



**Faculty of Arts**  
**School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures**

ALMC 358.01  
Muslim Cultures through Film  
Fall 2020  
TR: 12:30 - 13:45 via Zoom and Slack.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Mahmoud Ababneh**

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday 2:00-3:00 or by appointment (via Zoom)

**E-MAIL:** [Mahmoud.ababneh@ucalgary.ca](mailto:Mahmoud.ababneh@ucalgary.ca)

I am happy to respond to specific questions within two business days. I will not summarize lectures or restate information that is already mentioned in the course outline.

**DESCRIPTION**

The course is designed to fill in knowledge gaps about Muslim cultures through cinema. It is a research-intensive project where students are required to contribute significantly to online class discussions. Their contributions reflect and critique the materials that they encounter and research. As they face complex subjects and unfamiliar histories, it is essential for students to conduct investigations to find answers through individual and group research and discussions. Moreover, the course focuses on a multiperspectivist approach to learning and critical engagement. This means there will be discussion about the diverse Muslim communities' representations in cinema across the globe. Also, there will be an engagement with a variety of familiar and unfamiliar art forms, media and documentaries as well as the context and histories that inform them. This approach enables students to have a wider comprehension of issues such as misrepresentations of Muslims in Films, Literatures and media. One of the important questions that the course aims to address is what it means to be a Muslim and what exactly is a Muslim film.

**OBJECTIVES**

Demonstrate the ability to individually research materials in an online environment and, most importantly, to critically reflect on them. This process is meant to encourage students to engage with how Muslim (and non-Muslim) filmmakers are using films to represent Muslim cultures.

**OUTCOMES**

**By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to:**

- Critique and evaluate what they know about Muslim culture communities.
- Analyze and close read films within the political and historical contexts that inform it.
- React to and actively participate in group discussions that aim to challenge our taken-for-granted assumptions about Muslim culture and their representation.
- Demonstrate an ability to reflect on the connection between the films and their contexts.
- Implement the course terminologies and theoretical frameworks to clearly articulate forms of interconnectedness—or dissimilarities—between various Muslim communities.
- Critically and persuasively integrate the researched materials into the analysis of Muslim films.



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#### REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list. Students will be asked to watch additional films and various media forms. We will also read theoretical articles that enhance our watching experience. Further details will be given in the reading schedule and on D2L

- 1- Akkad, Mustapha. *The Message* (1976).
- 2- Ambah, Faiza. *Mariam*. (2016)
- 3- Nair, Mira. *Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012). A movie based on Hamid's novel.
- 4- Akhtar, Ayad. *Disgraced: A play*. (2012) The performance or the text.
- 5- Gearon, Eamonn. *The Great Courses*. Selection of lectures on Kanopy
- 6- Zbanic, Jasmila. *On the Path* (2010).
- 7- Moore, Michael. *Fahrenheit 9/11*. (2004)
- 8- Shaheen, Jack. *Reel Bad Arabs*. (2006)

#### Course delivery:

The course will be delivered in a synchronous context. We will be using both Zoom and Slack. This means that students must be available during the course dates and times that are already timetabled. In case of absence, it is necessary for students to propose an activity that shows their effort to make up for what they missed. Thursdays will be for our Zoom meetings; however, we might use Tuesdays if we need extra Zoom sessions. Tuesdays will be mostly on slack during the scheduled time.

#### Course notes:

- a) The films and texts that we discuss in this class can be uncomfortable to some for different reasons. The films we are watching and the texts we are reading sometimes describe war, violence, and controversial ideological and geopolitical issues.
- b) Zoom sessions will not be recorded for this course.

#### \*LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES AND REQUIREMENTS

There is a D2L site for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see [d2l.ucalgary.ca](https://d2l.ucalgary.ca)). There is also a Slack discussion group (After our first Zoom meeting, I will send all students an invitation link for joining.) Students might also be asked to watch films and documentaries on streaming services such as Netflix and Kanopy.

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection (ethernet connection is preferable).



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#### ASSESSMENT

1- Readers' reflection and response 4 x 5% (20%)

Over the course of this term, you will be required to prepare four brief responses. Each of these responses should be written in plain language but should nonetheless thoroughly and critically engage with the assigned readings. Students will reflect on the theoretical and historical concepts they study and how these concepts support, challenge or expand on what they already know or previously learned. These responses must be submitted to the D2L DROPBOX on the dates provided in the reading schedule. Each response is worth 5% of your final grade. An assessment rubric and additional instructions will be provided in class. Additionally, students are expected to write no more than 500 words for each of these responses.

2- Short film review Paper (20%):

Each student will write about 1500-word film review paper. This paper may focus on one film and it must investigate the connections between this film and the historical and political materials studied in class. Full assignment instructions will be provided.

3- Participation (20%)

This includes attending Zoom and Slack sessions. To be successful in this component, it is important to constantly engage with the discussion threads on our class platform (Slack). Further details about participation will be provided (see below). Evidence of active and substantial engagement in this course will include: making comments that consistently demonstrate careful thought and creative analysis, listening actively and responding thoughtfully to your peers. Coming to our sessions fully prepared with specific questions and ideas to share during each class is so important to succeed in this component.

4- Final paper (30%)

The paper asks the students to engage with at least two films from different geographies. The discussion of the paper will focus on the findings that you make during the semester and how these findings are represented in the selected films. Additional instructions will be given in class. (2500 words)

5- Presentation (10%)

This can be done either individually or as a group. You can perform this activity through various forms: video, podcast, or just regular in-class presentation. You may select an issue that you would like to discuss or present to the class. Further details on students' projects will be given in class.

- **All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade.**

#### ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions. These are part of the participation grade, as outlined in the assessment components section above. If students miss a class session that is included as a component of participation, they must contact the instructor within 24 hours to discuss options to make-up for that component. Any unexcused absences in excess will reduce the final class participation and attendance grade.



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A = Student engages in all activities, and frequently contributes *thoughtful* comments and questions to class discussions that enhance understand of the material being discussed.

B = Student engages in most of the activities and occasionally offers a comment or question in class.

C = Student engage in some activities and/or class discussions

D= There is little evidence of engagement in class activities and discussions.

- There are no extra credit assignments.
- Make-up assignments, excused absences, and extensions will only be issued by the instructor in the event of extenuating circumstances.
- Assignments must be submitted on the date that they are due. The late penalty for assignments is a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each day (not business day) that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted four days past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

**GRADING SCALE**

- All components will receive a numerical grade, to be converted using the following scale:

90 + %	A+	4.0	67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
85 – 89 %	A	4.0	64 – 66 %	C	2.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7	60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3	55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0	50 – 54 %	D	1.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7	0 – 49 %	F	0

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the 4-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

**INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT**

All members of the University community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Statement on Principles of Conduct, and to comply with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures (available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

**Academic misconduct**

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

- a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one’s own in an examination or test);
- b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;



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- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or  
d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.”

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student’s work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

#### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION**

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

#### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT**

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it. Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

#### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is the student’s responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

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



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Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>)

Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

#### **FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES**

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca)

Website: [arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate).

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: [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).

#### **INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

#### **SUPPORT AND RESOURCES**

Links to information that is not course-specific related to student wellness and safety resources can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>.