



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

WMST 303.1 Lec 1 W18  
"Islam and Feminism"  
Winter Term 2018

Course Outline

Lectures: TR 12:30 – 13:45 in TRB 102

**Instructor:** Safaneh Mohaghegh Neyshabouri  
**Office:** SS 1232  
**Office Phone:** (403) 220-3165  
**Email:** Safaneh.mohagheghney@ucalgary.ca  
**Office Hours:** Thursday 14:00-16:00

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on political, theoretical and pragmatic dimensions of feminist consciousness in the Islamic world. First, we critically examine the orientalist representations of women in Muslim societies as repressed and yet sexualized, and how these representations contributed to the stereotype of Muslim women as being in need of liberation. Second, we seek insight from within Islamic societies by looking at the complex and interconnected relationship between these societies' feminist movements and their nationalist movements within the context of their broader political evolution.

Women's rights and roles have today gained a prominent place in the theological conversations and political debates that are taking place among the elite and clergy in regards to political and Islamic reform. The Islamic societies that we discuss as case studies (e.g., Algeria, Egypt, Iran, etc.) are diverse and geographically expansive in order to showcase both the unity and diversity within Islam and within feminist currents in those societies.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

Through lectures, class discussions, readings, and other material, this course aims to create an inviting and inquisitive learning space for all the participants.

The objectives of this course are:

- To study the foundational texts of Muslim views on gender.
- To become informed of the issues of orientalism scholarship regarding Islam in general, and women in Muslim societies in particular.
- To identify the theoretical frameworks that enable us to understand gender issues in Muslim societies covered in this class.
- To investigate the feminist movements in different Islamicate societies, and learn about their historical context.

- To analyze complex and interconnected relationship between these societies' feminist movements and their nationalist movements within the context of their broader political evolution.

To arrive at these objectives, students are asked to think about the following questions while reading the texts required for each session:

- 1) Describe the text. What is the text about? What do we know about the author of the text and the historical backdrop of the text? For whom is the author writing?
- 2) What is the argument? What claims is the author making about Islam and about women? Does the author imply something?
- 3) What support does the author use in presenting their view? How does the author make their argument and what is their positionality?
- 4) What is your evaluation of the author's claims and arguments? Does the author convince you? Do you agree/disagree with their arguments and claims regarding Islam and women?
- 5) What is new for you in this reading? Do any of the author's claims, arguments, positions excite or disturb you? Does the reading influence/change/ contribute to your own position in any way?

**WARNING:** Religious texts discussed in this course are examined for their cultural significance and their influence in the societies and countries covered in this course, and not studied as sacred scripture. Discussion of issues pertaining to religion can be of sensitive nature for some, so we ask that all students maintain a respectful tone in class discussions. This class respects difference and diversity while welcoming thoughtful, critical debate and discussion.

**Required/Recommended Texts (including electronic resources):**

In order to access the links, you need to log into University of Calgary library account.

Annie Van Sommer and Samuel Zwemmer, *Our Moslem Sisters*:

<https://archive.org/stream/ourmoslemsister00sommgoog#page/n18/mode/2up>

Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*: [https://ebookcentral-proquest-](https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgaryebooks/reader.action?docID=310172&ppg=1)

[com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgaryebooks/reader.action?docID=310172&ppg=1](https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgaryebooks/reader.action?docID=310172&ppg=1)

Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*:

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=3443003&ppg=10>

Amina Wadud, *Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*:

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=431353&ppg=3>

Hamid Dabashi. "Native informers and the making of the American empire"

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/Archive/2006/797/special.htm>

Saba Mahmoud. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Find required chapter in D2L

Valentine Moghadam. *Gender and National Identity*. Find required section in D2L

Assia Djebar. *Fantasia, An Algerian Cavalcade*

Boutheina Cheriet. "Gender, Civil Society and Citizenship in Algeria."

Leila Ahmed. *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern debate.*

Shaarawi, Huda. *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist*

Afsaneh Najmabadi. "Veiled Discourse-Unveiled Bodies".

