The Modern Arabic Novel
الحديثة العربية الرواية في

ENG 405-090 Fall 2012
TTH 2-3:15 Ferguson 381
Instructor: Dr. Ericka Hoagland Office / Ext.: LAN 211, ext. 2413
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CATALOG DESCRIPTION: Advanced study and research in World Literature, which may focus on particular periods, genres and/or authors. Prerequisite: 12 semester hours of English.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: “Art,” Nobel Laureate Naguib Mafouz remarked in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988, “is generous and sympathetic. In the same way that it dwells with the happy ones it does not desert the wretched. It offers both alike the convenient means for expressing what swells up in their bosom.” The first Arabic writer to be recognized with the Nobel, Mahfouz, who died in 2006, continues to be one of the most important writers both within the Arabic/Islamic world and outside of it, known particularly for his many novels, including his celebrated Cairo Trilogy. The novel itself is a rather late-addition to a long and rich tradition of Arabic literature, emerging as a major literary form in the 20th century with writers like Muhammad Husayn Haykal (whose 1913 novel Zaynab is considered by some to be the first Arabic novel), Mahfouz, and Emile Habiby. As Robert Allen observes, “If the earlier part of the historical development of the Arabic novel coincides with a period of nationalism and particularly of Arab – pan-Arab – nationalism as well as more local versions, then recent decades have witnessed what Albert Hourani, in a chapter of his renowned book, A History of the Arab Peoples (1991), terms ‘a disturbance of spirits;’ in more literary-critical terms, a division into more local concerns and an analysis of khusūsiyyāt (particularities) at the national and regional levels” (249).

The novels selected for this course are intended to represent both aspects of the twentieth-century “history” of the Arabic novel, with an emphasis on Hourani’s “disturbance of spirits,” as we delve into the particularities of the literature representing the Mahgreb – those countries spanning the Mediterranean rim of Northern Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia – as well as parts of the Middle East, namely Lebanon and Palestine. The writing for this course will focus on the one hand with exploring how the novels reflect the observations about Arabic literature made by noted scholars in the field, and on the other hand, investigating through rigorous research the scholarship on a particular text through the construction of an annotated bibliography, and then contributing to that scholarship with original research in a final paper due at the end of the term.

Course Goals and Objectives: The general goals and objectives for the course are the following and meet Texas Exemplary Educational Objectives:
1. The student will demonstrate the ability to read complex texts, closely and accurately.
2. The student will demonstrate the ability to comprehend both traditional and contemporary schools/methods of critical theory and apply them to literary texts to generate relevant interpretations.
3. The student will demonstrate knowledge of literary history in regard to particular periods of World, British and American literature.
4. The student will demonstrate ability to effectively conduct literary research.
5. The student will demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes in regards to literary analysis.

Required Texts:

Djebbar, Assia. *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*.

Required Online Readings (available on D2L):

Hamarneh, Walid. “Some Narrators and Narrative Modes in the Contemporary Arabic Novel.”
**Required Assignments**

**40% Reading Response Papers** - Over the course of the term, students will write five, single-spaced, one page analytical reading response papers on 8 X 14 paper. These papers are not personal response papers, or miniature book reviews, but rather focused analyses of specific themes, issues, or characters in the literature. In these papers students are expected to synthesize all texts covered up to the paper’s due date and bring the literature and criticism into conversation with one another through a critical response / analysis identifying meaningful connections, and thematic links/departures between the texts. The first response paper will be comprised of 1) a synthesis of the critical pieces that offer a background and history of/for the Arabic literary tradition, themes and concerns within it, and the place of the novel within that tradition, and 2) an analysis of this information: that is, a critical response which seeks to engage with the texts in some meaningful, particular way.

**15% Annotated Bibliography** – A 6-8 page annotated bibliography prefaced by a succinct analytical introduction (300-400 words) that outlines the scope and organization pattern of the annotated bibliography to follow as well as identifies the major trends or patterns in the scholarship on one of the featured texts in the course. This introduction should conclude by briefly identifying additional avenues of critical discussion. The annotated bibliography should be comprised of 8-10 citations with annotations; the annotations themselves should be at least 100 words, and no more than 250 words. The annotations should be concise representations of the central argument/s of the piece, grammatically and mechanically clean, in active, third person voice, and without any evaluative language that suggests some sort of response to the piece being annotated.

**30% Final Paper** – The final paper, due during Finals Week, represents the capstone assignment for this course, and is comprised of two parts: a proposal due in the tenth week of class, and the final paper. The proposal is worth 5% of the 30% allocated to the final paper assignment, and should follow the structure outlined in the proposal guidelines available on D2L. The final paper
is an 8-10 page researched literary analysis, accompanied by a works cited page that strictly follows MLA conventions of formatting and citation. The paper is likely to be a continuation of the study begun with the annotated bibliography, potentially looking more closely at a gap in the critical discussion identified in the bibliography’s introduction or taking a contrary position to the critical consensus on the text. The central requirements of this assignment are that the essay reflect original scholarship on your part and that secondary scholarship (i.e., sources) comprise only 20% of the paper itself.

**15% Participation** – Consistent, thoughtful participation in this class is expected. Offering questions and reactions to the texts, as well as contributing to the discussion board, are the main ways to participate in class discussion. Over the course of the semester, I expect all students to contribute to the discussion board TEN times: five times before midterm and five times before finals week (and not all at once). Discussion board postings count for HALF of your participation grade, and must be thoughtful contributions, not one sentence postings a la Facebook. Half of your postings must be original threads, while the other half must be responses to the postings of others.

**Grading Scale:** The following grading scale is non-negotiable.

- 90%-100%: A
- 80%-89%: B
- 70%-79%: C
- 60%-69%: D
- 59% & below: F

**Grading Rubric:** While students can expect substantial comments on their drafts and/or in required and informal meetings that are designed to both explain the grade they have received as well as provide comments to aid in improving the student’s work, the grading rubric below offers additional information about the basic requirements of and differences between A, B, C, D, and F papers. Note: *this rubric is used for grading papers ONLY.*

An “A” paper is an exceptional paper that meets all of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines. Such a paper has a clearly stated and critically sophisticated thesis statement; supporting paragraphs are thoughtful and well-supported; transitions between paragraphs and ideas are smooth; a formal introduction and conclusion are provided and both paragraphs meet the expectations of introductions and conclusions as outlined by the instructor; and there are few to no grammatical errors.

A “B+” paper is a strong paper that meets all of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines; thesis statement is clear but lacks some of the critical sophistication of an “A” thesis statement; paragraphs are nicely developed and supported; transitions between paragraphs and ideas are generally smooth; the introduction and conclusion are for the most part formally constructed and follow most of the guidelines for introductions and conclusions as explained by the instructor; and has a few grammatical errors.

A “B” paper is a solid paper that meets most to all of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines; the thesis statement is identifiable but lacks the level of
clarity and sophistication found in “A” and “B+” papers; paragraphs show attention to development, but not as consistently or as rigorously as “A” or “B+” papers; smooth transitions between paragraphs and ideas are present in places, but not consistent; the introduction and conclusion lack some of the necessary formality and components as stipulated by the instructor; and there are several grammatical errors.

A “C+” is an adequate paper that meets a large number of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines; the thesis is identifiable, but may be awkwardly constructed and is somewhat lacking in critical depth; paragraphs are fairly developed, but could use more support and development; transitions are abrupt or in some places non-existent; the introduction and conclusion are too informal and are lacking in some of the components outlined by the instructor; and there are several grammatical errors.

A “C” paper is an average paper that meets most of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines; the thesis is identifiable, but its claim is vague, observational, or underdeveloped and is too informal in its construction and critical thinking; paragraphs show some development, but not as much as a “C+” paper; transitions are hard to find between paragraphs and ideas; the introduction and conclusion are too informal and have few of the components outlined by the instructor; and there are many grammatical errors.

A “D+” is a mediocre paper meets only one or two of the requirements of the assignment as outlined by the assignment guidelines; there is no discernible thesis statement; the paragraphs lack structure and critical development; transitions are absent; the introduction and conclusion are awkwardly constructed and do not provide adequate set-up or closure to the paper; and there are many grammatical errors.

A “D” paper is a poor paper that does not meet the requirements of the assignment; the thesis statement is not identifiable; supporting paragraphs are underdeveloped and unfocused; there are no transitions to move from idea to idea or paragraph to paragraph; the introduction and conclusion are hard to follow, have no clear purpose or direction, and do not meet any of the expectations as outlined by the instructor; and the paper has many errors on each page.

An “F” paper does not meet any of the requirements as a whole or those for the introduction and conclusion; the paper has no discernible main idea; paragraphs are short and underdeveloped; the paper does not meet the minimum page length; the paper lacks focus; and there are grammatical errors throughout the entire paper.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54):** Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**General Course Policies**
The syllabus for a course is like a contract between student and teacher. A contract, loosely defined, is an agreement between two or more parties in which the parties agree to follow certain behaviors and meet specific responsibilities. By being in this class, you agree to the conditions listed below, including the course policies which outline acceptable codes of behavior for this course, and the course schedule, which outlines the due dates for all assignments. Should you not meet the expectations outlined by the syllabus, you can expect in turn to incur the penalties described below. That means it is extremely important that you familiarize yourself with the syllabus as thoroughly as possible; if a policy does not make sense, make sure to ask me as soon as possible as I will not allow confusion to be an excuse for not completing an assignment as required or for not meeting class expectations as described below.

