NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course Canvas site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus.

ENG 213: Literatures of the World – The Middle East

Oregon State University
Extended Campus
Fall 2016
4 Credits

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REQUIRED TEXTS
-- Naguib Mahfouz: Adrift on the Nile.
-- Zayd Mutee’ Dammaj: The Hostage.
-- Sadeq Hedayat: The Blind Owl.

Note to prospective students: Please check with the OSU Bookstore for up-to-date information for the term you enroll (OSU Bookstore Website or 800-595-0357). If you purchase course materials from other sources, be very careful to obtain the correct ISBN.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This class will focus on modern Middle Eastern literature from multiple perspectives: cultural, political, religious, historical, geographical, linguistic, structural, modern, postmodern, psychological, feminist, postcolonial, self-referential, and other points of view. The texts on our reading list include a stream-of-consciousness narrative from Egypt, a collection of innovative poems in Hebrew, a curious slave narrative from Yemen, and a surrealistic, hallucinatory, self-deceptive novel from Iran. Among the topics we will discuss are different languages and dialects of the Middle East, different national and cultural categories, and the idea that the distinctions between these categories are often fluid and dynamic. We will also try to establish connections between Middle Eastern narratives and global cultural and intellectual ideas.

This course fulfills the Baccalaureate Core requirements for two categories:
1. Literature and the Arts.
2. Cultural Diversity.
BACCALAUREATE CORE LEARNING OUTCOMES: LITERATURE AND THE ARTS
1. Recognize literary and artistic forms/styles, techniques, and the cultural/historical contexts in which they evolve.
2. Analyze how literature/the arts reflect, shape, and influence culture.
3. Reflect critically on the characteristics and effects of literary and artistic works.

This course fulfills these learning outcomes through a close reading, discussion, and analysis of Middle Eastern texts in larger literary contexts, paying attention to a variety of techniques, strategies, and components: setting, narration, conflict, tension, motives, emotions, language, style, themes, point of view, and so on. Special attention will be paid to fiction and poetry as forms of art.

BACCALAUREATE CORE LEARNING OUTCOMES: CULTURAL DIVERSITY
1. Identify and analyze characteristics of a cultural tradition outside of European or American culture.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of how perspectives can change depending on cultural or historical contexts.
3. Describe aspects of non-Western culture that influence or contribute to global cultural, scientific, or social processes.

This course fulfills these learning outcomes through a careful examination of Middle Eastern literature and its simultaneous relations to two traditions: local and global. While deeply anchored in Farsi culture, The Blind Owl, for example, is also a landmark of modernist literature, published in 1936 and comparable to William Faulkner, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, and other contemporary Western writers. In similar ways, The Hostage, a novel from Yemen that documents the painful transition from a theocracy to a democracy, can also be read as a classic courtly romance, a captivity narrative, a slave narrative, and a bildungsroman. In other words, what we might discover at the end of the course is that Middle Eastern literature is neither isolated nor completely unfamiliar. In many cases, it absorbs, shapes, and influences universal cultural traditions.

ASSIGNMENTS

Week 3:
-- Adrift on the Nile assignment (20 points). Stay tuned for the prompt on this novel and post a 400-word analysis. A longer essay is always welcome.
-- Participation on the discussion board (10 points). Post at least two comments on other essays. Each comment should be at least 200 words. Read the essays on the discussion board carefully and post meaningful, articulate, fully developed comments.

Week 5:
-- The Hostage assignment (20 points). Stay tuned for the prompt on this novel and post a 400-word analysis. A longer response is always welcome.
-- Participation on the discussion board (10 points). Post at least two comments on other essays. Each comment should be at least 200 words. Read the essays on the discussion board carefully and post meaningful, articulate, fully developed comments.
Week 7:
-- *The Blind Owl* assignment (20 points). Stay tuned for the prompt on this novel and post a 400-word analysis. A longer response is always welcome.
-- Participation on the discussion board (10 points). Post at least two comments on other essays. Each comment should be at least 200 words. Read the essays on the discussion board carefully and post meaningful, articulate, fully developed comments.

Week 10:
-- Final assignment (10 points). Stay tuned for the prompt. This assignment will give you the option of producing a visual analysis of *The Blind Owl* or working with a secondary source on this novel.

REQUIREMENTS
-- Buy the books.
-- Read the novels carefully. Follow our reading schedule and plan ahead.
-- Take notes while you read: underline or highlight key passages, write comments or annotations in the margins, identify important or difficult sections. Make a list of questions about the text and raise them on the discussion board.
-- When working on our assignments, please remember to avoid plot summary. Pay close attention to the complexity of the text and focus on analysis rather than description. Many elements in our novels revolve around ambiguity, uncertainty, fragmentation, and fluid or dynamic identities. Your goal would be to examine the text from multiple points of view. Refrain from simplifying the narrative to an objective truth, bottom line, or single message. Respond to the assignments as accurately as you can while registering as many perspectives as possible.
-- Articulate your observations on our novels in coherent, insightful, fully developed paragraphs. Be specific. Anchor your analysis in the text, demonstrating a close familiarity with the novels. Pay attention to major and minor characters, important events, key scenes, narrative strategies, and other literary components and devices. Do not use outside sources.
-- Be active on the discussion board. Feel free to raise additional questions, suggest different interpretations, or propose other directions to explore and discuss.
-- Please remember to be critical but civilized. In other words, please feel free to disagree with posts made by other people, including your instructor, but keep in mind that arguments delivered in a polite and respectful manner are often more effective than outbursts of passionate refutation.
-- Turn in all assignments on time. Late work may not be accepted.
-- Retain copies of all assignments.
-- If you need help, contact me as soon as possible. If you feel you are falling behind, act immediately. Send me an e-mail. I will respond in 48 hours or less.
OFFICIAL GRADING SCALE
94 - 100 = A
90 - 93 = A-
87 - 89 = B+
84 - 86 = B
80 - 83 = B-
77 - 79 = C+
74 - 76 = C
70 - 73 = C-
67 - 69 = D+
64 - 66 = D
60 - 63 = D-
0 - 59 = F

COURSE SCHEDULE
Week 1: Introduction.
Week 2: Reading: Adrift on the Nile.
Week 3: Tuesday: Adrift on the Nile assignment due. Friday: discussion board comments due.
Week 4: Reading: The Hostage.
Week 5: Tuesday: The Hostage assignment due. Friday: discussion board comments due.
Week 6: Reading: The Blind Owl.
Week 7: Tuesday: The Blind Owl assignment due. Friday: discussion board comments due.
Week 8: Final assignment launched.
Week 9: Work on final assignment.
Week 10: Friday: final assignment due.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Please review carefully the information provided on the following webpage, including the various definitions of academic dishonesty:
http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0
Academic dishonesty is a serious offense that could result in a failing grade for the course or suspension from the university. **Do not use outside sources.** If you have questions about the topic in general or a specific assignment, please contact me.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at http://ds.oregonstate.edu. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
If you need assistance using Canvas, access 24/7 help through the Help link at the top right within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or require assistance logging into the course, contact the OSU Help Desk. You can call 541-737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu, or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.