Morocco: Changes & Cultural Identities

COURSE DESIGNATOR: MRCO 3014
NUMBER OF CREDITS: 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course examines the major social, cultural, intellectual, and human rights transformations in Morocco over the last four decades, stressing the undergoing tensions between the secular liberals and conservatives (especially Islamists) across gender, religion, language, and sexual politics all within a context of democratization. It also explores changing identities and the complexity of Moroccan cultural politics. It is based on a balanced combination of the exploration of major academic scholarship from a comparative new academic outlooks and multi-disciplinary perspectives, along with an insight into the lives and experiences of Moroccans. Above all, it traces the blended trajectories and trends in Moroccan society and culture, stressing the pressuring challenges to Moroccan national identities posed by globalization, attempts at democratization, secularism, conservatism, and fundamentalism.

This course is also designed to understand male-female dynamics, sexual politics, youth culture, and ethnicities in literature, philosophy, anthropology, popular culture, politics, religion, human rights, and sociology.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

• Become aware of the social, political, religious, intellectual, linguistic, and cultural reforms and transformations in postcolonial Morocco.
• Increase understanding of academic and political debate in Morocco over social, religious, political, and secular issues within a context of democratization.
• Develop more objective insider/insider interactive discussions of Moroccan cultural politics and identity.
• Develop critical thinking, academic writing, and research abilities in non-American academic contexts.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objectives of the course, you will receive a pack of selected materials in both soft and hard (scholarly articles, movies, and excerpts from books, novels, and short stories). You will be encouraged to hold discussions in class about a considerable range of issues, including the status of women in the Moroccan society, family values, youth, street harassment, human rights, multiculturalism, homosexuality, Moroccan identity, the Arab Spring and its aftermath, and the latest demonstrations/protests. The course will involve fieldwork and academic research activities, and you will draw on your observations and discussions with ordinary Moroccans, academics, and students to become familiar with the culture and society. You will choose an independent research project and give a short oral presentation; you will then develop the same topic into a mini research paper to be submitted during the last week of class.

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English
CONTACT HOURS: 45
Most sessions will be carried out in the form of PowerPoint presentations by the instructor and discussions of the main points of the theme dealt with. Previous reading/watching of the materials provided for the session is necessary. This allows for an increase in your talking time ratio and productive participation.

**REQUIRED READINGS/ MATERIALS**

Most of the readings are scholarly and not only canonical. This is because the field requires updates and new outlooks by young researchers who are imbued with critical thinking and by international organizations relying on field research and reports. These will provide a fresher objective perspective on the various issues we will tackle.

**E-materials (to be provided by instructor through PDF texts)**

- International Civil Society Action Network. (March 2015) What the women say: Morocco’s dilemma.

Print materials (photocopies of required materials will be available for purchase)

GRADING

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<th>Grading Rubric</th>
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Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.

Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.

Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.

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<tr>
<th>SUMMARY OF HOW GRADES ARE WEIGHTED</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and attendance</td>
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<td>Quizzes and presentations</td>
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<td>Mid-term examination</td>
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<td>Final examination</td>
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<td>Overall grade</td>
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ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Regular oral presentations and written submissions will form the basis of the course grade. Active class participation is also expected. Exact presentation submission topics are based on consultation between faculty member and student.

COURSE CONTENT

WEEK 1: Introduction

- General introduction to Moroccan history and society
- The postcolonial Morocco: Pre-Arab Spring to Post-Arab Spring (Stein et al. Islamism and the Arab Spring)

WEEK 2: Political Systems

- Dynamics of democratization in post-independent Morocco (in Storm, L. Democratization in Morocco)
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<td>Week 3: Women in Morocco</td>
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<td>El Jabri. Democracy and human rights</td>
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<td>Barlas, A. Believing women in Islam (Patriarchy and interpretation)</td>
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<td>Sadiqi, F. The impact of Islamization in Moroccan feminisms</td>
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<td>What Moroccan women say</td>
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<td>Week 4: Anthropological Views</td>
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<td>Pham, T. T. Social work and anthropology: Moroccan female immigrants to Spain</td>
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<td>Slyomovics, S. Introduction to Clifford Geertz in Morocco</td>
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<td>Week 5: Diverse Community Groups</td>
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<td>Sullivan, J. Prostitution and its surrounding culture in Morocco</td>
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<td>Mezouar, M. Prostitution in Morocco</td>
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<td>Morocco: situation of LGBT persons</td>
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<td>Week 6: Multiculturalism</td>
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<td>Fati, M. Multiculturalism in a Multilingual Society: Could that Be Possible?</td>
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<td>Fischer, S. R. Amazigh legitimacy through language in Morocco</td>
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<td>Week 7: Mid-Term Examination</td>
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<td>Mid-term</td>
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<td>Discussion of Oumil's Making sense of recent protests in Morocco</td>
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<td>Week 8: Religion in Morocco</td>
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**WEEK 9: Human Rights**

- Storm, L. Basic civil liberties in Democratization in Morocco
- Menin, L. (2014). Rewriting the World: Gendered Violence, the Political Imagination and Memoirs from the “Years of Lead” in Morocco
- Gender equality and parity in Morocco (National Council for Human Rights)

**WEEK 10: Cultural Identities**

- Riecken, N. Periodization and the political: Abdallah Laroui’s analysis of temporalities in a postcolonial context
- Orlando, V. K. Screening Morocco: Contemporary film in a changing society. (Chapter 4. Prison, Torture and Testimony)
- Orlando, V. K. Screening Morocco: Contemporary film in a changing society. (Chapter 1. Moroccan films as social realist texts)

**WEEK 11: Cultural Identities**

- Migration: Gonzalez, V. Maghreb and sub-Saharan migration to Spain
- Sabry, T. Emigration as popular culture.

**WEEK 12: Final Examination**

- Oral presentation of papers
- The final
ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes. Attendance and participation are allotted 20% of the general grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a good grade, but participation in class discussions and proving that you have read the selected articles prior to class time will highly and positively affect your final grade.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY:

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

STUDENT CONDUCT:

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.