

Statement on Sustainability: Issues in Teaching and Research

The sustainability workshop has readjusted my interactions and feelings towards the environment. The three days that I spent in intensive training and lectures have allowed me to ponder upon our environment; moreover, this training has urged me to integrate all this knowledge into my own personal and professional life. In a personal sense, I have fundamentally changed the ways in which I interact with nature: I am fully aware of the impact of recycling, of my own role in the sustainability of the earth; on a professional level, I have begun to assume the roles of integrating and sharing ideas regarding concern for the environment with students and colleagues. My syllabus now includes chapters that deal with issues of sustainability. I am becoming more aware of my surroundings, my neighborhood, my community: I examine the architecture of my confining community. For instance, when I walk, I pay close attention to how the space is structured for the pedestrian. I walk, and I pay attention to allocations of space. I am now cognizant of space, and I peruse the entire walkway in an effort to understand the decisions that were made in the design of the space and the neglectful manner in which much of our urban design regards the natural world. I have begun to appreciate and understand the value of our natural world: its vegetation and its many resources. I am now more inclined to take a walk in nature, to appreciate the trees and flowers while I walk. My curiosity has dramatically increased, and I find myself often curious about the types of trees, their characteristics, and the differences between them. As I consider these environmental factors, I also consider my own diet and routines. I have begun to look for the healthiest choice, not only in food, but in my methods of purchasing food, trying to use less packaging, and in disposing of garbage, paying attention to what I throw away and how. In my travels, I am aware of how other nations regard issues of sustainability: in London, for example, I found that refuse collection is well-labeled and well-organized so that the ordinary citizen is more likely to use the recycling system. In Morocco, I came to realize that, although there may not be a national system for sustainability, people live in ways that are more sustainable: less packaging means less waste.

Representations of Nature in Arabic Literature

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Required Textbooks and Materials:

- Al-Koni, Ibrahim. *The Animists*. American University of Cairo Press, 2012.
- Darwish, Mahmoud. *In the Presence of Absence*. 2006.
- DeLoughrey, Elizabeth, and George Handley, editors. *Postcolonial Ecologies: Literatures of the Environment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Foltz, Richard, Frederick Mathewson Denny, Azizan Haji Baharuddin, Editors. *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. Cambridge: Center for the Study of World Religions, 2003.
- Gibran, Kahlil. *The Prophet*.
- Irwin, Robert. *Night and Horses and the Desert: An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature*. New York: Anchor, 2002.
- Kanafani, Ghassan. *Men in the Sun*. New York: Rienner, 1998.
- Makhzangi, Mohamed. *Memories of a Meltdown: An Egyptian between Moscow and Chernobyl*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2006.
- Nasser, Amjad. *Where the Rain Doesn't Fall*. Qatar: Bloomsbury, 2010.
- Salih, Tayeb. *Season of Migration to the North*.
- Samman, Ghada. *Beirut Nightmares*. Quartet, 2010.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine representations of the natural world in Arabic literature, with a particular focus on how key texts in Arabic address such questions as ecology, natural imagery, and the human relationship to the natural world.

The natural world is a point of emphasis for many Arab writers. This tradition begins with the Qur'an and its strong emphasis on care for God's creation. This tradition of stewardship, begun in the words of the Qur'an, have continued to be a point of strong interest in classic Arabic philosophical and literary texts, and this ecological tradition continues in contemporary literature.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and participation

Attendance is key in this course. You are expected to attend every class, be on time, and prepared. Readings and assignments should be done *before* class. You will be responsible for turning in any work on the day it is due, regardless of absence. I will only accept emailed assignments when previously arranged. Attending class only in body does not count. You must be here in body and mind. In short, you are expected to *attend* to the material and to our class discussions. If you use your class time for other than our mutual work, I will consider you absent. See the policy about cell phones and laptops in regards to attendance points. Come prepared to discuss honestly your responses, concerns, wonderings, and questions to outside readings, experiences, and reflections. If issues with attendance or tardiness arise, points will be deducted from the participation section of this course.

It is expected that you will read and reflect on *all required reading assignments* as you prepare to *actively participate* in class discussions. As you read for each class, take notes of interesting or confusing points that you would like to discuss in class. Please bring up any questions, issues, or connections to your experience that you would like to share.

2. Midterm and final essays

You are required to complete two essays for this course, each of which is an exegesis on the literature that we are covering for the course. Please select one poem and one short story or novel excerpt as the focus of your essay. Please quote several published theoretical articles, book chapters, or books at relevant points. Five-hundred words each, due before the exams.

3. Midterm and final exams

Exams will cover the theories and literary works on the reading list. Questions will require you to consider the contextual background and influences of each writer, a close reading of the literature, and comparisons across texts.

Summary of course requirements:

Attendance and participation	20
Midterm essay	20
Midterm exam	20
Final essay	20
Final exam	20
Total	100 points

The following guidelines will be used to determine letter grades:

Letter Grade	Percentage Score
A+	98-100%
A	93-97%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	60-69%
F	< 60%

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Deviations from the syllabus may be necessary.

