

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 2244

Films of the Middle East

SYLLABUS

TERM:	OFFICE:
CREDIT HOURS: 3	EMAIL:
LEVEL:	OFFICE PHONE:
CLASS TIME:	OFFICE HOURS:
LOCATION:	
INSTRUCTOR:	

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, contemporary films of different Middle Eastern countries will be approached from several perspectives. The course will present films of several countries in the region to give an introductory account of the specific cultures. The emphasis will be on how various national cultures have built popular cultural products that may be representative of their specific cultural locations. In this respect, the course will bring about national, social, cultural, and historical issues and problems pertaining to the region. Film as a form of popular art will be considered as useful for understanding the production of narratives about Middle Eastern lives. Both a narrative and a visual medium, film will be presented as a way of seeing and representing the realities and fictions of these societies. Students will be asked to relate, compare and contrast these films as examples of national projects and cultural products. This introduction to different cinematic experiences in a particular region will consider how the representation and narration of reality in filmic texts are related to its contexts. This course will equip students with a basic knowledge of contemporary Middle Eastern cultures. It will give students a chance to understand foreign cultures by presenting examples of how these cultures envision themselves in their films. Film, as a social practice and as a medium for national imagination and representation, will provide students a comparative and critical perspective with which to reconsider their own understanding of film.

GENERAL EDUCATION

This course fulfills the University's GE Culture & Ideas and Diversity: Global Studies requirement.

Cultures and Ideas

Goals: Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and



- expression.
2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

Diversity: Global Studies

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.

COURSE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, you should

1. Understand basic cinematic and anthropological concepts introduced in the course.
2. Be able to apply these concepts in evaluating and critically approaching different Middle Eastern films.
3. **Understand the ways in which culture is presented in film.**
4. Learn how to produce counter arguments to the generalized image of the Middle East created by the American media industry.

TEACHING METHOD: Lecture/Discussion/Workshop.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

All on Canvas.

MECHANISM AND ASSIGNMENTS:

There are two kinds of meetings in this course: **Reading Sessions** and **Media Sessions**. Reading Sessions are like other normal classes you have. You do the readings before every Reading Session, and in class—after my short presentation or a student presentation on the readings (explained in the assignment section)—we discuss the material together. From the beginning of the semester until week 2 we will only have Reading Sessions. From week 3 to the end of the semester, there will be a mix of reading and media sessions. No reading will be assigned for the Media Sessions; in the MS we watch some visuals, you discuss them in your groups and then share your group ideas with the class (I call this workshop).

Assignments

1. *Reading Response (RR)*: You are required to write 300-400 (or more) word summary on the readings. Your Reading Responses are supposed to show me that you have done the readings. Every RR must cover all readings of the respective session (so, not every reading needs a separate RR). RRs are required only for reading sessions. RRs should be posted on Canvas.



2. *Discussion Questions:* For every reading session, you have to prepare one relevant and thoughtful discussion question and post it on Canvas. After my presentation, I will put some of your discussion questions on the screen and we will discuss them.
Discussion question should be posted separately in our Canvas Discussion Forum.

NOTE: I will drop your two lowest RR and DQ grads which means you get two freebies. BUT, I will increase your grades by one third of a letter grade, if you do all the 13 RR and DQ instead of the required 11.

3. *Student Presentations:* Every student should do one student presentation in one of the Reading Sessions. Student presentation is your reflection on and presentation of the readings of a certain day. You can choose the day and the readings/subjects you would like to present on. Dates and subjects will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis. So, go through the class schedules and choose what subject you are going to present on.
4. *Workshops:* Workshops will take place mainly in our Media Sessions. After watching parts of scheduled films, you sit around your group table and discuss the media material with other group members. There is a key point here: apply the concepts you learn in class to your analyses of the film productions. Workshop simply means critically evaluating and discussing the film productions presented in class and sharing your thoughts with others. Every three weeks, I will give you a workshop score based on your participation and contribution to your group and class.
5. *Midterm Essays:*
 1. Write a film review on one of the films that we watch in class (4 to 5 pages; detailed prompt is posted on Canvas). **Due Oct 19, 2016.**
 2. Write an essay on the history of Israel-Palestine. (4 to 5 pages; detailed prompt is posted on Canvas). **Due Oct 23, 2016.**
6. *Final Presentation:* Presentation on your final project. Share with class what you are going to do for your final project and get some feedback. **Due Dec 09, 2016.**
7. *Final Project:* It can be a paper, but other creative projects are also welcome.
If you want to write a paper it should be
 - a. 10 to 15 pages
 - b. Double spaced, 12 Calibri or similar font
 - c. On a subject related to the course
 - d. You need to talk to me before writing your project.

