

CET Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Intensive Arabic Language in Amman

Course Code / Title: (AM/LANG 385) Marginalization and Discrimination in the Arab World:
Changing Perspectives

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Arabic Language / Middle East Studies,
Sociology

Language of Instruction: Arabic

Prerequisites/Requirements: ACTFL Intermediate, final placement at discretion of Academic
Director

Description

This course surveys the diversity of identities and cultures in the Arab world, focusing on marginalized populations and the institutional and social barriers they face, in addition to changing attitudes, particularly among youth. Beginning from pre-Islamic society and tracing the formation of Arab identity in opposition to the “other,” the course highlights ways stereotyping and discrimination have shifted among society, religious authority, and the state.

Using literature, popular culture, the writings of contemporary thinkers, and sociolinguistics, students examine the roots of salient attitudes towards marginalized populations, common justifications for discrimination, as well as changing attitudes in a globalized world.

This course begins meeting a few weeks into the program, after a period of intensive instruction in MSA and Jordanian dialect. Depending on the number of students enrolled, the course may be split up into smaller groups so instructors can devote personalized attention to students at varying levels of Arabic to ensure all students are able to actively participate in the larger class meetings.

Objectives

During the course, students:

- 1) Develop Arabic vocabulary for discussing and analyzing issues of identity, power, marginalization, and society, and use evidence (from stories, poems, articles, and other examples) to formulate arguments on such issues
- 2) Widen their understanding of literary and cultural stereotypes in Arab cultures and their roots
- 3) Distinguish between varying local viewpoints on course themes
- 4) Uncover changing perspectives on marginalized groups and monitor how traditional stereotypes have developed after the Arab Spring

Course Requirements

The pace of instruction is intensive. Students are expected to thoroughly prepare for each class and to actively participate. Attendance in the course is mandatory, as outlined in the CET Jordan Attendance Policy.



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- Homework may include readings followed by short in-class presentations and student-facilitated discussion.
- Small projects and presentations are assigned throughout the course, for which students must conduct interviews with their local peers on concepts covered in readings and present a comparison of viewpoints.
- Presentations are 15 minutes in length and include a question and answer period at the end. All students provide a written summary of their presentation to the instructor for each project.
- For the final project, students conduct research on a topic of their interest and present in front of instructors and peers, accompanied by a paper of 10 to 15 pages on A4 sized paper, utilizing examples from the course material to support their arguments.

The course may also include special lectures and field-based course components such as visiting local organizations supporting various marginalized groups in Jordan.

Grading

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Participation: 20%
- Projects: 15%
- Homework: 20%
- Presentations: 15%
- Final Paper 20%
- Presentation of Final Paper: 10%

Readings

[Abou Fakr, Saqar. "Policies, Minorities, and an Arab World Opening Up". Al Rai Al Akhar Magazine Online. 2008.](#)

[Abou Khanjar, Ahmad. "Nubia and the Works of Idris Ali: Racism Countering Racism." Al Faisal Magazine Online. December 2016.](#)

[Abou Rakba, Samar. "Minorities in the Arab World". Dunya Al Watan newspaper online. May 2011.](#)

[Abou Taha, Heba. "Civil Marriage: Socially Vilified, Legally Prohibited, Righteously Desired." 3alRamRam Online.](#)

[Abou Thar Al Qasrawy. "The Kurdish Issue: Between Past and Present." Katehon Online. December 2016.](#)

['Adnani, Ikram. "Religious Coexistence in the Arab World". CNN Bil 'Arabi Online. April 2016.](#)

Antoon, Sinan. *O Mary*. Dar Al Jamal. 2012.

Al Atrash, Layla. *Children of the Wind*. Al Ahliya. 2012.

Batayne, Afaf. *Outside of the Body*. Beirut. 2004.



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[Bin Shadad, Antar. "A Victim of Racial Discrimination in Theater Has a New Vision." Al Ghad Online. 2011.](#)

Al Da'aas, Su'ada'. *Because I'm Black*. Edafais. 2010.

[Hash, Dalia. "Adventists or 'Sebtiyoon': The Minority of Minorities in Egypt." Raseef 22 Online. May 2016.](#)

Hathat, Aziz. "The Crisis of Minorities in the Arab World". Dar Al Fikr. Damascus. 2002.

[Ishaya, William. "Study on National and Religious Minorities in Arab and Islamic Reality". Assyrian Forums Online. April 2006.](#)

Al Juhani, Laila. *Ignorance*. Dar Al Adaab. Beirut. 2008.

[Karasha, Basma. "Is Arab Society Racist?" BBC News Arabic. December 2013.](#)

Al Karzoon, Bassam. "Minorities in Palestine". Palestinian Foreign Ministry. Dunya Al Watan Newspaper. 2005.

[Kheir, Bustami Mohammed Sa'id. "Perspective on Racism: Is the Prophet Black or White?" Sudaress Online. October 2009.](#)

[Majla, Hend. "Gender Roles in Arab Societies." Syrian Women's Network. 2016.](#)

Al Maqari, Ali. *The Current Jew*. Dar Al Saqi. London. 2009.

["Minorities: A Priority for Lebanon, the Region, and the World, Starting with the Yazidis" Al Afkar Online. September 2014.](#)

[Moro, Mohammad. "The Islamic Solution to the Problem of Minorities". AlMoslem.Net. 2008.](#)

Nasrallah, Ibrahim. *The Balcony of Disgrace*. Dar al Arabiyya Lil Uluum. Beirut. 2010.

[Al Omari, Adel. "The Roots of Arab Prejudice". Civilized Dialogue Online. July 2012.](#)

[Osama, Sherif. "Seven Minority Groups in Yemen". Dotmsr. January 2015.](#)

[Al Rifai, Layla. "Gender Concepts: From Body Ownership to Normalization." Midan Al Jazeera Online. 2010.](#)

[Al Rifa'ai, Najm Al Deen. *Ethnic Minorities in Syria*. High Institute for Ethnic Studies. Syria. 2016.](#)

[Windsor, Mohammad Jabr. "Prejudice and Discrimination in Islamic Culture". Aden Jewel of Arabic Blog. June 2016.](#)

[Al Zoabi, Lotfy. "Jordanian and Palestinian Prejudices." Al Rai Press Online. December 2016.](#)

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Outline of Course Content

Each topic is covered in 2-3 weeks.

Topic 1 – Stereotypes and Racism

- The Arabs and the “other”
- Multidirectional discrimination (Arabs as colonizers and colonized people)
- Stereotypes in literature and Arab culture for Jews, Persians, minorities (ethnic and racial)
- Stereotypes among Muslims (particularly Arabs versus non-Arabs)
- Discrimination against minorities in Egypt
- Discrimination and racism in Gulf societies

Topic 2 – Family and Gender Discrimination

- Gender/sexual orientation and “honor” crimes
- Family status and children outside of marriage

Topic 3 -- Religion

- Quran and Hadith references, Islamic approaches to racism
- Race and the prophet Mohammad
- Minority sects in Islam
- Christians and Jews in the Arab world

Topic 4 – Changing Perspectives

- Social change and limitations
- Youth perspectives
- Gender and sexual orientation
- Geopolitics, nationality and ethnicity