, will be posted on Moodle.


CLASS SCHEDULE

September 3 (T)  Introduction to the Course

September 5 (TH)  Introduction to the Middle East and North Africa
Required reading:

September 10 (T)  Women in the Pre-Islamic Middle East
Required reading:

September 12 (TH)  Historical Background: Early Islamic History
Required reading:

⇒Test 1

September 17 (T)  Women and the Rise of Islam
Required reading:

**September 19 (TH)**  
**Women in the Qur’an**  
Required reading:  

**September 24 (T)**  
**Amina Wadud**  
Required reading (all available on Moodle):  
1) PBS Frontline: An Interview with Amina Wadud.  
[http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/interviews/wadud.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/interviews/wadud.html)  
2) Women as Imams.  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgPiSFXTZ4I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgPiSFXTZ4I)  
3) Amina Wadud: Bringing women’s voices to sacred text.  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luyjABV1nYw&list=PL55KyoZFB5beMmMs-tC2FYvRy51Wn5L-rc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luyjABV1nYw&list=PL55KyoZFB5beMmMs-tC2FYvRy51Wn5L-rc)

**September 26 (TH)**  
**Women in the Hadith**  
Required reading:  

**October 1 (T)**  
**Women in the Abbasid, Medieval, and Ottoman Periods**  
Required reading:  

**October 3 (TH)**  
**Orientalism and Gender**  
Required reading:  


October 8 (T) Midterm exam

October 10 (TH) Historical Background: The Middle East in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Required reading:

October 15 (T) “Colonial Feminism”

Required reading:

October 17 (TH) The Rise of Women’s Movements

Required reading:

October 22 (T) Islamist Voices

Required reading:

**October 24 (TH)**  
**Film:** *Persepolis*. Directed by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud. Culver City, Calif.: Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2007.

Required reading: 

⇒Paper proposals due

**October 29 (T)**  
**Islamic Law: Background**  
Required reading: None.

**October 31 (TH)**  
**Islamic Law: Marriage and Divorce**  
Required reading: 

**November 5 (T)**  
**Islamic Law: Property and Legal Capacity**  
Required reading: 

**November 7 (TH)**  
**Honor Crimes**  
Required reading:  
1) Kecia Alia, “Honor Killings, Illicit Sex, and Islamic Law.”  
[http://www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/muslim/honor.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/muslim/honor.html)  
[http://www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/muslim/honor-texts.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/projects/fse/muslim/honor-texts.html)  

**November 12 (T)**  
**Catch-up day and/or film**

⇒Test 2

**November 14 (TH)**  
**Female Genital Cutting (FGC)**  
Required reading:

November 19 (T)  **Same-Sex Sexuality**
Required reading:

⇒Optional: drafts of papers due

November 21 (TH):  **Masculinities**
Required reading:

November 26 (T):  **Women and Gender in the Arab Uprisings 1**
Required reading:

November 28 (TH):  Thanksgiving. No class.

December 3 (T):  **Women and Gender in the Arab Uprisings 2**
Required reading:
1) *Middle East Report 268-Gender Front Lines* (Vol. 43, Fall 2013).

⇒Final research papers due

December 5 (TH):  **Summing Up**
Required reading: