Contemporary Issues in Arabic and Islamic Studies

Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, 0631247601
Wednesdays, 10:15 – 11:45
Rosenberg 105
Semester Bet

Instructor: Mr. Fabian Spengler
Contact: fabians@mail.tau.ac.il
Office Hours: Upon appointment

Course Description:
The course discusses contemporary issues in Arabic and Islamic studies, with a focus on identity and politics. 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 and women's rights.

Course Goals:
The course aims to encourage in-depth discussion of contemporary Muslim and Arabic identity 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, open questions, and a few questions relating to English grammar. Only students who **handed in all three written assignments** will be eligible to take the final exam.

Course Grades:
15%   Assignment 1
15%   Assignment 2
15%   Assignment 3
55%   Final Exam

Syllabus

I.   Introduction

1. **11.03.2020**
    Introduction and overview

    Reading for next class:
    1. https://www.thedailybeast.com/meet-the-mipsterz
    2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qn3EFPOuEGM

II.   Identity

2. **18.03.2020**
    Mipsters, sex, and women's rights I

    Reading for next class: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/26/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-women-drive.html

3. **25.03.2020**
    Mipsters, sex, and women's rights II

    Reading for next class: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UDtinc9lLU

4. **01.04.2020**
    Guest lecture. Attendance is mandatory.

5. **22.04.2020 (First writing assignment due!)**
    Mipsters, sex, and women's rights III

    Reading for next class: https://www.american.edu/careercenter/Resumes.cfm

6. **06.05.2020**
    Writing workshop I

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

7. **13.05.2020**
    Shaping Islam for Muslim minorities

    Reading for next class:
    https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13602004.2018.1524137?casa_token=jWVM_dldzpgAAAAA:HDArx7W8DaSR0CxhWEt48CtOt1GWP0RW70d4OBjKU1TJskP9JweikUdaBC4BOQlQrogzQSrfC44

8. **20.05.2020 (Second writing assignment due!)**
    Research on Islam in Europe

    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

9. **27.05.2020**
Islamic norms in German schools

Reading for next class: https://medium.com/@richarddmorey/how-to-write-a-well-structured-essay-48a961cda42e

III.   Politics & human rights

10. **03.06.2020**
Writing workshop II & preparation for the final exam

Reading for next class: TBA

11. **10.06.2020**
Youth and politics in the Middle East

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.

Add: what do Western governments think about cooperation with Sisi, what about refugees?

12. **17.06.2020 (Third writing assignment due!)**
Social media and propaganda

Reading for next class: TBA

13. **24.06.2020**
Islam under oppression

Reading for next class: TBA