

Women and Politics in the Middle East

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Fall 2020

Tuesday/Friday 12:35 pm-1:55 pm ET

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Pronouns: She/her/hers

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Office hours: Wednesday 3:00 pm-5:00 pm ET

Course Description

This course aims to introduce students to the issues, debates and themes in the study of women, gender, and politics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The main theme of the course is the agency of women in the region. We will challenge the notion that women in the region are oppressed and need to be saved by the West. In the first half of the course, we will discuss theoretical and empirical research by gender and politics scholars who focus on the MENA region, many of whom are from the region. In particular, we will focus on the relationship between women and the state, women's movements, women in political parties, and the opportunities and constraints that women face in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. In the second half of the course, we will focus on new areas of research: gender quotas and women's representation, public policy, LGBTQ+ politics, construction of masculinities, and backlash against feminism.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand categories of analysis such as gender and key theories such as postcolonial feminism
- Understand key debates surrounding methods and explain the contributions of feminist methodology
- Understand concepts such as the state and social movements and engage with research on the diverse experiences of women in the region

- Identify the opportunities and constraints that women and other marginalized groups in the region face and identify underdeveloped areas of research

Evaluation

Class presentations (50 points): Twice during the semester, you are expected to bring in an additional reading and present it to your peers. You should present a summary of the article or book chapter-its argument, methods, and findings. Email me a copy of the article or book chapter 24 hours before your presentation.

Weekly quizzes (120 points): There will be timed multiple-choice quizzes due by Sunday at 11:55 PM ET, which will cover material from the week's readings and lectures. Expect to see 10 questions each week and you will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz.

Midterm exam (100 points): You will be given 10 concepts and you will be asked to define them and explain their significance to the study of women, gender, and politics in the MENA. In the second part of the exam, you will be asked to answer one long-essay question.

Research paper (200 points): Choose two Middle Eastern countries and compare the status of women in these two countries. For each country, the paper should explain the country's political history, the development of the women's movement, the relationship between the women's movement and the state, women's rights laws passed, challenges that women's rights activists face, and the situation of women in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. The research paper should be 6-8 pages, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font, 1-inch margins, with a bibliography at the end. The paper is due Monday, December 21 at 11:55 PM ET.

Final exam (50 points): You will be give 10 concepts and you will be asked to define and explain their significance to the study of women, gender, and politics in the MENA. The final exam is due Monday, December 21 at 11:55 PM ET.

Required Materials

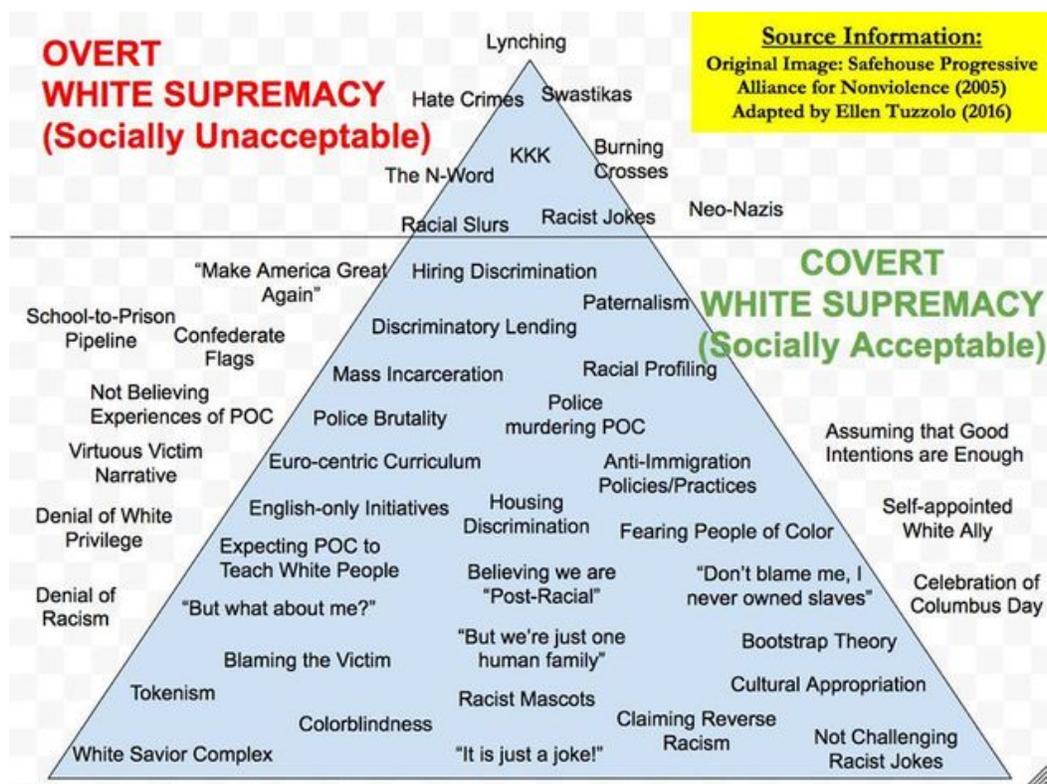
All materials will be available on Canvas.