<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/3178098?seq=1> - [page scan tab contents](#)

Taj al-Saltaneh, *Crowning Anguish*

Fereshteh Ahmadi. "Islamic Feminism in Iran: Feminism in a New Islamic Context"

<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/20487863?pq-origsite=summon&seq=1> -  
[page scan tab contents](#)

**Grade scale:**

A+	≥ 95	B+	80 ≥ & < 85	C+	67 ≥ & < 70	D+	55 ≥ & < 60
A	90 ≥ & < 95	B	75 ≥ & < 80	C	64 ≥ & < 67	D	50 ≥ & < 55
A-	85 ≥ & < 90	B-	70 ≥ & < 75	C-	60 ≥ & < 64	F	< 50

**Grade Breakdown:**

- 20 Participation in class discussions
- 20 2 response papers
- 30 Mid-term paper
- 30 Group Project

**Participation/Discussion:**

The criteria for class participation grades include:

- Preparedness in having read assigned readings before class
- Reasonable frequency and quality of valuable and constructive participation in class discussions and debates
- Quality of analysis and contribution to discussion in case analysis

It is recommended that you place a clearly readable nametag in front of you during class sessions, so that the instructor can better associate your name with your participation and give you the participation grades you deserve. If a student feels that they have not participated enough in class discussions, or did not get the chance to voice their opinion in class, they can supplement their participation by writing and emailing meaningful and well thought-out notes to the instructor. These notes can include topics such as what they learned from class, how they think the class can be improved, analysis of interesting facts, links, videos, readings, cases and news related to the class, etc.

## **Response Papers:**

You are required to write **two response papers** on two of the texts (or the movie) listed in the course timetable. You decide which of the texts you would like to write your response papers on. The paper should be two pages, double-spaced, with Times New Roman size 12 font, one inch margin on all sides, printed on white letter sized paper, and not less than 400, or more than 500 words. Each paper makes up for 10% of your grade. Your response paper should be submitted at the beginning of the session in which your chosen text is discussed. Note that this means your choice of text determines the deadline for this assignment.

## **Mid-Term Paper:**

You are required to write a **paper** on a suggested topic (the suggested topics will be posted on D2L) or a topic of your choosing. You should check your topic with the instructor through email before writing on it. The paper should be between 1250 to 1750 words. This is approximately between 5 to 7 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman size 12 font, with one inch margins on all sides, printed on white letter sized paper. This paper makes for 30% of your grade and is due on **February 27, 2018**. If for any reason—and I do not need to know your reason—you need an extension, you should notify me by email before the assignment is due (this can be on the day that it is due), but keep in mind that for every 3 days of late submission, your final grade will be lowered by one letter.

## **Group Project:**

The group project makes for 30% of your final grade. You are required to work in groups of 5 people (depending on the size of the class this can change) to work on feminism/ women's movements/ gender equality issues in one of the countries suggested on D2L, or on an Islamicate country of your group's choosing. No two groups can work on the same country/topic, and countries/topics are allocated to whichever group first requests them. You should check your choice with the instructor before starting to work on it. A representative of your group should email the instructor and provide her with the names of all the members of the group and the country you have chosen to research on. The division of the 30% is as follows: 10% is given to the presentation. The presentation should be between 10-15 minutes; 15% of the grade is given to the report written by the group; and 5% is given to each person individually based on peer evaluation.

### **Presentations=>**

Each presentation should take between 10-15 minutes, and extra 5 minutes is given for Q and A. The presentation can be given by a single member of the group, all of them, or a number of them based on what the group decides among themselves.

### **Presentation Report=>**

The report of the presentation should be in the format of a paper with introduction, body structured with appropriate headings and subheadings, conclusion and references. It should be no less than 1250 words, and no more than 2500 words.

