

NC GLOBAL DISTINCTION

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Region: Middle East and Muslim Civilizations

Course information and description: ENG 112: Writing/Research in the Disciplines

Description of the Course:

Writing and Research in the Disciplines is the second composition UGETC course required for AA and AS degrees at Durham Technical Community College and for transfer to senior universities. Within this course, students are taught how to write within the disciplines outside of English, how to apply rhetorical strategies to analyzing texts from various disciplines that include Social Sciences, English/Humanities, and the Sciences.

Description of the Global Module:

In ENG 112, my students have been discussing many gender issues that overcome our American society (i.e. transwomen as tokens, black women and depression, gendered toys, social construction of gender, the gender pay gap, domestic violence of men by women, etc.), but for their final and interdisciplinary paper, they will be required to write a interdisciplinary paper on gender issues that prevail in the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations. The global modules will guide them in understanding gendered identities in the Middle East as social and politicized constructs that affect both men and women alike. As they are in the United States, students will learn that many factors contribute to the gendered constructions and limitations of a society, and in regards to the Middle East, these factors can include religious beliefs, societal rituals and norms, cultural values, politics, and even geography.

Global Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of local and global contexts in the shaping of gender issues.
2. Students will be able to assemble a multi-perspective analysis of a given gender issue against local, global, international, and intercultural background.
3. Students will be able to examine the roles of men and women from the Middle East and Muslim nations and expand their understanding of gender as it is influenced by societal norms and religion.

Global Learning Activities:

1. Title: Subverting Stereotypes of the Middle East Scavenger Hunt

Objective: For this introductory lesson, we will look at some of the stereotypes that prevail about the Middle East and Muslim nations outside of the United States in terms of the men and women that live within these regions.

Procedure: Students will be placed in 6 groups of 3 students per group; as a group, they will be instructed to make a list of 5 stereotypes they are aware of regarding the Middle East and Muslim nations. Out of that list, they will be instructed to choose 1 stereotype related to gender and then go on a digital scavenger hunt in search of the truth. As a group they will be asked to find at least 5 credible sources using the computers in our classroom and take note of how the articles demystify the stereotype. Once they have made a list of their sources and compiled the information they need to subvert the stereotype, the group will make a 3-minute presentation on what stereotype they chose, why they chose it, and what they actually discovered during their scavenger hunt. The class will end with a PowerPoint presentation titled The Middle East: Myths vs. Reality.

Follow-up Assignment and Assessment: Students will write a Forum Discussion post for Sakai reflecting on the class assignment and what they have learned about the Middle East that they hadn't known prior to this class assignment. They are required to consider where this myth or stereotype came from and then relay how stereotypes have the power to hurt or impact not just individuals but also cultures and nations. They are also required to respond to two people's comments in the forum with substantive remarks that expand the conversation.

Resources:

“Common Misconceptions and Stereotypes about the Middle East.” The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies PDF

<https://jsis.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/mideast.pdf>

Accessed 2 Feb. 2019

Selena Randhawa, Meet the Photographers Challenging Stereotypes of the Middle East CNN,

<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/everyday-middle-east/index.html> Accessed 2 Feb.

2019.

Ferraro, Vincent. Stereotyping the Middle East Mount Holyoke College

<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/~giri22m/classweb/worldpolitics/suicideattacks/page4.html>

Accessed 2 Feb. 2019.

2. Title: Female Identities in the Middle East and Media

Objective: For this lesson, we will take a look at women's lives, not from the perspective of the U.S. media platforms, but from the experiences of Middle Eastern women themselves. With the actual voices of women from the Middle East via the Malala documentary and Ted Talks, students will get a more accurate portrayal of women and their empowerment in the Middle East, seen as they want to be seen -- strong, confident, intelligent -- and not as victims. The purpose is to show the narrow view the media paints of women in the Middle East and to expose students to a larger and current landscape of women who have struggled to maintain their identities as strong, independent women.

Procedure: The following lesson will take 2-3 class meetings. Students will watch the YouTube video titled "Women in the Middle East" put together by the John Hope Franklin Center at Duke University. Students will then watch the film *I am Malala* and respond to guided questions about observations they made from the film regarding women's rights. As a class, we will discuss how the discoveries revealed to us from the film echoes and/or rejects what we have come to know about women in the Middle East and how the two films differ and show similarity in their portrayal of women.