Statement on Anti-Racism¹

The American state was founded on racism. Systemic discrimination and violence against people of color continues today. These are facts that will not be debated in my classroom. Every single one of us grows up in a racist society. For many white people, we don't notice it until it is pointed out and that experience can be quite discomfoting. That is the power of white supremacy. Just because you are not racist does not mean you are anti-racist. To be anti-racist is to actively dismantle the root of racist structures.

To offer "both sides" space to talk is to validate them as equally worthy/accurate. I will not be neutral in the face of white supremacy or racism. I am happy to discuss this position with you and encourage you all to reach out if you are concerned or want to talk. I always announce my politics at the beginning of the semester because I do not think educators should pretend to be neutral. It is more challenging to explain this position when we are not in person but I hope that this announcement can get us thinking and talking together. Education is a dialogue amongst the participants, and you have the right and responsibility to engage.

I have included some resources below that I hope will support you. You are welcome to share them with your friends and family.



¹ This statement was written by one of my colleagues, Haley Norris, a PhD candidate in the Department of Political Science.

1. If you don't know about the events that have precipitated this message please read some of these news articles:

1. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/28/us/video-george-floyd-contradict-resist-trnd/index.html>
2. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/05/21/us/breonna-taylor-death-police-changes-trnd/index.html>
3. <https://www.out.com/news/2020/5/29/tony-mcdade-black-trans-man-killed-police-florida>
4. https://apnews.com/e27cfce9464809aa8c91afd74c930bb5?utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=AP&utm_campaign=SocialFlow
5. <https://apnews.com/eadfe65c7ce593d04c0aef7eb0276e22>

2. If you are confused about the idea of a racist society, please read about these thinkers and activists

1. <http://laylafaad.com/>
2. <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/a-sociologist-examines-the-white-fragility-that-prevents-white-americans-from-confronting-racism>
3. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/tanehisi-coates-between-the-world-and-me/397619/>
4. https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/05/21/is-armed-protest-by-african-americans-treated-differently-history-says-yes/?utm_campaign=wp_opinions&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter

3. If you would like to read cutting-edge academic research on race and ethnicity in politics, start here:

1. https://twitter.com/PGI_WPSA/status/1266361630398570496
2. <https://twitter.com/JournalREP>

4. If you would like to learn what you can do in this exact moment, please go here:

1. <https://www.blackvisionsmn.org/>
2. <http://nbjc.org/>
3. <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>

5. If you would like materials or guides on how to be anti-racist, please go here:

1. <https://www.meandwhitesupremacybook.com/>
2. <https://jocolibrary.bibliocommons.com/list/share/1412410137/1560308299>

6. If you need mental or emotional support, you can start here:

1. <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>
2. <https://blackmentalhealth.com/connect-with-a-therapist/>

Academic Integrity:

Rutgers takes academic integrity seriously. Under no circumstances should you engage in plagiarism and/or self-plagiarism. You cannot use someone else's work without using proper citations nor can you submit work that you previously submitted in another course. If you feel unprepared, I encourage you to rethink your reading strategy and contact me with questions! You should never resort to plagiarism. I strongly encourage you to read Rutgers' policy on this matter by visiting <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Accommodations

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the [Registration form](https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration)(<https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>).