After you have read the syllabus, sign and return the “syllabus contract” at the end of this document. By signing the contract, you are signifying that you understand the course policies and expectations, and agree to follow those policies and expectations, including the penalties described below for absences, tardiness, and plagiarism.

**Attendance Policy:** For this course, students are allowed FOUR absences without penalty; this translates to two weeks in a sixteen week semester. This is a generous attendance policy: USE IT WISELY. After the fourth absence, I will make the following deductions from a student’s final grade: for each additional absence up to the seventh, the final grade will be reduced by half a letter grade. Any student who misses more than seven classes will automatically receive an “F” for the course.

I follow the university’s policy for excused absences; this policy only excuses absences for official university business, not illness, court dates, doctor appointments, funerals, etc.

**Grievances and Concerns Policy:** If you are having difficulties with this course, whether it is with a writing assignment, a particular reading, or with the course in general, please do not suffer in silence and/or wait until the end of the term to inform me of these problems or concerns in the evaluations. At that point, there is nothing I can do to address those concerns. Thus it would be best for you, me, and the class to be able to address your concerns while there is still time left in the term to do so. Please talk to me either via email, or in private to discuss any problems or concerns you have with the course and I will do my best to address them. Of course, at the end of the term, your feedback regarding this course is both welcome and appreciated when it comes time to fill out the class evaluations.

**Students with Disabilities:**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).
**AARC Policy:** Students are highly encouraged to use the AARC, located in the Steen Library, for help with their papers. Some rules/guidelines that students should follow with respect to the Writing Center: 1) set up an appointment (they last thirty minutes), either by signing up on the appointment sheet located at the AARC, or by setting up an appointment online; 2) As a general rule, DO NOT DROP IN – you can never be assured of help by doing this, so it is best to sign up for or set up an appointment; 3) Come in with a complete, TYPED, draft – a typed draft is easier for the writing consultant to read, and a complete draft gives them more to work with and respond to; 4) Come in with specific questions about your draft, or specific parts of the paper that you want the writing consultant to look at; 5) If available, bring the assignment sheet with you so that tutors can reference it if they need more information about the assignment; and 6) DO NOT EXPECT THE WRITING CONSULTANT TO PROOFREAD THE ESSAY FOR YOU (that means fixing spelling and punctuation errors for you) – THEY WON’T. They will, however, point out grammatical/mechanical errors to you, but it is your responsibility to fix them.

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1):** Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Furthermore, turning in a paper that you wrote for another class for this class, as well as incorporating outside sources when research is not required or allowed for an assignment qualifies as academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

The following penalties will be incurred for plagiarism in this course: for the first offense, you will receive a zero for the paper and be reported to the appropriate academic dean; for the second offense, you will receive an “F” for the course and again be reported to the appropriate academic dean.

**Late Work and Makeup Policy:** I define a paper as “late” if it is submitted an hour after the official deadline for the paper. A paper that is a full day late will be marked down a half letter grade (thus, if you receive a “B” on the paper, but it is late, its final grade will be a “C+”). A paper turned in two days late will be marked down a full letter grade (a “B” paper will become a
A paper turned in three days late will automatically receive a “D.” If that paper shows poor work, additional deductions may occur. No papers will be accepted after four days.

THERE ARE NO MAKE-UPS IN THIS CLASS. In-class writing tasks and quizzes cannot be made up outside of class. Students cannot make-up formal writing assignments or exams.

**Email Policy:** Should you have questions about an assignment, a reading, the course in general, or simply need to contact me, use the Titan email address above, and be sure to write in the subject line: ENG 405. Please include a proper salutation (“Dr. Hoagland” will suffice), and a coherent, professional message. Emails that are missing any of these items will not receive a response. I will only answer emails during regular business hours, that is, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., so plan accordingly. I will answer emails sent to me over the weekend, but students should expect that these replies will not be as prompt as those sent during the work week.

