Very Important Note, Please Read

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity/ for more information.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l’un des objets est la maîtrise d’une langue).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded

“In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Women in Contemporary Middle East
(Institute of Islamic Studies, 613)
Winter, 2014
Morrice Hall 313
Friday: 2:00-4:00

Professor Malek Abisaab
Office: Leacock, room # 620
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:00-2:00 and by Appointment
(514) 398-4400 Ext.09325
Email: malek.abisaab@mcgill.ca
The seminar attempts to introduce students to selected debates and experiences of Muslim Middle Eastern women. We will critically study these issues to discern how Muslim women encountered major socio-economic and political obstacles that go back in time to early confrontation with Western colonialism. Topics of gender equality, discrimination against women, women rights, veiling and other feminist issues will be analyzed.

We will explore a range of female roles, experiences, and voices. We will delineate particular enactments of the feminine in diverse social, political and religious settings. Students will see women partaking in court politics, directing labor activism, or weaving a resistance of “silence” against European colonialism. Women’s roles are also explored in connection to modern castings of family and citizenship by the state. In terms of its analytical framework, the course assesses the diverse realities of women in Middle Eastern/Islamic societies in relationship to class, patriarchy, religion and power structures. The course is organized around the topic: “Islamic Feminism.” Students are required to write three short reports and a final long report (term paper). The short reports are based on the three topics below respectively.

1. Talal Asad, on religion, nation-state, secularism.
2. Pierre Bourdieu, on structure and habitas.
3. Judith Butler, on gender and performativity; agency.

Course Requirements:

Attendance is mandatory. This class is a research-oriented seminar; readings are shared and will be discussed in class. Students are required to lead class discussions during the semester. Other students have to prepare the assigned readings before coming to class. They are expected to engage in discussion and raise critical questions relating to the course material. Each student receives a grade pertaining to her/his performance. Students are required to write three book reports and a final report (term paper). The final report (term paper) (15-20 pages) is due on Dec. 8th, 2014. The final report is based on the works of only ONE scholar writing on Islamic Feminism such as Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Haideh Moghissi, Amina Wadud, etc… Or women organizations that advocate Islamic feminism (Musawah; Sisters in Islam and the Struggle for Women’s Rights, etc…)

Final Grade is based on the Following:

| Attendance and participation in class discussion | 40% |
| Short reports | 30% |
| Final report (Term Paper) | 30% |
Reading Assignments:

Week 1
Sept. 8th  Introduction to the course

Week 2
Women and Early Islam
Sept. 19th  Leila Ahmed, Women and Gender in Islam,

Week 3
Medieval Women

Week 4
Oct. 3rd  Yossef Rapport, Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society, (Ebook)
Submit 1st book report

Week 5
Ottoman Women
Oct. 10th  Leslie Peirce, The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire,
Oct. 13th  Thanks Giving Day

Week 6
Women and biography
Oct. 24th  Halide Edib Adivar, Memoir of Halida Edib,

Week 7
Women and Work
Oct. 31st  Mariam cook, Nazira Zeineddie: A Pioneer of Islamic Feminism,
Submit 2nd book report

Week 8
Nov. 7th  Najla Said, Looking for Palestine: Growing up Confused in an Arab-American Family,
Week 10
A Critique of Western Feminist Discourse
Nov. 14th submit the third report on Wed. Nov., 12th. The class will meet to discuss the three reports.

Week 11
Nov. 21st Saba Mahmood, Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject, (Ebook)

Week 12
Nov. 28th Final Report (Term paper): Outline and discussion

Bibliography


