



**NORTHWESTERN
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IN QATAR**

Northwestern University in Qatar

ENG 242 Topics in Literature: Modern Middle Eastern Literature

4/0/4 - 1 NU-Q unit = 4 US credits

Instructor: Aaron LaDuke, PhD

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*If you do not receive a response to an email within 24 hours or have a pressing matter, feel free to contact my mobile number.

Office Location: 2-311

Office Hours: Tues 1:30-3:30 and Thurs 10:30-12:30 and by appointment

Class Times: Tues/Thurs 3:30-5:20

Classroom: 2-254

PREREQUISITES:

None

DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine 20th and 21st Century Middle Eastern literature through a wide range of voices and locations. The genre focus of the course will be the novel. The thematic focus will be place, space, and borders.

RATIONALE:

This elective course in the Liberal Arts Program offers an introduction to the fundamentals of literary study. It provides students with a set of literary terms and tools; introduces them to the practice of implementing a specific critical lens or investigating a specific genre; cultivates writing skills and formal analysis in the discipline; and offers a foundation for further literary study.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Analyse written texts through the use of literary devices, close readings, and the critical lens of place, space, and borders.
2. Achieve a complex understanding of Modern Middle Eastern literature as well as place, space, and borders as a method of critical inquiry.
3. Produce analytical arguments on a variety of texts.
4. Literary Tools developed:
 - Genre Conventions



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Devices • Close Reading Skills • Use of a Specific Critical Perspective • The Literary Analysis Essay 														
<p>METHODS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures, class discussions, guided practice, group work • Formative assessments through Canvas with instructor feedback • Peer and instructor feedback during the writing process 														
<p>INDICATIVE READING:</p>	<p>REQUIRED TEXTS: <i>Season of Migration to the North</i>, Tayeb Salih <i>Cities of Salt</i>, Abdelrahman Munif <i>Men in the Sun</i>, Ghassan Kanafani <i>Salt Houses</i>, Hala Alyan <i>Persepolis</i>, Marjane Satrapi <i>Celestial Bodies</i>, Jokha Alharthi (All NUQ students will receive a copy of the novel in early February.) <i>Death is Hard Work</i>, Khaled Khalifa <i>The Day the Leader Was Killed</i>, Naguib Mahfouz (e text) *Other, shorter texts will be available on Canvas</p>														
<p>ASSESSMENT:</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">SUMMATIVE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Group Presentation</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Exam</td> <td style="text-align: right;">20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Celestial Bodies</i> Essay</td> <td style="text-align: right;">25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final Essay on Independent Text</td> <td style="text-align: right;">35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">FORMATIVE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Various Reading Response Methods</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10%</td> </tr> </table>	SUMMATIVE		Group Presentation	10%	Exam	20%	<i>Celestial Bodies</i> Essay	25%	Final Essay on Independent Text	35%	FORMATIVE		Various Reading Response Methods	10%
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Various Reading Response Methods	10%														
<p>ASSESSMENT DETAILS:</p>	<p>Reading Responses: Students will respond to each reading assignment through notes, short writings, Perusal, and possibly other methods. Some of these responses will be completed in class. (Lowest score dropped.) A “LitNote” consists of plot, theme, style, question, personal reaction/relation on about the space of an index card (or longer).</p>														



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	<p>Group Presentation: Before each unit (which will be structured around a country or region), a group of students will make a presentation about the history, government, economics, religion, and culture of that place.</p> <p>Exam: Students will be assessed on the texts of the first half of the course through short answer, quotation responses, and a short essay.</p> <p>Essay: Students will write an essay (1000-1200 words) on Jokha Alharthi's novel <i>Celestial Bodies</i>. (The author will be visiting NUQ on March 29th.)</p> <p>Final Essay (Analysing a Self-Chosen Text): Students will choose their own Modern Middle Eastern work, make a short presentation, and write an essay based on this text and the theme of the course. (Due Thursday of finals week or before.) Novel choice proposals may begin after spring break. It will be a good idea to start thinking early on what place and work you want to explore for this culminating and most important assessment of the course. If you are particularly drawn to a county studied in class, you might think about other texts with that setting. Further, this course most certainly has literary omissions related to areas and countries of the Middle East (notably Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, and Afghanistan.) If you start to sense a gap in the course, that could be a promising direction for your final text choice. A suggested list of titles appears at the end of the syllabus, but your choice does not need to come from these works.</p> <p>*A detailed description and rubric will be handed out prior to all of these assignments.</p>
	<p>Attendance: Students should not miss more than (3) classes. Three times late or being absent from class for more than ten (10) minutes counts as an absence. Missing more than (6) classes prevents a student from receiving credit for the course.</p>



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In Class Decorum: Avoid behaviour that distracts in any way from the learning environment. This could include 1) cell phone usage, distracting laptop usage, 2) talking while others are speaking, and 3) leaving the classroom. (Please use the mid-class transition or after as the time to leave the classroom.) If there are issues with classroom decorum, I will contact students through email, alerting them to the problem, and hopefully the matter can be resolved in this way.