**Additional Policies (aka other stuff you need to know):**

1. Cell phones, ipods, blackberrys, iphones, and any and all electronic devices that beep, ring, play music, buzz, vibrate, and essentially cause distractions should be turned off and stowed in the dark, deep recesses of your bags. I don’t want to see them, and I absolutely don’t want to hear them. If some emergency warrants having your phone handy, you must talk to me first. If I see one of those things out after class starts, you’ll be marked absent for the day.
2. If you fall asleep in class, you will be marked absent for the day. So have some coffee or other caffeinated beverage with you if need be.
3. Don’t interrupt when someone has the floor – it’s disruptive and disrespectful. Furthermore, don’t use this class as a place to do work for another class or to visit with your neighbors/friends; again, this is disrespectful behavior.
4. You can bring snacks to class, just don’t get too elaborate. If your food involves utensils or rotisseries, it’s probably not a good idea to bring it to class.
5. If you have any questions or concerns with the class, don’t suffer in silence: come see me during my office hours or set up an appointment. In general, it is a good idea to keep lines of communication open: I am far more likely to be flexible if you talk to me.
6. Come to class on time: if you’re late three times, you will receive an absence.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week One: August 28th – August 30th**

**Tuesday:** Introduction to class; overview on Arabic literature and critical terminology  
**Thursday:** Discuss “Literary History and the Arabic Novel,” “The Beginnings of the Arabic Novel,” and “The Mature Arabic Novel Outside Egypt,” and “The Arabic Novel in English Translation”

**Week Two: September 4th – September 6th**

Thursday: Discuss A Season of Migration to the North (Introduction and pgs. 1-50)

Week Three: September 11th – September 13th

Tuesday: Reading Response #1 Due; discuss Season of Migration to the North (Introduction and pgs. 1-50)
Thursday: NO CLASS: Finish discussion of Season of Migration to the North (pgs. 51-95) on discussion board

Week Four: September 18th – September 20th

Tuesday: Finish Season of Migration to the North & “Reflections on the Excesses of Empire”
Thursday: Discuss The Secret Life of Saeed (Book One) & “Readings of National Identity in the Palestinian Novel”

Week Five: September 25th – September 27th

Tuesday: Discuss The Secret Life of Saeed (Book Two)
Thursday: Discuss The Secret Life of Saeed (Book Three & Epilogue) and “The Miracle of Emile Habiby’s Pessoptimist”

Week Six: October 2nd – October 4th

Tuesday: Reading Response #2 Due; Discuss Arabian Nights and Days (pgs. 1-50)
Thursday: Discuss Arabian Nights and Days (pgs. 51-130)

Week Seven: October 9th – October 11th

Tuesday: Discuss Arabian Nights and Days (pgs. 131-178) and “Mahfouz and the Arabian Nights Tradition”
Thursday: Discuss Arabian Nights and Days (pgs. 179-228) and “Mahfouz’s Novels and the Nation”

Week Eight: October 16th – October 18th

Tuesday: Discuss The Story of Zahra (Book One: Chpts. 1-3) and “The Fiction of Hanan Al-Shayk, Reluctant Feminist”
Thursday: Annotated Bibliographies Due; discuss The Story of Zahra (Book One: Chpts. 4 & 5; Book Two: pgs. 123-132)
Tuesday: Discuss The Story of Zahra (pgs. 132-215) and “Writing Self, Writing Nation”
Week Nine: October 23rd – October 25th

Tuesday: Reading Response #3 Due; discuss *The Story of Zahra* (pgs. 132-215) and “Writing Self, Writing Nation”
Thursday: Discuss *The Game of Forgetting* (Introduction and Chpts. 1-4)
Tuesday: Discuss *The Game of Forgetting* (Chpts. 5-7)

Week Ten: October 30th – November 1st

Tuesday: Paper Proposals Due; discuss *The Game of Forgetting* (Chpts. 5-7)
Thursday: Discuss *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (Introduction and Part One) and “Assia Djebar’s Contribution”

Week Eleven: November 6th – November 8th

Tuesday: Discuss *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (Part Two)
Thursday: Discuss *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (Part Three: First & Second Movements)

Week Twelve: November 13th – November 15th

Tuesday: Discuss *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade* (Part Three: Third, Fourth, and Fifth Movements)
Thursday: Reading Response #4 Due; discuss *Minaret* (Chpts. 1-13)

Week Thirteen: November 20th

Tuesday: Discuss *Minaret* (Chpts. 14-21)

Week Fourteen: November 27th – November 29th

Tuesday: Discuss *Minaret* (Chpts. 22-27)
Thursday: Reading Response #5 Due; discuss *Minaret* (Chpts. 28-36)

Week Fifteen: December 4th – November 6th

Tuesday: Discuss *A Tunisian Tale* (pgs. 1-73)
Thursday: Discuss *A Tunisian Tale* (pgs. 74-139)

Week Sixteen: FINALS WEEK

Tuesday: Final Papers Due by 5 p.m.