Your final project should not necessarily be a paper. You can make a short video that combines films and documentaries with your voice-over and analysis.
I am open to other projects, too. Talk to me if you have other ideas. I will further explain this in class. **Due December 14, 2016.**

And...



No Midterm Exam!
No Final Exam!

ATTENDANCE: Since this is a discussion-based course, your presence has a significant role in doing well. Any unexcused absences will have a %3 negative impact on your overall grade; so if you cannot take part in a meeting, email me beforehand. Check with me to see whether or not your absence can be excused.

Lateness: Two latenesses of more than 10 minutes will be counted as one absence.

Note: Please, refrain from using cellphone, texting, facebooking and checking email during class.

GRADING

Reading Responses	%30
Discussion Questions	%5
Workshops	%15
Student Presentation	%10
Midterm Essays	%15
Final Presentation	%5
Final Project	%20
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Total	%100

OSU GRADING SCHEME

A: 93 – 100%	B-: 80 – 82%	D+: 67 – 69%
A-: 90 – 92%	C+: 77 – 79%	D: 60 – 66%
B+: 87 – 89%	C: 73 – 76%	E: 0 – 59%
B: 83 – 86%	C-: 70 – 72%	

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. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>).

DISCLAIMER

A large amount of mass media productions that offer a range of different and opposite ideas are presented in this course. These ideas do not necessarily reflect instructor’s views or those of the university.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office of Disability Services offers services for



students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus if necessary, but will notify you about any changes in advance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

ROUND I :DEFINITIONS/CONCEPTS

1. Aug 24, 2016 **Introduction**

Read the syllabus (You can learn a lot only by reading the syllabus).

Be ready to introduce yourself and tell us why you are interested in this course.

Tell us what you want to learn in this course.

2. Aug 26, 2016 **Is there such a thing as the Middle East?**

Readings:

- I. Amanat, Abbas. 2012. "Introduction: *Is There a Middle East?*" In *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, edited by Michael E Bonine, Abbas. Amanat, and Michael Ezekiel Gasper, 1–8. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- II. Adelson, Roger. 2012. "British and U.S. Use and Misuse of the Term 'Middle East.'" In *Is There a Middle East? The Evolution of a Geopolitical Concept*, edited by Michael E Bonine, Abbas. Amanat, and Michael Ezekiel Gasper, 36–55. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

1st response and discussion question due Aug 25, 5 p.m. on Canvas.

3. Aug 31, 2016 **Culture, Stereotypes, (Essentialism)**

Readings:

- I. Rapport, Nigel, and Joanna. Overing. 2000. "Culture." In *Social and Cultural Anthropology the Key Concepts*, 92–102. London; New York: Routledge.
- II. Rapport, Nigel, and Joanna. Overing. 2000. "Stereotypes." In *Social and Cultural Anthropology the Key Concepts*, 343–349. London; New York: Routledge.

2nd response and discussion question due Aug 30, 5 p.m. on Canvas.

4. Sep 02, 2016 **Middle Eastern Cinema**

Readings:

- Chapman, James. 2003. "Middle East Cinemas" In *Cinemas of the world: film and society*



from 1895 to the present. 386-401. London: Reaktion.

3rd response and discussion question due Sep 01, 5 p.m. on Canvas.

5. Sep 07, 2016 **Studying everyday-life (or culture?) through Film**

Reading:

Xing, Jun, and Lane Ryo Hirabayashi. 2003. "Media Empowerment, Smashing Stereotypes, and Developing Empathy" In *Reversing the lens: ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality through film*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado.

4th response and discussion question due Sep 06, 5 p.m. on Canvas.

Spotlight I: Iran

<p>6. Sep 09, 2016 Reading Knox, Zara. 2016. "Lights, Camera, Revolution." <i>Reorientmag</i>. Accessed 8/16/16</p> <p>5th response and discussion question due Sep 08, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>7. Sep 14, 2016 I. Film: Farhadi, Asghar. 2010. <i>About Elly</i>. Or Farhaadi, Asghar. 2012. A separation = [Judāyī-i Nādir az Sīmīn]. II. Workshop</p>
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ROUND II:

PRESENTATION OF THE MIDDLE EASTERN LIVES IN THE FILMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Gender and Sexuality

<p>08. Sep 16, 2016</p> <p>Readings I. Khosravi, Shahram. 2008. "Introduction." In <i>Young and Defiant in Tehran</i>. 1–10. Philadelphia, Pa.; Bristol: University of Pennsylvania Press. II. Khosravi, Shahram. 2008. "Conclusion." In <i>Young and Defiant in Tehran</i>. 169–171. Philadelphia, Pa.; Bristol: University of Pennsylvania Press.</p> <p>6th response and discussion question due Sep 15, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>09. Sep 21, 2016</p> <p>I. Film: Keshavarz, Maryam. 2011. <i>Circumstance</i>. II. Workshop</p>
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Tradition and Individuality

