

## **WS 331U Women in the Middle East**

Summer 2008  
82095 CRN  
MTWR 1:00-3:20

Instructor: Taghrid Khuri-Tubbeh  
Office: NH C  
Phone: (503)725-8931  
Email: tkhuri@pdx.edu

### **COURSE OBJECTIVE AND DESCRIPTION**

Historically, the role of Middle Eastern women in society was determined as much by social and economic factors as by religious prescriptions, Islam and Muslim culture remains an abstruse, let alone, a controversial issue. Rapidly changing social realities still seem to be at odd grips with rigid patriarchal systems. Moreover, the current state of international affairs such as global and regional trade relations, increasing unemployment and poverty, bear on gender relations and determine women's status and position in such complex patriarchal systems.

This course is an overview of women in the Middle East. It will address gender relations and women's status and roles in Middle Eastern societies. Certain countries and societies will be selected to discuss certain topics of culture, household and power relations; education, health and reproductive health; political and gender representation in parliaments, and policy and decision-making positions; governance and civil society, among other issues. With the slogan of "women's rights are human rights," a rights-based approach will portray the influences of the various factors affecting the gender relations in the Middle East; what those mean to women and men and how they may affect women's relations to the development processes.

### **Outline of the Course**

The course is worth four credit hours and each student's final grade will be based on the student's performance in meeting the requirements specified under each of the following categories:

#### **\* Attendance and Class Participation**

The class depends on reading and student participation. Accordingly, students are strongly encouraged to read the assignments and to participate in class discussions. A poor record in either attendance or punctuality will negatively influence the student's final grade for the course.

### \* **Researching Relevant Topics**

All students will search the web and read external sources on related topics and topics of interest. The grade will also depend on the seriousness in selection of topic of interest and ability to review related materials (outside reading: web and/or library research), synthesize the appropriate information from the class text, instructor information and class material and reference.

Students are encouraged to work in pairs if they so wish.

### \* **Presentation Topic and Final Class Presentation**

Each student will present the presentation and final paper topic in writing, as well as the related references. Topic papers will be collected not later than **August 14, 2008 (CHECK THE DATE)**). The topic will be approved after discussion and review by the instructor.

Each student will prepare a final presentation on his/her topic. The class presentation will take place on the last class or two of the term, depending on the class size.

### \* **Final Paper**

The final paper is an elaboration on the presentation topic. Papers will be word processed double spaced, font size 12. The paper will be between six and ten pages. Papers are turned in on the last day of class.

### **Basis of Grading**

➤ Attendance and Class Discussion	20%
➤ Library and Internet research of related topics	20%
➤ Identification and write-up of final paper topic, submission and discussion with instructor for approval	20%
➤ Final Paper	20%
➤ Class Presentation of Final Paper	20%

### **Required Text**

Women in the Middle East: Tradition and Change (Revised Edition). Ramsay M. Harik and Elsa Marston. Watts. 2003.

Selected reading from:

A Social History of Women & Gender In the Middle East. Edited by Margaret L. Meriwether & Judith E. Tucker.

Other reading assigned by instructor.