

## **Contemporary Issues in Arabic and Islamic Studies**

Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, 631247601

Wednesdays, 12:15 – 13:45

Rosenberg 205

Semester Bet

Instructor: Mr. Fabian Spengler

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Office Hours: Upon appointment

### **Course Description:**

The course discusses contemporary issues in Arabic and Islamic studies, with a focus on youth culture. Class discussions comparatively analyze youth culture; youth and politics; the challenges of Muslim minorities in Western countries; and the contemporary Middle East, with special focus on the Arab Spring.

### **Course Goals:**

The course aims to encourage in-depth discussion of Muslim and Arabic youth culture and politics, as well as to improve the students' Academic English skills. At the end of the course, each student should be able to actively participate in a university lecture given in English.

### **Course Material:**

The course material is entirely in English. It is composed of academic articles, newspaper articles, excerpts from fiction literature and video clips.

### **Course Work:**

Attendance and participation in the course are mandatory. Students must prepare a reading assignment for all classes. Further, each student has to submit three written assignments during the semester, which are part of the final grade. **Students who do not submit all three assignments will not be allowed to take the final exam and thus will not complete the course.**

### **Course Exam:**

The final exam consists of multiple choice questions and several short open questions. Only students who **handed in all three assignments** will be eligible to take the final exam.

### **Course Grades:**

15% Assignment 1

15% Assignment 2

15% Assignment 3

55% Final Exam

## **Syllabus**

### **1. Class**

Introduction and overview.

Reading for next class: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/meet-the-mipsterz>

### **2. Class**

Islamic Youth Culture.

Reading for next class:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2013/sep/13/mashrou-leila-lebanese-arab-politics>

2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qn3EFPOuEGM>

Assignment 1: Book or song report; and email writing exercise.

### **3. Class**

Music and Film in Arab/Muslim Youth Culture.

Reading for next class:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/26/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-women-drive.html>

### **4. Class**

Arab/Muslim Culture and Minority Rights.

Reading for next class:

<https://www.american.edu/careercenter/Resumes.cfm>

### **5. Class**

Workshop I.

Reading for next class:

Ramadan, Tariq, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2003): pages 144-173.

### **6. Class**

Contemporary Muslim Thinkers.

Reading for next class:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21567689.2017.1397514>

### **7. Class**

Researching Islam in Europe.

Reading for next class:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UDtinc9ILU>

2. TBA

Assignment 2: Political review; CV writing exercise.

## **8. Class**

Islamophobia in Europe: Being and Belonging.

Reading for next class:

<https://medium.com/@richarddmorey/how-to-write-a-well-structured-essay-48a961cda42e>

## **9. Class**

Workshop II + Preparation for the exam.

Reading for next class:

1. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/no-religion-at-school-berlin-court-rules-against-muslim-student-prayers-a-697182.html>

2. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/switzerland-muslim-swimming-pool-school-mixed-lessons-ruling-girls-boys-echr-a7518981.html>

Assignment 3: Political analysis assignment

## **10. Class**

Islamic Norms in German schools.

Reading for next class:

TBA

## **11. Class**

Politics of the Arab World

Reading for next class:

Howard, Philip N., and Muzammil M. Hussain, Democracy's Fourth Wave?; Digital Media and the Arab Spring (OUP USA, 2013): pages 17-34.

## **12. Class**

Social Media and the Arab Spring.

Reading for next class:

TBA

## **13. Class**

Islam in former Soviet Republics.