Date	
<i>Week 1</i>	Course introduction Examination of poetry by Darwish Discussion of techniques for exegesis of poetry
<i>Week 2</i>	Read chapter from Islam and Ecology Discussion of Darwish, In the Presence of Absence Sharing of essay ideas and thesis statements
<i>Week 3</i>	Read chapter from Islam and Ecology Discussion of Gibran, The Prophet
<i>Week 4</i>	Read chapter from Islam and Ecology Discuss selections from Irwin's anthology Sharing of essays in development
<i>Week 5</i>	Read chapter from Islam and Ecology Discuss selections from Irwin's anthology

Week 6	Read chapter from Islam and Ecology Discuss Nasser, Where the Rain Doesn't Fall
Week 7	Midterm essay due Sharing of essay excerpts Synthesis discussion of all readings thus far
Week 8	Midterm exam
Week 9	Read chapter from Postcolonial Ecologies Discuss Makhzangi's Memories of a Meltdown Sharing of essay ideas and thesis statements
Week 10	Read chapter from Postcolonial Ecologies Discuss Al-Koni's The Animists
Week 11	Read chapter from Postcolonial Ecologies Sharing of essays in development Discuss Kanafani's Men in the Sun
Week 12	Read chapter from Postcolonial Ecologies Discuss Samman's Beirut Nightmares
Week 13	Read chapter from Postcolonial Ecologies Discuss Salih's Season of Migration to the North
Week 14	Final essay due Sharing of essay excerpts Synthesis discussion of readings thus far
Week 15	Final exam

Assignments

Course assignments will be discussed in detail during our first few class meetings. All assignments are due in class on the date indicated; *any late assignments will result in 10% per day of the total points being automatically deducted before grading the assignment.* Turn in hard copies of your assignment on the day they are due, in a neat and organized fashion (i.e. a report cover or light weight 3-ring binder or folder if necessary). *All papers and projects should be stapled and neatly organized. I will accept emailed assignments only when previously arranged with me. ALL written assignments are to be generated on a word processor, double-spaced, using a 12 point Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier font (unless otherwise noted).*

Please feel free to ask for my feedback or assistance on any assignments if you are experiencing difficulties. You may always submit an assignment for my feedback before submitting it. Please proofread and edit your work carefully. While I may not take off points for errors in these areas, you will see that I will make corrections and comments when needed to help you improve your future writing. However, if the errors interfere with my ability to understand your ideas and effectively complete the task, points will be deducted. If written or oral assignments show evidence of potential problems with grammar, conventions of language, format and/or cohesiveness, a conference will be scheduled to address specific areas of need.

Cell Phones and Pagers

Please turn off all cell phones and pagers before class. Your cell phone should be kept in your bag during class. It should not be out on the table during class. No text messaging during class. Feel free to bring your laptop to class; however, all use must be limited to what we are working on in class that day.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

I expect that all assignments turned in for this course will be your own original work. While you are encouraged to use references as appropriate, it is expected that you will provide appropriate APA citations, references, and quotations as needed. The submission of the work of other students and/or authors as your own work is considered plagiarism. If you submit plagiarized work for all or part of an assignment in this course, you will receive a grade of 0 (zero) on the assignment. In addition, I am required to pursue further disciplinary action with the university.

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The university assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for practices that are fair require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable conduct in the course of academic work.

The examples and definitions below are intended to clarify the standards by which academic dishonesty and academically honorable conduct are to be judged. This list is merely illustrative of the kinds of infractions that may occur, and is not intended to be exhaustive. Moreover, the definitions suggest conditions under which unacceptable behavior of the indicated types normally occurs; however, there may be unusual cases that fall outside these conditions that also will be judged to be unacceptable by the academic community.

DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course, examples of which should be provided in advance by the faculty member. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

CHEATING ON EXAMINATIONS. Cheating on examinations involves giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member), or sharing information with another student during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member). Other examples include intentionally allowing another student to view one's own examination and collaboration before or after an examination if such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the faculty member.

UNAUTHORIZED COLLABORATION. Submission for academic credit of a work product, or a part thereof, represented as its being one's own effort, which has been developed in substantial collaboration with or without assistance from another person or source, is a violation of academic honesty. It is also a violation of academic honesty to knowingly provide such assistance. Collaborative work specifically authorized by a faculty member is allowed.

FALSIFICATION. It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise, assignment or proceeding (e.g., false or misleading citation of sources, the falsification of the results of experiments or of computer data, false or misleading information in an academic context in order to gain an unfair advantage).

MULTIPLE SUBMISSIONS. It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the faculty member(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit. In cases in which there is a natural development of research or knowledge in a sequence of courses, use of prior work may be desirable, even required; however, the student is responsible for indicating in writing, as a part of such use, that the current work submitted for credit is cumulative in nature.