Class Discussions: I am in the practice of calling on students in class during discussions. This is not a method of checking student preparation, but I do like to make students aware of this. Of course it is important to come to class prepared to participate, having completed the reading or work for the day.

Late work: Major assignments handed in late are penalized a letter grade per day. Reading responses cannot be made up, but the lowest grade is dropped.

Contacting the instructor: Please use email as the primary method of contacting me. Be sure that your email is written in a professional manner with a greeting and closing. If you do not receive a response to your email within 24 hours, feel free to text me. Past classes have created a WhatsApp group for the class, which has been helpful.

University Policy Statements

Students with Disabilities: Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with Accessible NU-Q (4454-5073) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from Accessible NU-Q, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential. For more information visit:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/accessiblenu/faculty/general-information/index.html>

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to comply with University regulations regarding academic integrity.

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/>



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If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, speak to the instructor before the assignment is due and/or examine the University web site. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating on an exam (e.g., copying others' answers, providing information to others, using a crib sheet) or plagiarism of a paper (e.g., taking material from readings without citation, copying another student's paper). Failure to maintain academic integrity on an assignment will result in a loss of credit for that assignment—at a minimum. Other penalties may also apply, including academic suspension. The guidelines for determining academic dishonesty and procedures followed in a suspected incident of academic dishonesty are detailed on the website.

Sexual Harassment Policy: It is the policy of Northwestern University that no member of the Northwestern community—students, faculty, administrators, staff, vendors, contractors, or third parties—may sexually harass any other member of the community. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; the use or threatened use of sexual favors as a basis for academic or employment decisions; conduct that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive academic or working environment; conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity. Sexual harassment is a type of conduct prohibited under the University's Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Stalking, and Dating and Domestic Violence, which can be found at www.northwestern.edu/policies.

For more information, visit: <http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-harassment>

Diversity/Safe Space: I am firmly committed to diversity and equity whereby barriers are removed to create space for all individuals to fully engage in all areas of campus life. Each student's voice has something of value to contribute and students are therefore encouraged to communicate and participate during class meetings. We must take care to respect the individual



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	<p>backgrounds, personal identities, intellectual approaches, and demographics expressed by everyone. Individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, thus making us global citizens. I strongly adhere to Northwestern University's non-discrimination policy (http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/equalopp-access/equal-employment-opportunity/nondiscrimination.html) and reserve our classroom as a safe space for unique and meaningful dialogue. Remember to keep confidential all issues of a personal or professional nature that are discussed in class.</p>
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Schedule of Assignments

Tues Jan 14

Topic: course introduction

Work Due: n/a

Thurs Jan 16

Topic: Space, place, and borders/literary tools

Work Due: Read Cresswell's "Introduction: Defining Place" (on Canvas)/ Quiz on Literary

Tools (handout on Canvas)

Tues Jan 21

Topic: Palestine (instructor presentation) and *Men in the Sun*

Work Due: Read *Men in the Sun* (do not need to read other stories in the collection) (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs Jan 23

Topic: Palestine and *Salt Houses*

Work Due: Read "Salma" (first chapter) in *Salt Houses* (response in class)

Tues Jan 28

Topic: Iran (group presentation) and *Persepolis*

Work Due: Read *Persepolis* (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs Jan 30

Topic: Iran and *Persepolis*

Work Due: Read "Bearers of Culture: Images of Veiling in Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*"
Esmaeil Zeiny Jelodar, Noraini Md. Yusof, Khalil Mahmoodi (response in class)



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Tues Feb 4

Topic: Sudan (group presentation) and Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*
Work Due: Read *Season of Migration to the North* 3-86 (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs Feb 6

Topic: Sudan and *Season of Migration to the North*
Work Due: Finish reading *Season of Migration to the North* (response in class)

Tues Feb 11 (no class Qatar National Sports Day)

Thurs Feb 13

Topic: Egypt (group presentation) and Mahfouz's *The Day the Leader Was Killed*
Work Due: Read *The Day the Leader Was Killed* (LitNote on Canvas)

Tues Feb 18

Topic: Syria (group presentation) and Khalifa's *Death is Hard Work*
Work Due: Read *Death is Hard Work* Part One and Two (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs Feb 20

Topic: Syria and *Death is Hard Work*
Work Due: Read *Death is Hard Work* Part Three (response in class)

Tues Feb 25

Topic: Reflection and Synthesis Discussion
Work Due: n/a

Thurs Feb 27

Topic: **Exam**
Work Due: n/a

Spring Break

Tues March 10

Topic: Oman and the Gulf (group presentation) and Munif's *Cities of Salt*
Work Due: Read *Cities of Salt* chapters 1-6 (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs March 12



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Topic: Oman and the Gulf

Work Due: Read *Cities of Salt* chapters 7-9 (response in class)