Health and Safety

Rutgers is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all students. If you or someone you know is in need of counseling services and/or violence prevention, you can contact CAPS at 848-932-7884. All medical care is confidential and separate from academic records. Please visit their website for more information <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

Course Schedule:

1. Introduction (No Quiz)

September 1: Introductions and expectations

No reading

September 4: Introducing the Middle East and North Africa

No reading

2. Feminist Theory and Methodology

September 8: No class (Monday classes meet Tuesday, September 8)

September 11: feminist theory, postcolonial feminism

Scott, Joan. 1986. "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis." *The American Historical Review* 91(5): 1053-1075.

Edward, Said. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 1-28.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 1991. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in Chandra Mohanty, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, pp. 51-80.

September 15: How to study gender in the Middle East

Charrad, Mounira M. 2011. "Gender in the Middle East: Islam, State, Agency." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37: 417-437.

Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2002. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others." *American Anthropologist* 104 (3): 783-790.

September 18: qualitative and quantitative methods, feminist methodology

Mahoney, James, and Gary Goertz. 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research." *Political Analysis* 14 (3): 227-249.

DeVault, Marjorie L. 1996. "Talking Back to Sociology: Distinctive Contributions of Feminist Methodology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 22: 29-50.

3. The State

September 22: feminist theories of the state, state-building and gender

Charrad, Mounira. 2001. *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 1-13, pp. 147-168, pp. 169-200, pp. 201-232.

September 25: finish Charrad (no additional reading)

4. Hybrid Regimes

September 29: Introducing types of regimes in the MENA

No reading

October 2: regimes and women's rights

Tripp, Aili Mari. 2019. *Seeking Legitimacy: Why Arab Autocracies Adopt Women's Rights*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-28.

5. Social movements and Revolutions

October 6: women in movements, cooptation vs autonomy, women in revolutions

Amrane-Minne, Danièle Djamila, and Farida Abu-Haidar. 1999. "Women and Politics in Algeria from the War of Independence to Our Day." *Research in African Literatures* 30(3): 62-77.

Cheref, Abdelkader. 2006. "Engendering or Endangering Politics in Algeria? Salima Ghezali, Louisa Hanoune and Khalida Messaoudi." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 2 (2): 60-85.

Al-Ali, Nadej. 2012. "Gendering the Arab Spring." *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 5(1): 26-31.

October 9: women's movements

Al-Ali, Nadjie. 2002. "Women's Movements in the Middle East: Case Studies of Egypt and Turkey." Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, online: https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/4889/2/UNRISD_Report_final.pdf

Salime, Zakia. 2014. "New Feminism as Personal Revolutions: Microrebellious Bodies." *Signs* 40(1): 14-20.

6. **Democracy, democratic transitions, regime change**

October 13: feminist theories of democracy, democratic transitions, political liberalization

Johansson-Nogués, Elisabeth. 2013. "Gendering the Arab Spring? Rights and (in)security of Tunisian, Egyptian and Libyan women." *Security Dialogue* 44(5-6): 393-409.

Shalaby, Marwa. 2016. "Challenges Facing Women's Political Participation Post Arab Spring: The Cases of Egypt and Tunisia." In *Empowering Women after the Arab Spring*, Shalaby, Marwa, and Valentine Moghadam, eds. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Welborne, Bozena. 2016. "No Agency Without Grassroots Autonomy: A Framework for Evaluating Women's Political Inclusion in Jordan, Bahrain, and Morocco." In *Empowering Women after the Arab Spring*, Shalaby, Marwa, and Valentine Moghadam, eds. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

October 16: no reading

7. **Midterm Week (No Quiz)**

October 20: review session

October 23: no class, midterm exam due by Sunday, October 25 at 11:55 PM ET.

