

**Department:** MCL

**Course No:** ARAB 122

**Title:** Modern Arabic Culture

**Credits:** 3

**Contact:** Roger Travis, Norma Bouchard

**Content Area:** CA1-Arts and Humanities and CA4- International

**Catalog Copy:** (ARAB) 122. Either semester. Three credits. Three class periods. Introduction to modern Arabic culture from Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign to modern Islamism. Survey of institutions, philosophy, and social customs seen through the medium of literature.

**Course Information:**

a. course goals and objectives: This course introduce students to important elements of contemporary Arabic culture and complements Arabic Language instruction that is offered by the department of Modern and Classical Languages. Through literary texts and films, this course surveys contemporary Arabic culture from Napoleon's Egyptian campaign to the rise of modern Reformist movement. Since the approach is both interdisciplinary and comparative, this course facilitates an appreciation of modern Arabic culture while encouraging students to move past Western conceptual categories.

b. Course requirements:

Quizzes, 4 short papers, midterm and final exams. The exams are in the form of short essay questions, definitions and identifications. Exams also include background, factual information, and interpretative material presented during the lectures and class-discussions. Students are also asked to write 4 short essays on the main topics around which this course is structured.

c. List the major themes, issues, topics, etc., to be covered.

- 1) Napoleon I, Al- Jabarti , and the Egyptian Campaign.
- 2) Muhammad Ali (1805-1848) and Europe ; At- Tahtâwî .
- 3) An- Nahda : Lebanon: Ibrahim and al- Bustânî ;
- 4) Political Reforms: Muhammad Rashid Rida ; Abd al- Rahman al- Kawakibi
- 5) Literary and Cultural Critique
- 6) Women's voices: Salma Khadra Jayyusi ; Nawal as- Sa'dawi ; Ghada Samman
- 7) Modernization and the Arts
- 8) Modern Poetry: Nizar Qabbani ; Mahmoud Darwish ; Muhammad al- Maghut ; Badr Shakir as- Sayyab ; Abdul Wahab al- Bayati , Adonis.
- 9) Modern Fiction: Ghassan Knafani ; Hani ar-Raheb ; Hanna Mina; Ibrahim Nasralla ; Mu'nis ar-razzaz ; Najib Mahfouz .
- 10) Modern Theater: Sa'dallah Wannus , Tawfiq al- Haqîm

**How Meets Goals of Gen Ed.**: This course is based upon a selection of a rich body of literary

works that exemplify the varied responses of Arabic culture to the Napoleonic campaigns and colonizations. Hence, students will not only acquire intellectual breadth and versatility by gaining an understanding of how major political and social international developments affected the rise of modern Arabic cultures, but will become sensitive to the variety of human responses encountered in their weekly readings and screenings. These range from the embrace of Western modernity on the part of the Reformist movements (i.e., the assertion of the rights of the individual, the questioning of rigidly defined gender roles, conducts, and behaviors, etc) to attempts at maintaining the traditional Arabic cultural legacy. Moreover, by way of lectures, class-discussions, readings, and writing assignments, students will become more articulate while also developing the skills that are necessary for any critical, responsible, and serious assessment of the way literary cultures respond to and participate in different visions of modernity that, in the case of modern Arabic cultures, would eventually lead to complex attempts at Westernizing but also maintaining alive the traditional heritage.

**CA1 Criteria:** This course brings together historical, critical and aesthetic modes of inquiry. All readings selected are representative of emblematic responses on the part of Arabic intellectuals to the emergence of the modern Reformist movement initiated by Muhammad Rashid Rida, Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakib, Sayyid Qutb, Jamal Abd an-Nasr and Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah, among others, that followed the Napoleonic campaigns and the rise of modern forms of Western colonialism. As such, these texts document the varied responses of poets, novelists, dramatists, political thinkers, and cultural critics to developments spanning from the weakening and eventual fall of the Ottoman empire to the rise of a modern culture that led to irreconcilable differences over the individual vs. the community, the city vs. the country, gender roles, secular vs. religious society, democratic republicanism vs. monarchic powers, etc. Because of this selection, students become aware of the intricate relations between specific rhetorical genres and fundamental historical, social, and cultural developments. The variety of texts that are included in this course also provides students with a deeper comprehension of verbal art (i.e., narrative and lyric poetry, testimonial writing, political tracts and philosophical texts).

