

# 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.



**Gender in Modern Arabic Literature (22844)**  
**Arabic 2702 / WGSS 2702**  
**Location/Meeting Times:**

Professor:  
Email:  
Office hours:

Teaching Assistant:  
Email:  
Office hours:

**Course Description:** This course will explore modern Arabic literature as a space where different understandings of gender are analyzed and imagined. We will read a wide range of Arabic novels and short stories from the 1950s to the present and consider how gender is being produced in interaction with other categories such as the nation, social class, sexuality, and language.

The class is organized in a mostly chronological fashion. Starting with debates about gender and citizenship in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, we will move through particular historical and geographical contexts such as

nationalism and independence from colonial powers, the Lebanese civil war, Palestinian displacement, diasporic writing, to contemporary Beirut and writing about the future.

In each case, we will put our readings of the literary texts in dialogue with key frameworks such as Orientalism, Arab and global feminisms, and questions about what it means to write embodied and gendered experiences. By participating in ongoing scholarly conversations on modern Arabic literature and gender we will also be able to reflect on how our own learning community is generating questions and knowledge in these areas.

**This course is taught in English**



## GE Categories: Diversity: Global Studies, Literature

### 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:

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.

### Literature

**Goals:** Students evaluate significant texts in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgement; 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.

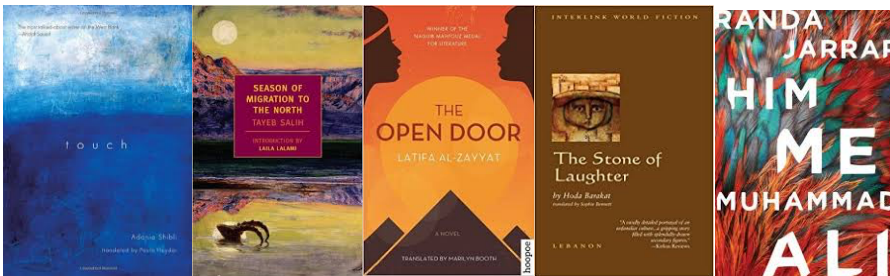
### In this course, we will meet these goals by:

- examining how gender is constructed in literary texts
- discussing the way that important frameworks for modern Arabic literature such as Orientalism, nationalism, and diaspora are understood in relation to gender
- focusing on the role that historical and social contexts have played in shaping the form, style, and themes of literary works
- analyzing how meaning is constructed through literary devices and aesthetics
- appreciating the different ways that literature has engaged with social issues in modern and contemporary Arab societies
- examining our own implicit and explicit beliefs about gender in a variety of contexts
- engaging with our classroom community in a manner that supports each individual's learning process and dignity

## Course Readings:

We will read the following five books. Other readings will be made available on Canvas. You can purchase the books at OSU's bookstore, order them online, or check them out from a library. If ordering online, use the ISBN number to make sure you are purchasing the assigned edition):

- *The Open Door* by Latifa al-Zayyat, ISBN-13: 9789774168277
- *Season of Migration to the North* by Tayeb Salih, ISBN-13: 9781590173022
- *The Stone of Laughter* by Hoda Barakat, ISBN-13: 9781566561907
- *Touch* by Adania Shibli, ISBN-13: 9781566568074
- *Him, Me, Mohammad Ali* by Randa Jarrar ISBN-13: 9781941411315



\*Knowledge of Arabic is not required for this course. However, for those of you who have reading proficiency in Arabic and would like to consult the original texts (when available) you will find pdfs on Canvas.

## Course Policies and Values:

**Support:** Your success and learning are important to us. We all learn differently and may need different kinds of accommodation. Please talk to the instructor or TA as soon as possible if there are aspects of the course that are not conducive to your learning or exclude you. We can develop strategies and adjustments to meet your needs. If you need official accommodations we will work with the

[Office of Student Life Disabilities](#) to make sure that you have these met. There are many resources on campus that may be useful, including the [Writing Center](#), [Academic Advising](#), and [Academic Coaching](#).

**Inclusivity:** In this course, we will strive to create an inclusive learning environment. This means that different perspectives and interpretations of texts and ideas can both coexist and be questioned. This also means that we recognize that learning often

initiates shifts in perspectives, approaches, and conclusions.

**Email:** Both the instructor and TA are keen on supporting your learning and success in this course. When you have questions relating to content and assignments in the

course please consider asking them during class or in office hours rather than via email. Although we are happy to answer your emails, we have found that in person conversations are typically more productive and efficient.



### **Assignments and Grades:**

**Participation:** Participation is an important component of the learning process. It helps you activate your knowledge and process course materials. We recognize that participation may mean different things to different learners. In this course, participation can include a variety of practices, such as contributing to group and class discussion, listening to and responding to your peers, and reflecting on ideas through in-class writing assignments. In some classes, you will be asked to turn in written reflections on texts or discussions.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is essential for success in this course. You will be allowed three unexcused absences. After that your final grade will be lowered by 3% for every unexcused absence. However, if you are sick, please stay home and rest! If you are missing class due to illness or for other unavoidable reasons, please contact Trisha Myers to let her know. Other excused absences include religious holidays, OSU competitions, deaths in the family, etc. We will use name tents to keep track of names and facilitate conversations. Please be sure to pick up your name tent at the beginning of each class meeting.

