

## MUSLIM WOMEN TODAY

ANT 4930 (2BO5) /ANG 6930 (2B12)  
Spring 2017

**Instructor:** Khadidja Arfi

**Day and Period:** M | Period 7 - 9 (1:55 PM - 4:55 PM) Room: MAT 0103

**Office Hours:** Wednesday from 11:45am-1:30pm and by appointment at TUR B 137

**Contact:** Email [karfi@ufl.edu](mailto:karfi@ufl.edu); Tel (352) 294-7594

### Course Overview and Objectives

Muslim women, who constitute more than half a billion in the world today, have settled in all corners of the world within traditional, modern, and various constructed ways of life and discourses that are fashioned according to what they and/or others construe as Islamic. How are we to understand this condition of Muslim women as they are faced with today's challenges? This course addresses this question by opening the gate toward a very vast and diverse realm of issues and questions using an interdisciplinary approach.

To this end the course focuses on three important developments in the condition of Muslim women, namely, traditional, revolutionary, and progressive movements by asking questions such as: How have Muslim women constructed, reassessed, and articulated Islam and their place within the context of very broad patterns of Islamic revival? How do they seek empowerment? How do they speak to the problems of gender, social change, and globalization? How do they continue to engage in Islamic reform within the "Muslim community"? How do they approach and deal with the critique of 'universal human rights' as being implicitly ethnocentric? How do they respond to calls for a need to work toward a new definition of universality in human right? Where does the majority of Muslim women fit between the secular Muslim feminists vs. Islamist women movement opposing camps? How do the majority of Muslim women navigate the challenge of being at the same time pro-faith and pro-feminism?

In addressing these questions, we will use a variety of source materials, including the foundational texts of Islam, historical materials, narratives and ethnographic accounts, as well as films and other visual sources. We will be drawing on a variety of literatures including many works from anthropology, sociology, humanities, women studies, and recent scholarly accounts of Muslim women in different parts of the world such as Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the USA.

### Students Learning Outcomes

- Get a direction toward research in the emerging academic field of the anthropology of gender in Islam
- Appreciate the importance of fieldwork and comparison of theory and methodology
- Further their understanding of Muslims in a critical and reflexive manner
- Appreciate the presented glimpses of Muslim women in their diversities through different accounts
- Discover that studying existing discourses and practices can contribute to a refined understanding of Muslim women, their religion, and their practices.
- Explore the ways Muslim women at times accept and at others contest their own cultures by relying on their own interpretations of Islamic texts and laws.
- Understand that Muslim women in their diversity cannot be lumped as a homogenized group in their identities, intellect, thoughts, interpretations and practices of the Islamic religion today.
- appreciate the depth of the acquired knowledge about Muslim women

### Textbooks and Required Readings:

- Abu-lughod (1998). Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East (eBook)
- Ahmed Leila (1992). Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate (eBook)
- Barlas Asma (2002). 'Believing Women' in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an (eB)
- Badran Margot (1994). Feminists, Islam and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt (eBook)
- Badran Margot (2009). Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences (eBook)
- Hidayatullah Aysha (2014). Feminist Edge of the Quran (eBook)
- Keddie Nikki R and Beth Baron (1991). Women in M.E. History: Shifting Boundaries in Sex and Gender (eB)
- Mir-Hosseini et al. (2013). Gender and Equality in the Islamic Legal Tradition (eBook)
- Wadud Amina (1999). Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective (eBook)
- Wadud Amina (2006). Inside The Gender Jihad: Women's Reform in Islam (2006), by Amina Wadud (eBook)
- Other resources: Videos and online video clips to be chosen as needed

### Recommended Readings:

- Basarudin Azza (2015). Humanizing the Sacred: Sisters in Islam and the Struggle for Gender Justice
- Mir-Hosseini (2006). Muslim Women, Feminism, and Movements for Social Change

### Assignments

**Discussions:** Discussion posts will be held via CANVAS. Each student must submit a new discussion thread (about 300 words) and respond to an existing thread (50 words or more). Discussions are assigned every week between January 09<sup>th</sup> – April 18<sup>th</sup> (see dates in schedule). This is an opportunity for you to react to and reflect on specific themes in the readings and a chance to share ideas with your peers. These ideas would be further discussed during class period.