Follow-up Assignment and Assessment: For a follow-up assignment, students will be required to find a Ted Talk with a Middle Eastern or Islamic woman in which she discusses her life and experiences living in the Middle East. They will be required to write a short 1-2 response paper in which they compare the Ted Talk findings from the women themselves to western media's coverage of women from the Middle East. If there are any discrepancies, they need to examine where these discrepancies come from and what they mean in terms of the media and how information/misinformation is shared to the public about women in the Middle East. They need to close the paper with examining motives of media and how these unempowering perceptions of women can be subverted here in the United States.

Resources:

Alhayek, Katty. "ISIS and Women: A Status Conversation with Rafia Zakaria." Status Audio Journal Hosts, 16 May 2013, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/33267/ISIS-and-Women-A-STATUS%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B6%D8%B9-Conversation-with-Rafia-Zakaria>. Accessed 15 Feb. 2019.

Al-Sharif, Manal. "A Saudi Woman Learns to Drive." TEDGlobal. June 2013. Lecture. https://www.ted.com/talks/manal_al_sharif_a_saudi_woman_who_dared_to_drive. Accessed 10 Feb. 2019.

Baker, Melinda. "Vanderbilt Exhibit 'I AM' Combats Stereotypes of Middle Eastern Women." The Tennessean, 18 Sept. 2018.

<https://www.tennessean.com/story/life/arts/2018/09/16/artists-combat-stereotypes-middle-eastern-women-vandy-exhibit/1255762002/> Accessed 26 Jan, 2019

Begum, Shad. "How Women in Pakistan are Creating Political Change." TED. Feb. 2019. https://www.ted.com/talks/shad_begum_how_women_in_pakistan_are_creating_a_political_revolution. Accessed 17 Feb. 2019.

Dad, Nighat. "How Pakistani Women are Taking the Internet Back." TED. May 2018. Lecture. https://www.ted.com/talks/nighat_dad_how_pakistani_women_are_taking_the_internet_back. Accessed 17 Feb. 2019.

Haghighat-Sordellini, Elhum. *Women in the Middle East and North Africa*. London: Palgrave, 2010.

Nabusi, Mira. "Women and the War in Yemen: Actors or Victims?" Status Audio Journal Hosts, 9 Feb. 2019. <http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/38371/Women-and-the-War-in-Yemen-Actors-or-Victim>. Accessed 17 Feb. 2019

"Women in the Middle East." *YouTube*, uploaded by John Hope Franklin Center at Duke University, 19 Dec. 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAWKThbeOM0>. Accessed 10 Feb. 2019.

3. Title: Images of Males and Masculinity

Objective: This lesson will introduce students to the fact that the Middle East contains many diverse cultures, religions, and religions and the ways in which masculinity is defined within these diverse entities. They will also explore how masculinities are being shaped by culture, by region, by religion, and by changes in society as a whole.

Procedure: After an introductory lesson in the Middle East as a region comprising 16 countries within the continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa, with diversity in religions, cultures, ethnicities, histories, and even languages. As a patriarchal society, we will look at the facets of patriarchy: male dominance over women and within the practice of honour and shame, male circumcision, soldiering rituals that define masculinity and mark the transition from boyhood to manhood. Given the strict code of masculinity required by Middle Eastern cultures, students will get into groups of 3 students and use the computer labs in our classroom to search for and locate articles that reveal the strict codes of masculinity for these men. A good example of this has to do with images of maleness and the instructor will detail the social requirements of the full-bearded male and illustrate how this image reinforces status and power among men so much so that Middle Eastern men are having facial hair implants to sustain this machismo image.

Follow-up Assignment and Assessment: Each group will choose one article that demonstrates images of masculinity for Middle Eastern men and they will create a groups student web page via Sakai to showcase their findings, focusing on the male image that is imposed on men, how it is internalized by the men, and how this image projects power and status. Students will have to locate information on the social/political/religious value of this image, the weight it has on men and on the culture itself, and bring to light the consequences for not behaving according to the dictated/imposed rules. Their student web page is required to have images, content that discusses the image requirement and the consequences, and a works cited page with additional resources for more information. The student web page will be presented to the rest of the class via the projector and a Q&A will follow during which each group needs to address how their discoveries differ/or are similar from media's portrayals of Middle Eastern men.

