ENG 254: Modern Arabic Literature
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NOTE:
1. Modern Arabic Literature (in translation) is an ONLINE class. Grades, assignments, announcements, chats, and discussions will be posted on Blackboard. Computer skills and the ability to work on Blackboard are required.

2. Problems with home computers or printers are not acceptable as excuses for late or missing assignments.

3. No religious theological or political platforms will be promoted in this class.

4. Students in this online class agree to the discussion parameters as exploring the literary value of various Arabic works in translation, and as presenting their views in online discussions with no intention of offending anyone’s religious values.

5. ADA students must register within the first two weeks of the semester.

6. The material in this syllabus is subject to revision by the instructor. Students will be advised of changes as the semester progresses.

7. Late work will not be accepted. There are no make-ups available.
Required Text:


3. The first week of class, students must sign up in a Literary Circle group and groups must choose a work to read from the selected list of approved novels. Students must order the selected text online once a selection has been agreed upon by all group members.

Course Objectives:
1. Students will gain insight into modern Arabic culture and values through exploring contemporary literary works in translation in various genres. According to the United Nations Development Program’s 2005 Report on Arab Human Development, modern literature plays a critical role in providing insight into Middle Eastern culture and values. According to the report, the impact of the First Gulf War, 9/11, and the War in Iraq opened the literary floodgates, and the Arab world is now a literary hotbed where modern writers (and women more than ever before) are using the novel as a means of re-inventing themselves and society. These contemporary Arab writers are challenging old stereotypes and inventing their own images for the first time in history.

2. By surveying male and female authors’ works from many different Arab countries, students will discover how writers of contemporary Arabian literature have re-invented views of modern Arab men and women. Students will read and discuss emerging female and male voices in 21st century poetry, short stories, diaries, drama, novellas, and novels.

3. Students will explore critical thought on Arab culture, Arab identity, the question of tradition and modernity, colonialism and nationalism, family, marriage, divorce, and sexuality as revealed in contemporary Arab men and women’s writings in translation.

Weekly Schedule

Week One:
Learning Module One: Introduction to Arabian Literature

**CLASS INTRODUCTIONS:** Introduce yourself to the class in the designated discussion thread. Share why you have taken this course and what your interests are in the literature or people of the region.

**Read:** “Introduction” *The Anchor Book of Modern Arabic Fiction* page xiii – page xxx
Review: PowerPoint Notes: Arabic Fictional Genres (in learning module)

Discussion (DQ#1). Post your comments on the readings as designated in the Week One Learning Module.

HW: (Formation of Literary Circles.)

In your selected group of 4-5 students, choose a novel from the list provided. Email the students in your circle to gain agreement on which text to read together. Notify me by email which book your group selected by the beginning of Week Two, order the book, then set up a schedule to read, analyze, and review the work together in preparation for individually writing five to seven pages of content in a final written report in MLA format with a Works Cited page including three to five references that focuses on ONE unique aspect of the author’s literary style: characterization, narration, symbols, motifs, figurative language, or plot development, and the theme. Finally, present what have you learned from this text about Arabic literature. Consider whether or not the text compares to any other text you have read.

Graded Discussion Postings: Each member of your literary circle is required to write four posts (related to the author and his/her style, the social/political/historical context, the plot, and the theme) using specific quotes from the text and respond to other members of the groups’ postings.

Final Written Report: Individually graded and Due Week Fifteen.

Week Two:
Learning Module Two: Arab Social Structure

Read: Chapter 7 “Social Structure” pp 163-178, United Nations Development Programs’ The Arab Human Development Report 2005

Review: PowerPoint Notes: Compilation of notes from: p150-184 “Traditional Values, Social Change, and the Contemporary Arab Personality” Contemporary Arab Thought by Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi’
Dr. Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi’s website: http://macdonald.hartsem.edu/aburabi.htm

Discussion (DQ#2):

Week Three:
Learning Module Three: Modern Arabic Poetry (Jordan)

Read: “Marble,” “Kohbayza,” “Tree,” and “Mewl” by Zulaykha; and “An Orphan” and “False…False” by Thorayya Malhas found in the learning module files.
Discussion (DQ#3)

Week Four:
Learning Module Four: Modern Arab Poetry (Syria, Palestine)

Read: Go to the following websites and read about Nizar Qabani: Arabian Love Poems. 
http://www.arabworldbooks.com/authors/nizar_qabbani.html
A sample of Nizar Qabani’s poetry: 
http://www.arabworldbooks.com/Literature/poetry2.html#top
About Mahmoud Darwish’s : To My Mother and Other Poems. 
http://www.mahmouddarwish.com/english/introduction.htm
A sample of Mahmoud Darwish’s poetry: 
http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Cafe/1324/darwish.htm

Discussion (DQ#4):

Week Five:
Learning Module Five: Modern Arab Poetry. (Syria, Iraq)

Read: Muhammad al-Maghut: Sadness in the Moonlight; Badr Shakir al-Sayyab: Song of Rain; ‘Abdul Wahab al-Bayati: The Gypsy Symphony found in the learning module files.

Discussion (DQ#5):

Week Six:
Learning Module Six: The Short Story. (Lebanon)


Recommended: View from GWCC’s library reserve collection: Beirut: The Last Home Movie: Chronicles the life of a Lebanese family living in Beirut’s during the 80s civil wars. (Gateway Community College Library, Long Wharf campus).

Discussion (DQ#6):

Week Seven:
Learning Module Seven: Short Stories (cont.) (UAE, Yeman)

Read: United Arab Emirates’ Mohammed al-Murr’s “Your Uncle Was a Poet” and Yeman’s Mohammed Abdul-Wali’s “Ya Khabiir” found in The Anchor Book of Modern Arabic Fiction.
Discussion (DQ#7):

**Week Eight:**
Learning Module Eight: Modern Arabic Drama (Saudi Arabia)

**Read:** Excerpt from *The Actor’s Last Death* by Raja’ Alem found in the learning module files.

Discussion (DQ#8)

**Week Nine:**
Learning Module Nine: Modern Arab Novella (Yemen)

**Read:** An excerpt from *They Die Strangers* by Mohammed Abdul-Wali in the learning module files.

Discussion (DQ#9):

**Week Ten:**
Learning Module Ten: Modern Arab Novella (Sudan)

**Read:** Excerpt from *The Wedding of Zein* by Tayeb Salih in the learning module files.

Discussion (DQ#10)

**Week Eleven:**
Learning Module Eleven: The Novel (Palestine)


Discussion (DQ#11):

**Week Twelve:**
Learning Module Twelve: The Novel (Saudi Arabia)


Discussion (DQ#12)

**Week Thirteen:**
Learning Module Thirteen: The Novel (Egypt)

Discussion (DQ#13)

Week Fourteen:
Learning Module Fourteen: The Novel (Lebanon)


Discussion (DQ#14)

Week Fifteen:
Learning Module Fifteen: Review and Reflection.

Discussion (DQ #15):

Self-Assessment: Justify the grade you believe you deserve based upon the quality of your contributions to the discussions, the level of in-depth analysis you engaged in through your journal entries, and the knowledge, comprehension, application, and evaluation of the novel you researched for your final written report.

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40% final written report on selected novel analyzed within assigned literary circle (5-7 pages in content). Analyze and present critical analysis of one element of the selected author’s literary style as noted above using 3-5 specific references to the text using MLA in-text citations and a works cited page.