### **Peer evaluation=>**

After your group project is over, group members may submit a numerical evaluation of the contribution of their fellow team members on a scale of 0 to 10 to the instructor (10 being the best). Your average evaluation out of 10 will be the percentage out of 10 you get on this grade item. Submitting peer evaluations is optional. Anyone who does not submit an evaluation is assumed to be giving a 10 out of 10 evaluation for all of their fellow team members. The deadline to submit peer evaluations (by email to the instructor) is indicated in the course timetable.

In order to send your peer evaluation, simply email the course instructor with the subject line "ENTI 381 Peer Evaluation" and in the body of your email use the following template:

Overall evaluation of FIRST TEAM MEMBER FIRST NAME LAST NAME: X/10  
Overall evaluation of SECOND TEAM MEMBER FIRST NAME LAST NAME: X/10

...

Overall evaluation of LAST TEAM MEMBER FIRST NAME LAST NAME: X/10

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

The instructor reserves the right to adjust peer evaluation grades based on her own investigation into issues of team conflict etc.

**Note:** Your papers and reports should follow MLA in referencing and format, typed in Times New Roman size 12 font, double-spaced, with one inch margins on all sides, printed in black ink on white letter sized paper.

**This course does not have a final exam.**

### **Class Schedule:**

#### **Week One:**

**9/1)** Introduction to the course

**11/1)** Reading: Annie Van Sommer and Samuel Zwemmer, *Our Moslem Sisters*

Introduction, page 1-10

Chapter 1, "Hagar and Her Sisters," p 15-23

<https://archive.org/stream/ourmoslemsister00sommgoog/page/n18/mode/2up>

#### **Week Two: Orientalists and Muslim Women**

**16/1)** Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*

Book available on U of C library Website:

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=310172&ppg=1>

Chapters: 1-4, p 3-36

Chapter 10, p 105-124

**18/1)** Michel Foucault. *History of Sexuality*, Vol 1

Part One "We, 'Other Victorians'," p 1-15 (check D2L)

#### **Week Three: Textual approaches to the study of Women in Islam**

**Deadline for choosing your peers for the group project**

**23/1)** Asma Barlas. *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*,

Chapter 1: "The Qur'an and Muslim Women: Reading Patriarchy, Reading Liberation," pages 1-28. Available online at U of C library

**25/1)** Asma Barlas. *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*,

Chapter 5: "The Qur'an, Sex/Gender, and Sexuality: Sameness, Difference, Equality," pages 129-166. Available online at U of C library

<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=3443003&ppg=10>

#### **Week Four: Textual Approaches to the Study of Women in Islam cont.**

- 30/1)** Amina Wadud. *Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*, Introduction and chapter 1, p 1-29
- 1/2)** Wadud, Amina, *Quran and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*, Chapter 2: The Qur'anic View of Woman in This World p 29-44. Available Online at U of C Library <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=431353&ppg=3>

#### **Week Five: Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism**

- 6/2** Edward Said. *Orientalism*, Introduction (Find in D2L)  
Dabashi, Hamid. "Native informers and the making of the American empire," *Al-Ahram Weekly* <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/Archive/2006/797/special.htm>
- 8/2** Mahmood, Saba. 2012. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Chapter 1: "The Subject of Freedom". Find in D2L

#### **Week Six: Algeria**

- 13/2** Valentine Mogahdam (Ed). *Gender and National Identity*. Chapter 3: "Algeria at a Crossroads: National Liberation, Islamization, and Women" by Doria Cherifati-Merabtine p 40-62. Available on D2L
- 15/2** Assia Djebar, *Fantasia, An Algerian Cavalcade*, Part One & Two, pp. 1-109

#### **Week Seven: Reading Week! No Class.**

#### **Week Eight: Algeria cont.**

- 27/2** **Mid-Term Paper due at the beginning of the class**  
Cheriet Boutheina. "Gender, Civil Society and Citizenship in Algeria" Middle East Report, No. 198, Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East (Jan. - Mar., 1996), pp. 22-26. Available online from University Library Website: <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/3012871?pporigsite=summon&seq=1> - [page scan tab contents](#)
- 1/3** Assia Djebar, *Fantasia, An Algerian Cavalcade*, Part Three, pp. 113-167

