



GS/SO 250 – GENDER AND SOCIETY IN NORTH AFRICA AND BEYOND
IES Abroad Rabat

DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce the students to the challenging questions related to gender identities and gender issues in North African societies in general, but with a particular focus on the Moroccan context. It exposes students to foundational gender and social concepts, and prepares them to engage in discussions of key debates animating the field. It asks students to examine diverse topics such as history, religion, culture, education, politics, sexuality, youth, development, globalization, and resistance in order to understand the formation of social hierarchies, privilege, and gender inequality. We will read texts and articles, watch videos, visit some women's associations, and discuss how gender, modernization, and social change affect North African societies.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

ADDITIONAL COST: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

The course will follow a mixed lecture-seminar format. Meetings consist of lectures, discussions, video screenings, students' oral presentations, and periodic written assignments. Marks will be based on one mid-term test, a research paper on a topic related to one of the subjects of the course, and a final exam, in addition to class participation (through formal presentations based on the required readings).

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Active class participation and attendance - 30%
- Midterm exam - 20%
- Term paper (8-15 pages) - 30%
- Final exam - 20%

Course Readings

All readings are required. It is vital that you complete the reading in full before each class, and that you read closely, in a way that allows you time to think about the material before coming to our discussion. All readings on the syllabus are on Moodle.

Active Class Participation

Attendance at all lectures, video screenings, presentations, and discussions are mandatory. You will only receive credit for participation if you make regular, quality contributions to class discussions. There will be periodic writing assignments responding to readings and/or discussion topics as well.

Midterm Exam

Essay response to questions based on course material.

Term Paper

The term paper will be 8-15 pages and is due the week before the final exam.

Choose a Moroccan or North African issue, person, event, theory, or movement about which you are particularly passionate and on which you can collect relevant data. The issue must pertain to women and gender in North Africa. Research it extensively; remember to think with a gender analytical lens attentive to the intersectionality of oppression and resistance; and write critically with support



for a clear argument. This is not simply a descriptive research paper. It should have a thesis statement that is supported by evidence and a discernible analysis of a fieldwork.

Use a wide array of sources. A research essay of this size should have at least 5 sources (scholarly books and journal articles). These sources can include up to two articles from your textbooks. The paper ought to be 8-15 pages typed, double-spaced pages, including citations with footnotes, and a bibliography.

Final Exam

Critical essay response to questions based on course material.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Acquire a profound knowledge of contemporary feminist scholarship and activism in North Africa and their engagement with power.
- Gain a multi-disciplinary understanding of women's contemporary writings in North Africa.
- Develop a sense of the complexity of gender issues and the challenges facing a gender-based reform.
- Obtain an understanding of the challenges Muslim women are facing within the context of "change" in North Africa and Morocco in particular.
- Develop an individual and critical approach to gender and society issues in North Africa.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Class attendance is compulsory. Each student will be allowed only two unexcused absences throughout the course. For each unexcused absence beyond this there will be a reduction in the final grade. Students who are late to class on a regular basis will also receive a reduction in their final grade and/or disciplinary action.

Students should not exceed 2 absences in each (45 hours) content course.

Students should not exceed 4 absences in the (90 hours) Arabic language course.

Any additional absence would lower the grades as follows:

- 1 more absence = will lower the final grade by 5 %
- 2 more absences= will lower the final grade by 10 %
- 3 more absences = will lower the grade by 15 %
- 4 more absences = will lower the grade by 20 %

