

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

School of Arts and Humanities
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
408 Humanities Building / 900 13th Street South / 205-934-4652
www.uab.edu/foreignlang/

ARA 399-1C: The Politics of Identity in the Arab World



MWF 10:00 am-10:50 am HB 424

Prof. Lamia Ben Youssef Zayzafoon
HB 408

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Office Hours, fall 2009
MF 12:00 pm-12:50 pm
M 2:00 pm-2:30 pm
F 2:00 pm-3pm
And by appointment.

Arabic Conversation Table

Friday 3:00pm-5:40pm HUB

Course Description:

This Advanced Arabic course emphasizes intensive conversation, technical readings and vocabulary pertinent to the political field through selected authentic texts which

focus on the theme of nation and identity in the Arabic-speaking world. The course focuses on practical vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, political and economic terminology and cultural patterns in both standard Arabic and its dialectical variations. The course will continue to deepen and refine students' knowledge of the grammatical structures with a focus on comprehension and discussion of texts. An important part of the course will be devoted to building the students' oral and written proficiency skills. Course materials include historical documents, political tracts, novels, music, newspapers, political cartoons, nationalist myths, and films. Course format consists of student-centered discussions and lectures.

Learning outcomes:

At the end of this course, students should be able:

- To discuss the history of Arab nationalism from the Ottoman Period to the current American war in Iraq in Arabic.
- To describe in the target language the various linguistic, ethnic, religious, and geographic diversity of the Arab world.
- To engage in contemporary issues happening in the Arab world such as the debate between secularism and religion.
- To discuss the various artistic expressions produced in the Arabic-speaking Middle East in their specific historical context.
- To analyze the significance of ethics and civic responsibility from the perspective of the Arabic-speaking world.

Grades:

Participation	10%
Homework	10%
Oral presentation	10%
Mid Term (press review)	15%
Email Discussion	10%
Arabic Conversation Table	5%
Final Project (Country Portfolio)	40%

Homework:

It includes both reports and other homework activities assigned by your instructor.

Cultural Event Report Guidelines

You only have five (5) days after the event to turn in your **1-page, double-spaced, typed**, cultural event reports, no more. At least one report must be submitted by the end of September; a second report, by the end of October; a third report, by the end of November; and a fourth report, by the end of the semester.

The cultural event reports must include, but are not limited to, the following elements:

- Title of the event
- Date of the event
- Location of the event
- Duration of the event
- Duration of time you spent at the event
- Name of event organizer(s)

- Stated purpose of the event – may be found on event flyer or advertisement or by speaking to event organizer(s).
- Your expectations before attending the event
- Your general impressions of the event
- An assessment of your level of engagement at the event
- An assessment of how the event represented concepts from the course, if at all

The above elements must be incorporated into complete, grammatically correct sentences. *Do not submit a list of the above elements in place of a well-written report.* For information about events on/off campus, please check the departmental web page (www.uab.edu/foreignlang) and select the "Event Calendar" link.

Oral Presentation:

Each student must present a power point presentation about the topic of national identity in an Arabic-speaking country of her/his choice (15 mns).

Press Review: each student must follow a particular event happening in the Arab world and analyze it in Arabic through various media channels.

Email Discussion: Every 3 weeks, students will be assigned a topic to discuss by instructor. (20 lines per entry). The entries will be graded according to the following criteria: 1. response to the previous email or emails if any; correct usage of Arabic language; research and/or contribution to the quality of conversation; and punctuality in turning in assignments.

Final Project (Country Portfolio): Using one country of your choice, explain the historical, economic and political processes through which a particular Arabic national culture has been transformed and reinvented from within and without.

N.B. By accepting this syllabus, students automatically give me permission to use data collected from their oral and written class performance in my publications. If you do not want me to use your work, please notify me of your objection via mail before September 20, 2009.

Tentative schedule

August 19	Course Introduction: <i>Inhibition</i> Tunisian short film (2004)
August 21	Who are the Arabs? “Fleeting Heterotopias” By Mahmoud Darwish
August 24	Passport by Mahmoud Darwish
August 26	“I am Joseph, O Father” By Mahmoud Darwish
August 28	Pre-Islamic Period
August 31	Pre-Islamic period
September 2	The Concept of the Umma in the Qur’an
September 4	The Concept of the Umma Arabic Imaginary
September 7	Labor Day Holiday

September 9	Arabitude in Islamic exegesis
September 11	Abbassid Literature
September 14	Andalusian Arabic Literature
September 16	Andalusian Arabic Literature
September 18	Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddima (selected excerpts)
September 21	Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddima (selected excerpts)
September 23	Nahdha Movement
September 2	North Africa (Taher al Haddad)
September 28	North Africa (Taher al Haddad)
September 30	North Africa (Abu Kacem Chebbi)
October 2	North Africa (Abu Kacem Chebbi)
October 5	WWII
October 7	WWII
October 9	Nasser
October 12	From French Algeria to Arab Algeria
October 14	From Arab Algeria to Amazigh Algeria
October 16	No Classes: Fall Break
October 19	(Mid Term Press Review is due)
October 21	Personal Status Code (Tunisia)
October 23	Personal Status Code (Tunisia)
October 26	Arabitude in Political Cartoons
October 28	Nation and Narration through selected oil paintings from North Africa
October 30	Presentation
November 2	Guestspeaker: Visit of Dr. Taoufik Ben Amor
November 4	Presentation
November 6	Presentation
November 9	Presentation
November 11	Presentation
November 13	"Drawing my Homeland" by Nizar Qabbani
November 16	"Writing on the Walls of my Exile" by Nizar Qabbani
November 18	"The Ruler and the Sparrow" and "The Courts of the Inquisition" by Nizar Qabbani
November 20	Arabitude in Arabic pop culture
November 23	Religion and secularism in the Arab world Raja Ben Slama/Olfa Youssef
November 25-27	No Classes: Thanksgiving Holiday
November 30	Debate over religion and secularism in the Arab world
December 2	Oral Presentation of Final Research Project
December 4	Oral Presentation of Final Research Project
Finals Week	December 7-11
December 11	Friday 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Additional Information:

FLMS (Foreign Language Media Services) is a computer lab for Foreign Languages students but also opened to all UAB students. It is located on the 4th floor of the Humanities Building (HB 402). All documentaries shown in class are available on the FLMS video server, accessible from the FLMS computer lab. Please go to FLMS and click on the “Video Assets” icon on your workstation. Then click on FLL 120, and the appropriate video you want to watch.

For more information about **foreign language courses and study-abroad opportunities**, please visit our UAB Department of Foreign Languages homepage: <http://www.uab.edu/foreignlang/>

International Scholars and Students Services offer a variety of international programs that you may be interested in and which may count for you to complete your International Events assignment. Please check their website and click on ISSS Calendars and Activities: www.uab.edu/iss

For more information about **free screenings of foreign films at UAB**, please visit the UAB Foreign Film Series webpage: <http://www.uab.edu/foreignlang/Foreign-Film-Series-2008-9.html>