

# Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different.

Please refer to your instructor's syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.

# NELC 1125 Stories of the Middle East and South Asia

Days/Time

Location

Instructor: Professor Naomi Brenner, Professor Ila Nagar

Office Hours: TBA

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Literature, even some of the shortest short stories, has the potential to open up new worlds. Literary texts can invite readers to travel across great distances of space and time; they can bring to life diverse characters and locations; they can offer intimate portraits of psychological and material challenges; they can create different fantasies and realities. This course will read and analyze a variety of short stories to illuminate different cultures of the Middle East and South Asia. The goal of the course is to introduce students to diverse cultures through literature. Students will become familiar with a variety of literary representations, social structures and religious, ethnic and racial diversity after the completion of this course.

**This course fulfills the General Education categories of Literature and Diversity: Global.**

Literature Goals:

Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; and critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students analyze, interpret, and critique significant literary works.
2. Through reading, discussing, and writing about literature, students appraise and evaluate the personal and social values of their own and other cultures.

In this course, students will read, analyze, interpret and critique a variety of short stories from across the Middle East and South Asia. They will become familiar with the different languages and cultures of these areas, including but not limited to: Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish, Hindi, and Urdu cultures. As they discuss and write about these literary texts, students will reflect on the ways in which literature can bridge cultural differences as well as the limitations of such cultural exchanges.

Diversity Goals:

Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

Expected Learning Outcomes: Global Studies

1. Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
2. Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

Through the study of short stories, students will understand cultural, social, economic and political aspects of different regions of the Middle East and South Asia. As global readers, students will reflect on their own attitudes and values in their encounters with different literary texts.

### **COURSE MATERIALS:**

Singh, K and N. Kumar. 2017. *Our Favourite Indian Stories*. Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House

All other readings, links, and resources will be available on the course website, Carmen. Please make sure that you have access to the class website and let me know immediately if you have trouble accessing either.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Attendance & Participation (15%)**

- Attend class – make sure to sign the sign-in sheet each session
- Complete assignments before class. Make sure to pace yourself so that you have time to read and think about the stories. Be an active reader! Take notes, record details, mark interesting moments in the text, scribble down questions to ask in class.
- Participate in class discussions and in-class groups. Come to class prepared to be an active participant: ready to talk about the readings, to consider different viewpoints and to ask questions. You will be graded on how you engage the material and other students, not how much you know about the subject. I will do my best to make this class a comfortable space for discussion. I recognize, though, that not everyone feels comfortable participating in class, which is why there are several different ways in which to participate:
  - Ask questions, volunteer ideas, participate in large and small group discussions during class.
  - Ask me questions or share ideas or interesting material relevant to the course outside of class, during office hours, or via email.
- There will be occasional quizzes, particularly if students are not keeping up with the viewing and reading. Quiz questions will primarily ask you factual questions about assigned texts and films.
- Please note: if you spend time on your computer, tablet or phone during class for purposes not related to the class, you will receive a 0 on that session's participation grade. If you do so on a regular basis, then your final grade may be up to 10% lower than you might expect.
- Grading:

- If you put up your hand regularly and speak in an informed and succinct way in class and participate in group work = 100
- If you speak occasionally in class, but demonstrate in other ways (groups, office hours, before and after class) that you are engaged with the material and asking good questions = 90
- If you never raise your hand and I have to call on you to involve you, but you have things to say when I do that = 75
- If you never participate in class, have nothing informed to add when called on and do not have anything to contribute to group assignments and discussions = 0
- If you raise your hand a lot and talk a lot, but do not think before you speak, or prevent others from speaking or expressing their opinions = 75

### Question of the Day (20%)

- Each session there will be question posted on Carmen that relates to the day's reading. Students must respond briefly (up to 75 words) to the question of the day **before** class meets on that day.
- Students may skip two questions of the day without penalty. After that, students will lose 5 points for each question not answered.

### Projects (45%)

- There will be 3 projects over the course of the semester:
  - Podcast: students will choose one short story to read and set to music in a podcast, due TBA (15%)
  - Screenplay: students will adapt one short story as a screenplay, due TBA (15%)
  - Spark Page: students will bring to life the geography and/or location of one short story through a spark page, due TBA (15%)
- Further details, include technical guidance and support, will be provided in class and on Carmen.

### Exams (30%)

- Exam 1 will take place in the middle of the semester, on [date TBA]. It will focus on the material covered over the course of the first half of the semester. (10%)
- Exam 2 will take place during the university assigned final exam period [date TBA]. It will focus on the material covered over the course of the second half of the semester. (20%)
- Review sheets will be provided on Carmen.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Attendance & Participation	15%
Question of the Day	20%
Projects	45%
Exams	30%

Grading scale: A (93-100) A- (90-92) B+ (87-89) B (83-86) B- (80-82) C+ (77-79) C (73-76) C- (70-72) D+ (67-69) D (60-66) E (below 60)

### CLASS POLICIES

Absences: To do well in this class, you need to be present and awake. Since things come up (illness, family issues, other commitments), you may be absent two times without penalty. After that absence, each additional unexcused absence will lower your overall grade, up to 5% per unexcused absence. This could potentially have a major effect on your grade – in fact, you could fail the class for missing too many classes.