**Asking questions:** In this class, we will discuss how to formulate and revise questions that can take a discussion to a deeper level. We will think about ways to probe underlying assumptions within questions and how to revise questions in order to catalyze new insights or ways of looking at an issue. **Twice in a semester, your designated discussion question group will share questions on the Canvas discussion page before class.** These and other questions will help guide class discussions in a variety of formats.

**Individual written reflection, annotated bibliography, and presentation:** Every student will sign up for a paper and presentation slot. You will select a topic that aligns (closely or broadly) with the book and issues being discussed that week. The written reflection will include 1) An annotated bibliography of 5-7 sources on your topic, a 2-3 page reflection on what you learned, and 3) 2-3 questions that would help you delve deeper into your topic. You will give a very brief presentation to the class (about five minutes) in which you convey some of the (in your assessment) interesting findings and questions of your research. See Canvas for more details.

**Group presentation:** Your discussion group will jointly prepare and present on a topic

that is pertinent to the class. See Canvas for more details.

**Final Exam: Wednesday, December 13,  
10.00-11:45 am**

### **Grade Distribution:**

**Participation: 30%**

**Discussion Questions: 10%**

**Written reflection / annotated bibliography: 20%**

**Individual Presentation: 10%**

**Group Presentation: 10%**

**Final Exam: 20%**



### **Course Schedule (subject to change):**

\*Each class meeting has its own page on [Canvas](#). You will find the modules for each week on the main course page. There, you will find a summary of what we did in class and any resources, links, or handouts used.

#### **Week 1**

8/22 *Introducing the course, introducing ourselves*

8/24 In class lecture: Gender, Citizenship, and Modernity in Arabic literature

Before class: Read "About *The Open Door*" by Marilyn Booth, pp. 361-383 in *The Open Door*

Entry on "Gender" in [The Gender Dictionary](#) by Lebanon Support

and <https://arablit.org/2017/08/03/must-read-classics-by-women-latifa-al-zayyats-the-open-door/>

#### **Week 2**

8/29 In-class screening and discussion of the documentary *Feminism Insha'allah*

Before class: read *The Open Door*, pp. 1-77

8/31 Class process: Gender, intersectionality, and threshold concepts. Guest professor: Maurice Stevens, Department of Comparative Studies

Before class read: Entry on "intersectionality" in [The Gender Dictionary](#) by Lebanon Support  
*The Open Door*, pp. 79-120

#### **Week 3**

9/5 Lecture: Research and library instruction session. **Meet in Thompson Library 160**

Before class read: *The Open Door*, pp. 121-179

9/7 Before class read: *The Open Door*, pp. 181-239

#### **Week 4**

9/12 Before class read: *The Open Door*, pp. 241-305

9/14 Before class read: *The Open Door*, pp. 307-360

#### **Week 5**

9/19 Lecture: Postcolonialism and Orientalist Legacies

Before class read introduction, pp. vii-xx and pp. 3-50 in *Season of Migration to the North*

9/21 Before class read: pp. 51-86 in *Season of Migration to the North*

#### **Week 6**

9/26 Before class read pp. 87-139 in *Season of Migration to the North*

9/28 In class lecture: Gender, Sexuality, and Narrative in Times of War

Before class read: Introduction pp. v-viii and pp. 3-69 in *The Stone of Laughter*

#### **Week 7**

10/3 Before class read: pp. 73-134 in *The Stone of Laughter*

10/5 Before class read: pp. 137-210 in *The Stone of Laughter*

#### **Week 8**

10/10 Lecture: Writing Gender in Palestinian Literature

Read *Touch* pp. 2-23

10/12 Autumn Break

Read *Touch*, pp. 24-42

#### **Week 9**

10/17 Read *Touch*, pp. 43-72

10/19 *Men in the Sun*, pp. 21-51

#### **Week 10**

10/24 *Men in the Sun*, pp. 52-74

10/26 In class lecture: Writing the Body

#### **Week 11**

10/31 *Short Stories* (on Canvas)

11/02 *Short Stories* (on Canvas)

**Week 12**

11/7 In class lecture: Constructing Masculinity through Literature

11/9 Excerpt from *Who's Afraid of Meryl Streep?* by Rashid al-Daif (available on Canvas)

**Week 13**

11/14 In class lecture: Writing the Future

11/16 Read "Kahramana" from *Iraq+100* (on Canvas)

**Week 14**

11/21 In class lecture: Diaspora

**11/23 Thanksgiving Break**

Read pp.3-51 in *Him, Me, Muhammad Ali*

**Week 15**

11/28 Before class: read pp. 53-136 in *Him, Me, Muhammad Ali*

11/30 Before class: read pp. 139-201 in *Him, Me, Muhammad Ali*

**Week 16**

12/5 Group Presentations

**Final Exam on December 13, 10-11:45 am**



**STUDENT RESOURCES:**

**Mental and Emotional Health:**

If you are experiencing a personal crisis or problems that are difficult for you to manage please contact the OSU Counseling and Consultation Services (614-292-5766; <http://www.ccs.ohio-state.edu>). This service is free and confidential to students. Staff is there to provide support and guidance.

**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/>.

## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Disability Services will be

appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone: 292-3307, TDD: 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>