**CA4 Criteria:** By placing at the center of modern Arabic culture the debate over modernity and tradition that ensued after the Napoleonic campaigns, the rise of colonialism, and the weakening (and eventual demise) of the Ottoman Empire, this course "emphasizes that there are varieties of human experiences, perceptions, thoughts, values." Since a number of the ideas of modernity have their origin in the Western encroachment in the 19th century over forms of thought developed through the centuries in traditional Arabic culture, this course introduces students to the differing conceptual categories that took shape in the traditional Arabic world and that were to give rise to complex processes of conflict and negotiation from the late 19th century onwards. The case of the modern Arabic reformist movement is particularly apt at illustrating the division of the Muslim community over the Sufi's pursuit of tradition vs. reformist and secularist tendencies, the weight of Sharia laws over day-to-day life, including politics, social issues, sexuality, etc. vs. the rise of more egalitarian political and social models, and so on. Since the modern Arabic reformist movement had a major shaping influence over both the rise of modern states and the continuation of more traditional forms of Islamic leadership, this course also facilitates an understanding of how such fundamental social configurations such as the state have their origins in cultural processes and therefore are subject to a process of redefinition (that cannot be separated from internal dynamics and transnational encounters). Moreover, since

these cultural processes are examined from a variety of textual sources ( i.e , the autobiography of Jibrân Khalîl Al- Jibrân , Taha Hussein, and Abdelrahman Munif ; the poetry of Nizar Qabbani , Mahmoud Darwish , Muhammad al- Maghut , Badr Shakir as- Sayyab , Abdul Wahab al- Bayati , and Adonis; the narrative of Ghassan Knafani ; Hani ar-Raheb , Hanna Mina, Ibrahim Nasralla , Mu'nis ar-razzaz , Najib Mahfouz ; the drama of Sa'dallah Wannus , and Tawfiq al- Haqîm , the political texts of Muhammad Rashid Rida , Abd al- Rahman al- Kawakibi , Sayyid Qutb , Jamal Abd an- Nasr , and Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah , and the writings of women authors Salma Khadra Jayyusi , Nawal as- Sa'dawi , and Ghada Samman , this course also facilitates students' understanding and appreciation of the varieties of modes of creativity and the role of gender and class in shaping these respective modes.

**Role of Grad Students:** None.

**Supplementary Information:** syllabus

**Course Description:** Through a variety of literary texts, including drama, works of poetry, autobiography, fiction, and cultural criticism, this course surveys contemporary Arabic culture from the Napoleon's Egyptian Campaign to the modern Reformist movement of Muhammad Rashid Rida , Abd al- Rahman al- Kawakibi ; Sayyid Qutb , Jamal Abd an- Nasr and Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah . Students are introduced to Modern Arabic culture and gain an appreciation of the values, symbols, and myths of the Arabic cultural heritage. The course also encourages students to think critically about another culture and make sense of an unfamiliar world by moving past Western conceptual categories. The approach is both interdisciplinary and comparative.

**Course Requirements:**

Participation: 10%

Quizzes: 10%

4 short papers: 40%

Mid term Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

**Required Texts:**

Badran & Cook: Opening the Gates

Cleveland : A History of the Modern Middle East

Johnson-Davies: Under the Native Sky

Handal : The Poetry of Arab Women

Week 1: Introduction: Napoleon I, Al- Jabarti , and the Egyptian Campaign.

Week 2: Muhammad Ali (1805-1848) and Europe ; At- Tahtâwî .

Week 3: An- Nahda : Lebanon : Ibrahim and al- Bustânî ;

Week 4: An- Nahda , cont. : Egypt , Ismail , and Al- Afghâni . Mohammed Abduh , Qasîm Amîn

Week 5: Autobiography: Jibrân Khalîl Al- Jibrân ; Taha Hussein, Abdelrahman Munif .

Week 6: Political Reform: Muhammad Rashid Rida ; Abd al- Rahman al- Kawakibi ; Sayyid Qutb .

Week 7: Reform, cont: Jamal Abd an- Nasr ; Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah .

Week 8: Literary Criticism: Ihsan ‘ Abbas ; ‘ Izz ad-Din Isma'il ; Mahmud Amin al-‘ Alim ; Idwar al- Kharrat .

Week 9: Cultural Criticism: Sakiq Jalal al'Azm ; Hisham Sharabi ; Adonis.

Week 10: Women's voices: Salma Khadra Jayyusi ; Nawal as- Sa'dawi ; Ghada Samman .

Week 11: Modern Poetry: Nizar Qabbani ; Mahmoud Darwish ; Muhammad al- Maghut ; Badr Shakir as-Sayyab ; Abdul Wahab al- Bayati , Adonis.

Week 12: Modern Fiction: Ghassan Knafani ; Hani ar-Raheb ; Hanna Mina;

Week 13: Fiction, cont: Ibrahim Nasralla; Mu'nis ar-razzaz; Najib Mahfouz.

Week 14: Modern Theater: Sa'dallah Wannus , Tawfiq al- Haqîm