Women: Activism and Leadership in the Arab World
ARLA 8336A:

Spring 2019
أهلا وسهلا ومرحبا بكم من جديد الى اللغة العربية

Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey
Arabic Studies Program

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Office Hours: 12 noon to 2 pm on Mondays
Class Schedule: 2:00 p.m.-3:50 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Morse A203

Important Dates

- Spring Break: March 16-24
- Final project due on Thursday, May 9
- Last day of class: Thursday, May 16

Required Materials

- Wehr, Hans (1993), Arabic-English Dictionary: The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, Spoken Language Services Inc; 4th edition or other approved Arabic-English dictionary

Additional Class Resources

- Authentic materials from Arab satellite TV stations (i.e. al-Jazeera, al-Arabiyya, BBC Arabic, Egyptian TV, Dubai TV, LBC, etc.)
- Social media, blogs, interviews, journals and other relevant sources
- Additional suggested resources provided by the Professor for each unit

Note: The class will be conducted entirely in Arabic, and student projects will be completed in Modern Standard Arabic.

Background and Class Description

Ahlan wa sahlan! Welcome to *ARLA 8336A, Women: Activism and Leadership in the Arab World.*

In the post-World War I era, the Arab world has experienced widespread and profound changes propelled by interrelated political, economic, societal/cultural and environmental events and processes.

Throughout this period, numerous women and women's groups have emerged in activist and leadership roles: promoting social agendas, demanding freedom and equality, helping topple repressive regimes, and responding to a range of crises and conflicts. From issues of anti-colonialism, Arab nationalism and the Arab Spring to gender rights, educational and economic equity and more, women activists have played a critical role in shaping the contemporary Arab world. Furthermore, Arab women's activism has manifested throughout the transnational community and the Arab diaspora.

ARLA 8336A offers directed projects and analytical tools with which students can question, unpack and evaluate the contexts for Arab women's grassroots activist movements and rising leaders, the issues addressed, end goals, strategies employed, and outcomes achieved.

Class Structure

Units of study in ARLA *8336A* are organized around four overarching themes: (1) *Political/Economic Activism,* (2) *Social Justice/Gender Activism*, (3) *Cultural /Educational Activism* and (4) *Environmental Activism* as perspectives for inquiry, analysis and reflection. Suggested sub-topics will help guide our thematic investigations. *Research and Analysis Frameworks* are provided as a consistent structure to guide student inquiry throughout the units.

During each three-week unit, students will research and develop a theme-based case study that highlights Arab women's activism/leadership focused on a historic period, region, country or transnational movement of interest and relevance. Guest speaker presentations, video clips, Arabic media and other primary/secondary sources will expand students' topic knowledge while promoting Arabic comprehension.

Written case study findings will be shared and reflected upon collaboratively through Google Classroom or a similar platform, and through recorded oral presentations. These elements will form a collaborative digital portfolio. By the end of the semester, each student will have contributed four case studies to the digital portfolio.

At the conclusion of each three-week unit, students will take part in a roundtable event to compare/contrast their case study findings and engage in shared critical thinking about the topic areas.

Final Project

The final project offers a creative opportunity to integrate learning from the semester while deepening personal understanding of the course content. Students will develop and present a simulated model project that addresses the goals of a specific Arab women's group or movement. Model projects may be based on any of the course unit themes. Guidelines and grading rubrics will be shared by the Professor.

Model projects will include text (project title, description, background context, rationale) and visual elements, and be exhibited on trifold boards, expo-style. Classmates will view, discuss and offer feedback on each other's work.

Course Outcomes

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- identify and discuss some of the major women's activist movements in the Arab world and Arab diaspora, post-World War I to the present
- analyze and write about various factors (political, economic, social, gender, cultural, educational and environmental) in the Arab world that have incited activist response specifically from women/women's groups
- reflect upon challenges, opportunities and outcomes posed by specific Arab women's activist movements
- apply course information/ concepts to a series of case studies
- improve target language skills: speaking, reading, writing, listening comprehension
- expand knowledge/correct application of both Arabic vocabulary and grammatical concepts

Breakdown of Unit Activities

* See postings on Canvas for specific assignment due dates.

Week 1:

Professor:
- leads topic overview with examples
- facilitates class discussion, vocabulary and conversation exercises related to the unit topic
- provides essential vocabulary

Students:
- maintain unit vocabulary, grammar and personally-useful words (Personal Dictionary) in a designated binder or device
- select a case study subject based on the unit topic. The Professor will review selection criteria.
- utilize the provided *Research and Analysis Frameworks* to begin drafting a case study of an Arab woman leader or activist group. Enter your notes/bullet points in the Frameworks document. This document is in the form of an editable Excel spreadsheet, located on Canvas (see "Pages" on Canvas for link).
- develop a minimum of three key questions that further address the complexities of the current unit of study. Questions should dig in to the topic and promote critical thinking. The questions may be directed to guest speakers (when scheduled). Questions can also serve as research prompts for the case study assignment
- write and share bulleted research notes and key questions on Canvas (**to be completed by Thursday of Week 1**)
- **Using research notes (see above), write and submit a (minimum) 1-page draft case study - due on the first Tuesday of Week 2. Share your draft on Canvas under "Assignments."**

Week 2:

<u>Students:</u>

- expand upon case study drafts via supplementary materials such as images, interview excerpts, social media posts, news updates, audiovisual material, etc.
- engage with guest speaker/s (as applicable) on unit topic and take follow-up notes in Arabic
- incorporate guest speaker material into case study as applicable
- incorporate written personal reflections on the topic and case study
- complete/share final draft of expanded case studies

Week 3:

<u>Students:</u>

- **present case studies orally (Day 1)**
- take notes during peer presentations
- **participate in a roundtable discussion (Day 2)**

General Homework Guidelines

Short exercises will be assigned throughout the course and will be noted on a homework schedule. Students are expected to submit these assignments **on time**. **Please include your name and the due date of the assignment on all submitted work.**

Homework assignments will be graded on numerical points. The grading guidelines are provided below.

Important Notes:

- All assignments must be written in Arabic and should be handed in at the beginning of class session
- You are allowed two excused absences (i.e. sickness or other emergency circumstances). Two points will be taken from the total grade points for each additional absence. Please inform your professor of absence as soon as possible before--not after--the class you will miss.
- Use of electronic devices is not permitted in class unless it is related to class activities and/or tasks (e.g. presentation). This requires the instructor's permission.
- Please switch off your cell phone during class time.

Active participation

- **Use of Arabic:** The language of instruction and interaction in class is Arabic. English is not used in class or with the teacher outside of class.
- Regular attendance is expected. Excessive absence impacts your participation grade.
- Show evidence of preparation of materials prior to the class session
- Take an active role in class discussions!
- Participate fully in all class activities and tasks (i.e. pair and group work)
- Engage in discussion with classmates and guest speakers

Grading Guidelines

Class participation (see absence policy below)	10 %
Homework assignments	5 %
4 Case studies	40 %
Participation in 4 Roundtable discussions	20%
Final project	25 %

Grade distribution

A = 4.0 = 96 – 100   C+ = 2.33 = 73 – 77

A- = 3.67 = 92 – 95   C = 2.0 = 69 – 72

B+ = 3.33 = 88 – 91   C- = 1.67 = 64 – 68

B = 3.0 = 83 – 87   D = 1.00 = 60 – 63

B- = 2.67 = 78 – 82