10. Sep 23, 2016	11. Sep 28, 2016
<p>Reading Fernea, Elizabeth W. 2002. "The Veiled Revolution." In <i>Everyday life in the Muslim Middle East</i>. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.</p> <p>7th response and discussion question due Sep 22, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>I. Film: Al-Mansour, Haifaa. 2014. <i>Wadjda</i>.</p> <p>II. Workshop</p>

Vernacular and Constitutional Islam

12. Sep 30, 2016	13. Oct 05, 2016
<p>Reading Afzal, Ahmed. 2014. "I Have a Very Good Relationship with Allah: Pakistani Gay Men and Transnational Belonging" In <i>Lone Star Muslims: Transnational Lives and the South Asian Experience in Texas</i>. New York: NYU Press.</p> <p>8th response and discussion question due Sep 29, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>I. Film: Rahimi, Atiq. 2014. <i>Syngué Sabour, pierre de patience = The patience stone</i>.</p> <p>II. Workshop</p>

Spotlight II: Egypt

14. Oct 07, 2016	15. Oct 12, 2016
<p>Readings Gaffney, Jane. "The Egyptian Cinema: Industry and Art in a Changing Society." <i>Arab Studies Quarterly</i> 9, no. 1 (1987): 53-75.</p> <p>9th response and discussion question due Oct 6, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>I. Film: Diab, Mohamed. 2013. <i>Cairo 678</i>. [San Francisco, Calif.]: Global Film Initiative.</p> <p>II. Workshop</p>

American Folklore Society annual meeting (No Class)

16. Oct 19, 2016	17. Oct 21, 2016
<p>Write a film review. Due Oct 19, Midnight.</p>	<p>Write an essay on the history of Israel-Palestine conflict. Due Oct 23, Midnight.</p>



ROUND III: POLITICS AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN CINEMA

Israel and Palestine

18. Oct 26, 2016	19. Oct 28, 2016
Watch this Vox, 2016. <i>The Israel-Palestine conflict: a brief, simple history</i> . Accessed 8/19/16	I. Film: Abu-Assad, Hany. 2014. <i>Omar</i> . II. Workshop

Is Islam a violent religion?

20. Nov 02, 2016	21. Nov 04, 2016
Readings I. Omar, A. Rashied. 2003. "Islam and Violence". <i>Ecumenical Review</i> . 55 (2). II. "How strong is the link between faith and terrorism?" 2014. <i>CNN Wire</i> . III. Rix-Standing, Luke. 2015. "Islam Is a Religion of Neither Peace nor Violence – It Is Simply a Religion." <i>Nouse</i> . http://www.nouse.co.uk/2015/11/14/islam-is-a-religion-of-neither-peace-nor-violence-it-is-simply-a-religion/	I. Film: Shani, Yaron, Scandar Copti. 2010. <i>Ajamī</i> . New York: Kino. II. Workshop
10th response and discussion question due Nov 01, 5 p.m. on Canvas.	

Spotlight III: Israel

22. Nov 9, 2016	23. Nov 16, 2016
Readings Kronish, Amy, and Costel Safirman. 2003. "A national Cinema in the Making: An Over View." In <i>Israeli film: a reference guide</i> . 1-21. Westport, CT: Praeger.	I. Folman, Ari. 2009. <i>Waltz with Bashir</i> . II. Workshop
11th response and discussion question due Nov 08, 5 p.m. on Canvas.	



ROUND IV: ORIENTALISM

Orientalism and its impact on the Middle Eastern Cinema

24. Nov 18, 2016	25. Nov 30, 2016
<p>Watch at home: Said, Edward W., Sut Jhally, Sanjay Talreja, Steven McCarthy, Viveca Greene, Ravi Shankar, Philip Glass, Stuart Dempster, and Edward W. Said. 2002. <i>Edward Said on Orientalism</i>.</p> <p>12th response and discussion question due Nov 17, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>I. Fouladkar Assad. 2015. <i>Hala Love</i></p> <p>II. Workshop</p>

Spotlight IV: Turkey

26. Dec 02, 2016	27. Dec 07, 2016
<p>Readings Arslan, Savaş. 2011. "Introduction" In <i>Cinema in Turkey: a new critical history</i>. 1-22. New York: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>13th response and discussion question due Dec 01, 5 p.m. on Canvas.</p>	<p>I. Film Ceylan, Nuri Bilge. 2011. <i>Once upon a time in Anatolia</i>.</p> <p>II. Review</p>

28. Dec 09, 2016

Final Presentations