- Absences will be excused for illness, with a valid doctor's note or for other emergencies with appropriate documentation. Save your "free" absences for days when you're stressed about other courses, have car trouble, or might be traveling for fun or family events.
- After two absences, you must contact me if you believe an absence should be excused for things like illness, family emergencies or childcare emergencies. In order to be excused, you must provide documentation to explain your absence, such as a doctor's note.
- 2 late arrivals or early departures (without explanation) will count as an absence.
- Sleeping through class lectures, discussion or film screenings will be treated like late arrival/early departure, which means the 2 occurrences will count as an absence.
- You are responsible for all material that you miss in class. Make sure you have the contact information (email, phone number) for one or two other students in class so that you can get the information that you need. Do not email the instructor to ask what you missed.

In Class: **Please do not use laptops, tablets or phones in class**, unless it is an active part of class activities (quizzes or group-work). I realize that some people like to take notes on the computer, but multiple studies have shown that laptops are more disruptive and distracting than helpful in classes based on discussion. If you have special circumstances that make using a laptop necessary, please speak to me and we'll find a suitable arrangement. Using a phone in any way during class, and especially during film screenings, will result in an automatic 0 for that session's Participation grade. If you need to communicate with someone, step outside of the room for a minute and return when you're done.

Class Cancellations: If an emergency arises or if the weather conditions are dangerous and I need to cancel class, I will send an email to the class and post an announcement on Carmen. Please try to check your email before class in case anything comes up.

Fairness and Honesty: I expect students to complete all assignments, projects and exams with fairness and honesty. Plagiarism – the representation of someone else's words or ideas as one's own – is a very serious offense, and will result in serious consequences. By plagiarism, I mean failing to acknowledge someone else's work or ideas (word for word or paraphrasing), as well as cheating on quizzes and tests. All suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

This is not to say that you cannot use other people's ideas, just that you must acknowledge your sources (orally or with footnotes) and try to build on those ideas (agree, disagree, modify, give your own examples). One good reference is OSU's "Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity" (<http://oaa.osu.edu/coamtingsuggestions.html>). Please come and talk to me if you have any questions about this.

OSU has made Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system, available to instructors. For this class, you will submit your written work to Turnitin from Carmen. When grading your work, I will interpret the originality report, following Section A of OSU's Code of Conduct (plagiarism) as appropriate. Note that submitted papers become part of the OSU database.

Writing Center: The Writing Center (<http://cstw.osu.edu/writingcenter>) is a great (free!) resource on campus for helping improve your writing skills and work on specific assignments. You can set up appointment or drop in at certain times for one-on-one help with your writing.

Contact Me: Please come talk to me over the course of the semester if you have any problems or concerns, but also if you have questions or anything else that you'd like to talk about. It's great to have the opportunity to get to know you outside of class. Office hours are a good time to catch me, but you can also email me to set up an appointment to talk. For quick questions or concerns, email ([brenner.108@osu.edu](mailto:brenner.108@osu.edu)) is the best way to reach me. I will do my best to respond within 24 hours.

## DISABILITIES

**Students with disabilities (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions) that have been certified by the Office of Student Life Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Student Life Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue; telephone 614- 292-3307, [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu).**

Week 1	Introductions	
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Literatures as a Window, Literature as a Lens		
	Albert Memmi, "Two Pennies"	Question of the day (QOD)
Week 2 Family	Indira Parthasarthy, "The Journey"	QOD
	Shahriar Mandanipour, "Mummy and Honey"	QOD
Week 3	Aharon Megged, "The Name"	QOD
	Fawzi Abdel Kaderel-Milady, "The Night of the Festival"	QOD
Week 4 Relationships	Orhan Pamuk, "Distant Relations"	QOD
	Mahashweta Devi, "Draupadi"	QOD
Week 5 Faith	Hamdy El-Gazzar, "A Short Story about an Angel"	Project 1 Due
	Shahrnoosh Parsipour, "Crystal Pendants"	QOD
Week 6	Ömar Seyfettin, "The Secret Shrine"	QOD
	Tewfik Al-Hakim, "Miracles for Sale"	QOD
Week 7	Etgar Keret, "The Bus Driver Who Wanted to Be God"	
Caste	Exam 1 – in class	QOD
Week 8	Rabindra Nath Tagore, "Cabuliwallah"	QUO
Caste	Premchandra, "The Resignation"	QOD
Week 9 Class	Almog Behar, "Ana min al yahud"	QOD
	Sayed Kashua, "Cinderella"	QOD
Week 10 Conflicts	Manoj Kumar Goswami, "The Vulture"	Project 2 Due
	Mohamed Makhzengi, "Rhythmic Exercise"	QOD
Week 11	Hassan Blasim, "The Abandoned Village"	QOD
	Ayelet Tzabari, "Casualties"	QOD
Week 12 Gender	Ali Ghalem, "A Wife for My Son"	QOD
	Malika Moustadraf, "Just Different"	QOD
Week 13	Kamala Das, "The Flight"	QOD
	Nezihe Meriç, "Heyriye"	QOD
Week 14 Diaspora	Kishori Charan Das, "Death of an Indian"	Project 3 Due QOD
	Samira Azzam, "A Palestinian"	QOD
Week 15	Gauri Deshpande, "The Debt"	QOD
	Reyhaneh Rajabzadeh and Shokoofeh Rajabzadeh, "A Family Feast with Empty Seats" "The American Flag We Couldn't Remove"	QOD

TBA	Exam 2	
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