Any additional absences will continue to lower the final grade by 5% increments.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 1	General Introduction: Approaches, Theories, and Concepts - Introduction to the Course, Approaches, Theories, and Concepts - Foundational Works on Gender in the MENA Region	Required readings: - Mounira Charrad, “Gender in the Middle East, State, Islam and Agency”, The Annual Review of Sociology, 2011. - Fatima Mernissi, “The Veil and the Male: A Feminist Interpretation of Women’s Rights in Islam” Preface, Introduction and Ch. 3. - Mounira Charrad, “Common Heritage of the Maghreb”, in The State and Women’s Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. 2001, pp.15-80 Extra readings: - Loiusa Ait Hamadouche, Women in the Maghreb: Stereotypes and Realities, in Yahia H. Zoubir and Haizam Amirah-Fernandez, North Africa, New York: Routledge, pp:202-225. - Leila Abouzeid, Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman’s Journey Toward Independence, Austin: University of Texas, 2009, Introduction.
Session 2	General Introduction: Approaches, Theories, and Concepts - Screening of the documentary <i>Feminism Inshallah: a History of Arab Feminism</i> - Followed by debate and discussion	Extra readings: - Loiusa Ait Hamadouche, Women in the Maghreb: Stereotypes and Realities, in Yahia H. Zoubir and Haizam Amirah-Fernandez, North Africa, New York: Routledge, pp:202-225. - Leila Abouzeid, Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman’s Journey Toward Independence, Austin: University of Texas, 2009, Introduction.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 3	Between Secular and Islamic Feminisms	Required readings: - Leila Ahmed, "The First Feminists", Ch. 9, in <i>Women and Gender in Islam</i>. 1992. - Marnia Lazreg, "Feminism and Difference: The Perils of Writing as a Woman on Women in Algeria", in <i>Feminist Studies</i>, 1988. Extra readings: - Ahmed, Leila. <i>Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992. - William Zartman, 'Political Dynamics of the Maghrib: The Cultural Dialectic', in Halim Barakat ed, <i>Contemporary North Africa</i>, Washington: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1985, pp:20-36. - Moghadam, Valentine, <i>Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East</i>, Boulder: L. Rienner, 1993. - Clinton Bennett, <i>Muslims and Modernity: An introduction to the Issues and Debates</i>, London and New York: Continuum, 2005, pp: 17-30.
Session 4	Between Secular and Islamic Feminisms Screening of the documentary <i>Casablanca Calling</i>	Required readings: - Margot Badran, "Between Secular and Islamic Feminism/s: Reflections on the Middle East and Beyond in <i>JMEWS</i>, 2005. - Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others," <i>American Anthropologist</i> 104, no. 3 (2002). Extra readings: - Ahmed, Leila. <i>Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992. - William Zartman, 'Political Dynamics of the Maghrib: The Cultural Dialectic', in Halim Barakat ed, <i>Contemporary North Africa</i>, Washington: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1985, pp:20-36. - Moghadam, Valentine, <i>Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East</i>, Boulder: L. Rienner, 1993. - Clinton Bennett, <i>Muslims and Modernity: An introduction to the Issues and Debates</i>, London and New York: Continuum, 2005, pp: 17-30.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 5	Family Law Reforms in the MENA Region: Issues and Stakes	Required readings: • Mounira Charrad, “Contexts, Concepts and Contentious: Gender Legislation as Politics in the Middle East” In Hawwa, 2007. • Emanuela Dalmasso, Francesco Cavatorta, “Reforming the Family Code in Tunisia and Morocco - the Struggle between Religion, Globalization and Democracy” in Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions, 2010. • Emanuela Dalmasso, ‘Family Code in Morocco’; State Feminism or Democracy?”, Paper to be presented at the 2nd ECPR Graduate Conference, Barcelona, August 26, 2008. Extra readings: • Halim Barakat, ‘The Arab and the Challenge of Social Transformation’ in Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, Women and the Family in the Middle East, Austin, University of Texas Press, pp:27-47. • Mir-Hosseini, Ziba. “How the Door of Ijtihad Was Opened and Closed: A Comparative Analysis of Recent Family Law Reforms in Iran and Morocco,” in <u>Washington and Lee Law Review</u>, Vol. 64, No.4 (2007).
Session 6	Amazizgh Village Trip	Extra readings: • Halim Barakat, ‘The Arab and the Challenge of Social Transformation’ in Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, Women and the Family in the Middle East, Austin, University of Texas Press, pp:27-47. • Mir-Hosseini, Ziba. “How the Door of Ijtihad Was Opened and Closed: A Comparative Analysis of Recent Family Law Reforms in Iran and Morocco,” in <u>Washington and Lee Law Review</u>, Vol. 64, No.4 (2007).

