

HI 381/Near & Middle East
UNC-Greensboro
Office Hours: By Appointment
anajjaj@greensborocollege.edu
Spring 2009

Dr. April L. Najjaj (nǔ-jáj)
Home: (336) 455-9889
Office: (336) 272-7102 x 325
208 Proctor Hall West (GC)

Overview of the course:

With lectures, readings, DVDs, small group work, and class discussions, we will develop a historical understanding of the social, cultural, political, religious, and economic history of the Near and Middle East starting with World War I and the fall of the Ottoman Empire. We will also consider and develop a deeper knowledge and awareness of present-day events in the Middle East and the roots of those events in the past.

The purpose of this class is to provide a broad study of the modern region referred to as the Middle East. Although the religion of Islam and the language of Arabic are the dominant forces in the area, there are different minority ethnic and religious groups that will also be considered. Defined broadly as the area between Egypt and Iran, we will begin with a basic understanding of Islam and discuss Western influences through colonialism and the mandate system. We will then discuss Egypt, the countries of *Bilad al-Sham* (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine/Israel, and Jordan), and Islamism, popularly referred to as Islamic fundamentalism. The final portion of the course will cover Iraq, Iran, and a discussion of women in the region. Many historical studies of the Middle East deal only with politics and religion; in this class, however, we will be studying not only those topics but also introducing literature and language, art and architecture, food, and music.

Attendance is crucial for success in this course. Discussion is an important component; obviously, you cannot benefit from that aspect of the course if you do not attend class. Much of the information discussed in class lecture is not necessarily in the textbooks; therefore, reading the texts is **not** a suitable substitution for coming to class. **I will take attendance every class period; one unexcused absence (for whatever reason) is allowed.** In addition, **do your best to be on time.** Occasionally being late cannot be helped, but repetitive tardiness disrupts the class and will affect borderline grades at semester's end.

There will be a take-home mid-term, a non-cumulative final exam (each worth 100 points), and a five-page book review (100 points). In addition, 50 points is included for class attendance and participation for a total of 350 points possible for the course. Exams will be short answers and essays. Make-up exams will be entirely essay and must be done within one week of the original exam (no exceptions!).

The primary writing assignment is a 5-page, typed book review due **March 26th**. Choose a history book (not fiction!) that deals with any topic within the scope of this class (from World War I to the present). **All books must be OK'd by me in advance.** The book must include footnotes or endnotes, a bibliography, published after 1985 and by a reputable press. Be sure the book contains all of these elements before you bring it for approval; ten points will be deducted for any review not approved in advance.

Turn off all cell phones during class time.

Required textbooks:

Ali, Tariq. *The Clash of Fundamentalisms, Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*. London: Verso, 2002.

Aslan, Reza. *No god but God, The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. New York: Random House, 2006.

Cleveland, William L. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. 3rd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2004.

Optional textbook:

Lumbard, Joseph, ed. *Islam, Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition, Essays by Western Muslim Scholars*. Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom, Inc., 2004.

Various other required readings will be included on E-Reserves throughout the semester.

Class schedule:

January	22	Introduction to Course Islam 101 Aslan, Chs. 1-3
	29	Colonialism and the Mandate System Creation of the Modern State of Turkey Cleveland, Ch. 9; 10 (175-85); 14 (277-288) Aslan, Ch. 9
February	5	Egypt Cleveland, Ch. 15; 18 (373-382) Mahfouz novella (2 files on E-Reserve)
	12	Lebanon & Syria Cleveland, Ch. 12; 18 (382-392) Cleveland, Ch. 19 (397-407)
	19	Arab-Israeli Conflict Cleveland, Chs. 13; 16 (337-344); 17; 22 (474-478) Ali, Ch. 12
	26	Rise of Islamism Aslan, Ch. 4 Lumbard, Ch. 5 (E-Reserve) Ali, Ch. 20 Take –Home Mid-Term Exam
March	5	No class; GC Spring Break
	12	No class; UNCG Spring Break
	19	Mid-Term Exam Due

Useful Internet Links and Websites--Newspapers:

From Egypt:

www.egyptiancastle.com/live/newspapers/main.htm

www.egyptiangazette.net.eg

From Qatar:

www.aljazeera.net

From Kuwait:

www.arabtimesonline.com

From Lebanon:

www.daralhayat.com (English link)

www.alanwar.com

www.dailystar.com.lb

www.naharnet.com

From Syria:

www.sana.org (English link)

Israeli Peace Movement websites:

www.icahdusa.org (Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions)

<http://otherisrael.home.igc.org>

www.tikkun.org

www.nkusa.org

Miscellaneous websites:

www.csis.org/mideast/menc.cfm

www.futuretvnetwork.com

www.lebanon.com/radio

www.bbc.co.uk

www.arabtimes.com

www.memritv.org

www.lifebehindthewall.com/index.htm (Quaker peace movement site)