Tues March 17

Topic: Oman and the Gulf

Work Due: Read *Celestial Bodies* 1-79 (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs March 19

Topic: Oman and the Gulf

Work Due: Read *Celestial Bodies* 80-120 (response in class)

Tues March 24

Topic: Oman and the Gulf

Work Due: Read *Celestial Bodies* 121-199 (LitNote on Canvas)

Thurs March 26

Topic: Oman and the Gulf

Work Due: Read *Celestial Bodies* 200-243 (response in class)

Tues March 31

Topic: Discuss Alharthi visit

Work Due: n/a

Thurs April 2

Topic: Peer Review

Work Due: Rough Draft of *Celestial Bodies* essay (should have at least 600 words)

Tues April 7

Topic: short fiction and poetry of the Gulf

Work Due: *Celestial Bodies* **Essay Due**

Thurs April 9

Topic: short fiction and poetry of the Gulf

Work Due: n/a

Tues April 14

Topic: Individual meetings (no class meeting)

Work Due: final essay novel choice

Thurs April 16



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Topic: Presentations

Work Due: short presentation for the final essay

Tues April 21

Topic: Presentations

Work Due: short presentation for the final essay

Thurs April 23

Topic: CTECHS and course wrap

Work Due: n/a

Thurs April 30: Final Essay Due by end of day (11:59pm) on Canvas

A Short List of Possible Titles for the Final Essay

*Students are **not** required to choose from this list.

*The NUQ library stacks feature a wide collection of Middle Eastern literature.

The Gulf

The Corsair, Abdulaziz Al-Mahmoud (Qatar)

The Holy Sail, Abdulaziz Al-Mahmoud (Qatar)

Cities of Salt, Abdelrahman Munif (Saudi Arabia)

Girls of Riyadh, Rajaa Alsanea

Gathering the Tide: An Anthology of Contemporary Arabian Gulf Poetry

Oranges in the Sun: Short Stories from the Arabian Gulf

Yemen

They Die Strangers, Mohammad Abdul-Wali (diaspora, plight of emigrant workers)

North Africa

The Pillar of Salt, Albert Memmi (French colonized Tunisia, semi-autobiographical novel)



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Abdelilah Hamdouchi (detective fiction, North Africa, novels)

Midaq Alley, Naguib Mahfouz, Nobel Prize winner (Egypt, also *Cairo Trilogy*)

The Sand Child, Tahar Ben Jalloun (Morocco, novel, magical realism, sexual identity)

Yacoubian Building, Alaa al Aswani

Iran

Persepolis I & II, Marjane Satrapi (graphic novel)

A Cup of Sin: Collected Poems, Simin Behbahani (Iran, written over a half century)

Women Without Men: A Novel of Modern Iran, Shahrnush Parsipur (Iran, 2012)

Satan's Stones, Moniru Ravanipor (Iran, short stories...blend realism, myth, superstition)

Lebanon

A Game for Swallows, Zeina Abirached (Lebanon 1980s childhood, graphic novel)

I Sweep the Sun Off Rooftops, Hanan al-Shaykh (Lebanon and beyond, 1998, story collection)

I the Divine, Rabih Alameddine (Lebanon, issues of sexual identity)

The Prophet, Khalil Gibran

Jordan

Pillars of Salt, Fadia Faqir (1998, anglophone)

Syria

The Arab of the Future, Riad Sattouf (Libya, Syria, France...graphic novel, four parts)

Palestine

Baddawi, Leila Abdelrazaq (Palestinian refugee camp Lebanon, 2015, graphic novel)



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Salt Houses, Hala Alyan (Palestinian-American, 2017)

Mahmoud Darwish (regarded widely as Palestinian national poet, over 30 volumes)

In Search of Walid Masoud, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra

Turkey (recommendations from Professor Banu Akdenizli)

40 Rules of Love and *Bastard of Istanbul*, Elif Shafak (Turkey, critical praise and widely read)

Tales From the Garbage Hills, Berji Kristin (1993, captured the lives of the migrants who built the shanty towns in Istanbul)

What Have you Carried Over? Poems if 42 Days and Other Works, Gülten Akın (poet)

Two Green Otters, Buket Uzuner

The Wren, Reşat Nuri Güntekin, (1922, made into a TV series, very popular in the region)

The Black Book, *Snow*, and other novels Orhan Pamuk (Nobel Prize winner)

Dracula in Istanbul, Ali Rıza Seyfioglu

Iraq

The Corpse Washer, Sinan Antoon (shorter novel, self-translated)

Frankenstein in Baghdad, Ahmed Saadawi (a big starter of discussions of dystopian narratives in the ME)

Iraq + 100 (What will Iraq look like in 2103, 100 years after the US Invasion? 10 contemporary stories in the science fiction genre)

Afghanistan

The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini

A Thousand Splendid Suns, Khaled Hosseini