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 7	Women Challenging Patriarchy: Islamic Feminism and Female Religious Leadership Guest lecturer, Dr. Aziza Ouguir (researcher on female religious leadership)	Required readings: - Cooke, Miriam. "A Muslim Sister" in <i>Women Claim Islam: Creating Islamic Feminism through Literature</i>. New York: Routledge, 2001. - Wadud, Amina. <i>Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective</i>, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. - Mernissi, Fatima, <i>The Veil and the Male Elite: a Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam</i>, Addison-Wesley, 1991.
Session 8	Women Challenging Patriarchy: Islamic Feminism and Female Religious Leadership Documentary screening, <i>Women and Islam: New Perspectives</i>	Required readings: - Nikki R Keddie, "Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender" in <i>Women in the Middle East: Past and Present</i>. 2007. - Nadera Shelhoub Keverokian, "Reexamining Femicide: Breaking the Silence and Crossing "Scientific" Borders", in <i>Signs</i>, 2002.
Session 9	Gender, Sexuality, and Islam	Required readings: - Bouhdiba Abdelwahad, 'Festivities of violence: Circumcision and the Making of Men', pp:20-29 - Mai Ghossoub and Emma Sinclair-Webb, 'Imagined Masculinities', pp:1-47 - Kecia Ali, <i>Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence</i>, pp:75-96
Session 10	Gender, Sexuality, and Islam Fieldwork trip to an Islamist/secular feminist NGO or guest lecturer (feminist activist)	
Session 11	Review Session	
Session 12	Midterm Exam	
Session 13	SPRING BREAK	

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 14	Final paper and student presentations topic selection	
Session 15	Gender and Development	Required readings: • Kapchan Deborah, "In The Place of the Market", Gender on the Market: Moroccan Women and the Revoicing of Tradition. 1996. • Mernissi Fatima, "Women and the Impact of Capitalist Development in Morocco Part I and II" in Feminist Issues, 19982/1983. • Edna Acosta-Bellen & Christine E. Bose, 'From Structural Subordination to Empowerment: Women nd Development in Third World Contexts', Gender & Society, Vol.4 No, 3, September1990, 299-320. • Raham Bourquia, "Women, Uncertainty and Reproduction in Morocco", Presented at the Population Council Symposium on Family, Gender, and Population Policy: International Debates and Middle Eastern Realities, Cairo, Egypt, February 7-9, 1994.
Session 16	Gender and Space (Public Sphere and Urbanism)	Required readings: • Miriam Hoexter, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, Nehemia Levtzion, The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002, pp: 1-9. • Mernissi, Fatima, Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood, Massachussetts, Perseus Books, 1994, pp:1-12.
Session 17	Gender and Space (Public Sphere and Urbanism)	Required readings: • Stephanie Willman Bordat, Susan Schaefer Davis, Saida Kouzzi, "Women as Agents of Grassroots Change: Illustrating Micro-Empowerment in Morocco", in Journal of Middle East Women's Studies, 2011. • Rachel Newcomb, "Gendering the City, Gendering the Nation: Contesting Urban Space in Fes, Morocco". In Rollins Scholarship Online, 2006.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 18	Gender and Education	Required readings: - Chrisie J. Edwards, Gender Budget Analysis in Morocco: Achieving Education Parity for Women and Girls, DePaul Rule of Law Journal, International Human Rights Law Institute, Fall 2010. - Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi and Valentine M. Moghadam, “Empowering Women, Developing Society: Female Education in the MENA”, in Population Reference Bureau, 2003. - Christine M. Ostrosky, “Women’s Access to Education in the MENA”, A Report published in 2015.
Session 19	Gender and Education Fieldwork trip to a secular feminist/Islamist NGO	
Session 20	Gender and Political Participation	Required readings: - Chrisie J. Edwards, Gender Budget Analysis in Morocco: Achieving Education Parity for Women and Girls, DePaul Rule of Law Journal, International Human Rights Law Institute, Fall 2010. - Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi and Valentine M. Moghadam, “Empowering Women, Developing Society: Female Education in the MENA”, in Population Reference Bureau, 2003. - Christine M. Ostrosky, “Women’s Access to Education in the MENA”, A Report published in 2015. Extra readings: - Sherine, Hafez. The Terms of Empowerment: Islamic Women Activists in Egypt. American University Press. Cairo. 2001.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 21	NO CLASS, desert trip	Required readings: • Chrisie J. Edwards, Gender Budget Analysis in Morocco: Achieving Education Parity for Women and Girls, DePaul Rule of Law Journal, International Human Rights Law Institute, Fall 2010. • Farzaneh Roudi-Fahimi and Valentine M. Moghadam, “Empowering Women, Developing Society: Female Education in the MENA”, in Population Reference Bureau, 2003. • Christine M. Ostrosky, “Women’s Access to Education in the MENA”, A Report published in 2015. Extra readings: • Sherine, Hafez. The Terms of Empowerment: Islamic Women Activists in Egypt. American University Press. Cairo. 2001.
Session 22	Gender in/and Social Movements	Required readings: • Loubna H. Skalli (2011): Generational Politics and Renewal of Leadership in the Moroccan Women's Movement, International Feminist Journal of Politics, 13:3, 329-348. • Salime, Zakia (2012). A New Feminism? Gender Dynamics in Morocco’s February 20th Movement. Journal of International Women's Studies, 13(5), 101-114.
Session 23	Gender in/and Social Movements	Required readings: • Rabea Naciri, “The Women’s Movement in the Maghreb: With Emphasis on Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria”, in Al Raida, 2003. • Hanane Darhour and Drude Dahelrup, “Sustainable representation of Women through Gender Quotas: A decade’s Experience in Morocco”, in Women’s Studies International Forum, 2013.