8. **Elections and Political Parties**

October 27: women's right to vote, elections, voter biases

Aissa, Meriem. 2018. "Kuwait: Why Did Women's Suffrage Take So Long?" In *The Palgrave Handbook of Women's Political Rights*, ed. Susan Franceschet, Mona Lena Krook, and Netina Tan. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Blaydes, Lisa, and Safinaz El Tarouty. 2009. "Women's Electoral Participation in Egypt: The Implications of Gender for Voter Recruitment and Mobilization." *Middle East Journal* 63 (3): 364-380.

Benstead, Lindsay J., and Kristen Kao. 2020. "Female Electability in the Arab World: The Advantages of Intersectionality." *Comparative Politics*

October 30: political parties

Clark, Janine Astrid, and Jillian Schwedler. 2003. "Who Opened the Window? Women's Activism in Islamist Parties." *Comparative Politics* 35 (3): 293-312.

Ben, Shitrit, Lihi. 2016. "Authenticating Representation: Women's Quotas and Islamist Parties." *Politics & Gender* 12 (4): 781-806.

Arat, Zehra F Kabasakal. 2017. "Political Parties and Women's Rights in Turkey." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 44 (2): 240-254.

9. Representation and Gender Quotas

November 3: gender quotas and women's substantive representation

Sater, James N. 2007. "Changing Politics from Below? Women Parliamentarians in Morocco." *Democratization* 14 (4): 723-742.

Shalaby, Marwa. 2016. "Women's Political Representation and Authoritarianism in the Arab World." Policy brief, POMEPS: Project on the Middle East in Political Science, George Washington University.

Nanes, Stefanie. 2015. "The Quota Encouraged Me to Run: Evaluating Jordan's Municipal Quota for Women." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 11 (3): 261-282.

Benstead, Lindsay. 2016. "Why Quotas Are Needed to Improve Women's Access to Services in Clientelistic Regimes." *Governance* 29 (2): 185-205.

November 6: no reading

10. Public Policy

November 10: theorizing public policy, violence against women

Htun, Mala, and S. Laurel Weldon. 2010. "When Do Governments Promotes Women's Rights? A Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Sex Equality Policy." *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (1): 207-216.

Forester, Summer. 2019. "Protecting women, protecting the state: Militarism, security threats, and government action on violence against women in Jordan." *Security Dialogue* 50 (6): 475-492.

November 13: Family law, reproductive rights

Catalano, Serida Lucrezia. 2010. "Shari'a reforms and power maintenance: the cases of family law reforms in Morocco and Algeria." *Journal of North African Studies* 15 (4): 535-555.

Frank, Ana, and Ayşe Betül Çelik. 2017. "Beyond Islamic versus Secular Framing: A Critical Analysis of Reproductive Rights Debates in Turkey." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 13 (2): 195-218.

11. LGBTQ+ Politics

November 17: LGBTQ+ politics in the Global South

Massad, Joseph Andoni. 2002. "Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World." *Political Culture* 14 (2): 361-385.

Ghassan, Moussawi. 2015. "(Un)critically queer organizing: Towards a more complex analysis of LGBTQ organizing in Lebanon." *Sexualities* 18 (5-6): 593-617.

November 20: no reading

12. Masculinity (You can access the eBook via Rutgers libraries)

November 24: Ghannam, Farha. 2013. *Live and Die like a Man: Gender Dynamics in Urban Egypt*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Wednesday, November 25 (Friday classes meet today): finish Ghannam

13. Backlash

December 1: VAWIP, post-Arab Spring backlash

Chouakri, Yasmina. 2019. "Violence Against Women in Political Parties: Analysis of the Situation in Tunisia." National Democratic Institute
https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/02-12-2019_Tunisia%20%281%29.pdf

El-Ashmawy, Nadeen. 2017. "Sexual Harassment in Egypt: Class Struggle, State Oppression, and Women's Empowerment." *Hawwa* 15 (3): 225-256.

December 4: no reading

14. Final Exam/Research Paper (No quiz)

December 8: review session

Research papers and final exams due Monday, December 21 at 11:55 PM ET.

As the instructor, I reserve the right to alter the class schedule, readings, and assignments over the course of the semester.