Resources:

Adibi, Hossein. "Sociology of Masculinity in the Middle East." In Proceedings Social change in the 21st Century Conference 2006, Carseldine Campus, Queensland University of Technology.
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.426.45&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
Accessed 21 Feb. 2019.

Ghoussoub, Mia, and Emma Sinclair-Webb, editors. *Imagined Masculinities: Male Identity and Culture in the Modern Middle East*. London: Saqi Books, 1999.

Ennaji, Moha, and Fatima Sadiqi, editors. *Gender and Violence in the Middle East*. London:

Routledge, 2011.

Scott, Katy. "Masculinity in the Middle East: Confronting Stereotypes through Photography." CNN, 7 Dec. 2017.

<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/arab-men-scarlett-coten-tamara-abdul-hadi-photography/index.html>. Accessed 26 Jan. 2019

"Understanding Masculinities." Results from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey: Middle East and North Africa, 16 May 2017.

<https://imagesmena.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/05/IMAGES-MENA-Executive-Summary-EN-16May2017-web.pdf>. Accessed 21 Feb. 2019

4. Title: Activism and Social Change in the Middle East

Objective: Our closing lesson, this unit will explore all the ways men and women in the Middle East and Muslim Civilizations are participating in bringing about social change. This is intended to subvert the trivialized and narrow images of Middle Eastern persons as victims of ignorance and a “backward” existence -- images that are sustained/supported by western popular culture and media depictions.

Procedure: Because blogging and YouTube are today’s mediums for social change among young people, students will use the classroom computers to search for and locate a YouTube or Instagram video or blog by Middle Eastern individuals that use these mediums for social change and activism. An example provided by the instructor will include news coverage and a video of Iranian teen Maedeh Hojabri arrested for dancing in her Instagram videos. The point of this lesson is to show how men and women, especially youth, are using social media to rebel against gendered expectations that are outdated and patriarchal in nature, establishing new voices and new forms of activism that are bound to bring about social change and reform.

Follow-up Assignment and Assessment: Students will write a blog post and publish it on a free Wordpress blogging site that the instructor creates for the entire class. Each student will post on an activist from the Middle Eastern and Muslim civilizations that they find online. They will introduce the individual, discuss the activism itself, what the individual is arguing against, provide a history of the issue being subverted by doing a bit of online research, and then include an example of this person’s activism by embedding a video blog (vlog), Instagram image/video, or YouTube video. Students will be required to view each other’s posts and leave substantive comments for at least 5 people.

Fourth and Final Research Paper on Gender in the Middle East: Students will choose one topic that they came across from the smaller assignments related to Gender and the Middle East and compose a problem/solution paper on. This will be a 5-8 page paper, formatted in APA-style, and requires at least five credible sources from our Library’s databases. Three of these sources must come from scholarly journals. The objective of this paper is to bring light to one gender issue that prevails in the Middle East, for example, the narrow view of Middle Eastern women, discuss how this narrow view of them poses a threat and/or problem to women, men, and society, and they use their research to suggest solutions for changing public perception. For example, through education. During the last two classes of the semester, students will give their peers **an oral presentation on the paper**, the problem they situated in their research, and the solutions they recommend based on their research.

Resources:

Feingold, Spencer. “Iranian Teen Detained over Instagram Dance Videos.” CNN, 10 July 2018.
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/07/09/middleeast/iran-teenager-arrest-dancing-video-instagra>

<m-trnd/index.html>. Accessed 6 Feb. 2019.

Moghadam, Valentine M. *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013.

Said Makdisi, Jean, Noha Bayoumi, and Rafif Rida Sidawi, editors. *Arab Feminisms: Gender and Equality in the Middle East*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2014.

Su, Alice. Afghan and Pakistani women against Extremism. Pulitzer Center, 8 Feb. 2019.
<https://pulitzercenter.org/projects/afghan-and-pakistani-women-against-extremism>
Accessed on 6 Feb. 2019.

Su, Alice. "The Rising Voices of Women in Pakistan." Pulitzer Center, 8 Feb. 2019.
<https://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/rising-voices-women-pakistan>
Accessed 6 Feb. 2019.