Session	Content	Assignments
Session 24	Gender, the Arab Spring, and Social Change	Required readings: - Ebadi, S., Director, Middle East Program, “Reflections on Women in the Arab Spring”, Middle East Program: Woodrow Wilson Center International Center for Scholars, March 8, 2012. - Ramadan, T. “Neither an Arab Spring Nor Revolutions”, tariqramadan.com, October 9, 2011. - ICAN Report, ‘What the Women Say: The Arab Spring & Implications for Women’. International Civil Society Action Network for Women’s Rights, Peace and Security. Retrieved December 2011.
Session 25	Gender, the Arab Spring, and Social Change	Required readings: - Andrea Khalil, “Gender Paradoxes of the Arab Spring”, in Journal of North African Studies, 2014. - Nadje Al Ali, “Gendering the Arab Spring”, in Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication, 2012.
Session 26	Review Session	
Session 27	Final Exam	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Amazizgh village trip
- Visits to secular and/or Islamist feminist NGOs

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Ahmed, Leila. Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Badran, Margot. Feminists, Islam and Nation. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Barlas, Asma. “Qur’anic Hermeneutics and Women’s Liberation,” International Congress on Islamic Feminism, Spain, 2005 (<http://www.asmabarlas.com/TALKS/Barcelona.pdf>).
- Cooke, miriam. Women Claim Islam: Creating Islamic Feminism through Literature. New York: Routledge, 2001.
- Mernissi, Fatima. Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society. 1975. Intro. Bloomington and Indiana Polis: Indiana University Press, 1987.
- Moghadam, Valentine. Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East. Boulder: L. Rienner, 1993
- Wadud, Amina. Qur’an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman’s Perspective, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Mernissi, Fatima, The Veil and the Male Elite: a Feminist Interpretation of Women’s Rights in Islam, Addison-Wesley, 1991.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Clinton Bennett, *Muslims and Modernity: An introduction to the Issues and Debates*, London and New York: Continuum, 2005, pp: 17-30.
- Halim Barakat, 'The Arab and the Challenge of Social Transformation' in Elizabeth Warnock Fernea, *Women and the Family in the Middle East*, Austin, University of Texas Press, pp:27-47.
- Leila Abouzeid, *Year of the Elephant: A Moroccan Woman's Journey Toward Independence*, Austin: University of Texas, 2009, Introduction.
- Loiusa Ait Hamadouche, *Women in the Maghreb: Stereotypes and Realities*, in Yahia H. Zoubir and Haizam Amirah-Fernandez, *North Africa*, New York: Routledge, pp:202-225.
- Mir-Hosseini, Ziba. "How the Door of Ijtihad Was Opened and Closed: A Comparative Analysis of Recent Family Law Reforms in Iran and Morocco," in *Washington and Lee Law Review*, Vol. 64, No.4 (2007).
- Moghadam, Valentine, *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*, Boulder: L. Rienner, 1993.
- Sherine, Hafez. *The Terms of Empowerment: Islamic Women Activists in Egypt*. American University Press. Cairo. 2001.
- William Zartman, 'Political Dynamics of the Maghrib: The Cultural Dialectic', in Halim Barakat ed, *Contemporary North Africa*, Washington: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1985, pp:20-36.