#### **Week Nine: Egypt**

- 6/3** Leila Ahmed. *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern debate*. Chapter 7 and 8. p 127-168
- 8/3** Huda Shaarawi. *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist*. p. 23-82

#### **Week Ten: Egypt cont.**

- 13/3** Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern debate* Chapters 9, 10 and 11. p.169-234
- 15/3** Shaarawi, Huda. *Harem Years: The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist* p. 83- 137

#### **Week Eleven:**

- 20/3** **Class time to work on group project supervised by instructor**
- 22/3** **Unsupervised group work time (No Class)**

#### **Week Twelve: Iran**

- 27/3** Afsaneh Najmabadi. "Veiled Discourse-Unveiled Bodies". *Feminist Studies* Vol. 19, No. 3, Who's East? Whose East? (Autumn, 1993), pp. 487-518

Available from University website

<http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/3178098?seq=1> - page\_scan\_tab\_contents

29/3 Taj al-Saltaneh. *Crowning Anguish* p.

### **Week Thirteen: Iran cont.**

3/4 **Persepolis Movie + Pizza**

5/4 Fereshteh Ahmadi. "Islamic Feminism in Iran: Feminism in a New Islamic Context". *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, Vol 22, No. 2, Fall 2006. p. 33-53.

[http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/20487863?pg-origsite=summon&seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/stable/20487863?pg-origsite=summon&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)

**Presentations**

### **Week Fourteen: Group Project Presentations**

10/4

12/4

## **IMPORTANT DEPARTMENTAL, FACULTY AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION**

### **Academic Honesty**

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment, an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw from the University. See the relevant sections on 'Academic Misconduct' in the current University Calendar. Intellectual honesty requires that your work include adequate referencing to sources. Plagiarism occurs when you do not acknowledge or correctly reference your sources. If you have questions about correct referencing, consult your instructor.

### **Academic Accommodation**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their instructor.

### **D2L Help**

Desire2Learn is UCalgary's online learning management system. Important information and communications about this course may be posted on D2L. Go to <https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it> for help.

### **General Academic Concerns and Program Planning**

Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Drop in at SS102, call 403-220-3580, or email [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca). Advisors in the ASC can also provide assistance and advice in planning your program through to graduation. Visit the Faculty of Arts website at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> for detailed information on common academic concerns

### **Registration Overload/Prereq Waivers**

If you are seeking to register in a Philosophy course that is full or to get permission to waive the prereqs for a course, email the Department Manager, Tram Nguyen ([tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:tram.nguyen1@ucalgary.ca)). Include the specific course information and your UCID number in your request.

## **Writing**

This course will include written assignments. Faculty policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented. Students are also encouraged to use Writing Support Services and other Student Success Centre Services, located on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library. Writing Support Services assist with a variety of assignments, from essays to lab reports. Students can book 30-minute one-on-one appointments online, sign up for 15-minute drop-in appointments, and register for a variety of writing workshops. For more information on this and other Student Success Centre services, please visit [www.ucalgary.ca/ssc](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc).

## **Protection of Privacy**

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor or teaching assistant.

## **Internet and Electronic Communication Devices**

The instructor reserves the right to establish course policies regarding the use of devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartbooks. If allowed, these devices must be used exclusively for instructional purposes and must not cause disruption to the instructor or to fellow students. Cell phones and paging devices should be set to silent mode during lectures. Audio or video recording of lectures is not permitted without the written permission of the instructor. Students violating this policy are subject to discipline under the University of Calgary's Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

## **Emergency Evacuation:**

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>. Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

## **Other Helpful Contacts**

- Safewalk and Campus Security: 403-220-5333.
- Faculty of Arts Student Representatives: 403-220-6552, [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)
- Student Union: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/>; 403-220-6551.
- Student Ombudsman: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>
- Campus Mental Health Strategy: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>