### Presentations:

1. Weekly presentations as scheduled. Each presentation will be based on the readings/theme of the week. The presentation may include (but not required to) audio-visual materials, handouts, and/or educational activities. Presenters must produce 3-5 discussion questions for the class. The presentation should last 30-40 minutes leaving ample time for discussion and questions.
2. Each student presents a summary of her/his selected book review in 5-10 minutes on W 14 (4/4 – 4/5).
3. Each student presents the findings of her/his research/fieldwork related to the final paper topic on W 16.

### Papers:

1. Book review (4-5 pages long) due on Sunday 4/2/17 before midnight via Canvas.
2. Final paper (undergrad 7-10 pages and graduate students 15-20 pages long). Students should use at least 3-5 academic resources, including class readings, and other materials. Students may use any recognizable academic format for citation (e.g. APA). Students submit final papers via CANVAS.

**Please visit the UF Reading and Writing Center if you need extra assistance in writing (see "tutoring" section below).**

### Evaluation & Grading

<b><u>Attendance and participation 16</u></b>	<b><u>A 93-100 A- 90-92.9</u></b>
<b><u>Discussions 20</u></b>	<b><u>B+ 86-89 B 83-85 B- 80-82</u></b>
<b><u>Student's presentation 10</u></b>	<b><u>C+ 76-79 C 73-75 C- 70-72</u></b>
<b><u>Book Review 20</u></b>	<b><u>D+ 66-69 D 63-65 D- 60-62</u></b>
<b><u>Book review presentation 4</u></b>	<b><u>F 0-59</u></b>
<b><u>Oral presentation 5</u></b>	
<b><u>Final paper 25</u></b>	

## **Course Policies and Procedures**

**Classroom Behavior Rules:** total courtesy for classmates and instructor is required.

**Communication:** Students are in a course in which we communicate with each other through academic learning, thus, students should communicate with classmates and instructor with total respect and courtesy when discussing the course subjects.

**Academic Honesty:** Students must conform to the University of Florida's academic honesty policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of cheating. The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Violations will lead to the Department's and the University's procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty. All students are expected to honor their commitment to the [University's Honor Code](#) and the student conduct code.

### ***Accommodation for Students with Disabilities***

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Please make any requests by the second week of class.**

### ***UF Counseling Services***

Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

1. [University Counseling and Wellness Center](#), 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
2. [Sexual Assault Recovery Services](#) (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
3. [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling
4. [Reading & Writing Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-0791, writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

## Course Schedule

Day/Time P. 7-9 1:55-4:55	Theme	Readings/Resources
<b>Week 1</b> M 1/9	Introduction  Models of Women in the Quran	<a href="#">Beyond The Hijab: Narratives of Muslim Women on American ...</a>  <a href="https://ing.org/muslim-women-beyond-the-stereotypes/">https://ing.org/muslim-women-beyond-the-stereotypes/</a>
<b>Week 2</b> M 1/16	<b>MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>
<b>Week 3</b> M 1/23	Old discourses Early Islamic Centuries and Women	Leila Ahmed Chapters 1-2 Keddie & Baron  <b>DISCUSSION ONE</b> <b>PRESENTATION ONE</b>
<b>Week 4</b> M 1/30	Education and Women  Property, Islamic Law and Women	Berkey chap. 8 in Keddie & Baron (mamluk time) Quataert chap. 9 In Keddie & Baron (modern Turkey)  <b>DISCUSSION TWO</b> <b>PRESENTATION TWO</b>
<b>Week 5</b> M 2/13	New Discourses Women and reform in Muslim Societies	Leila Ahmed Abadan-Unat chap10 in Keddie & Baron  <b>DISCUSSION THREE</b> <b>PRESENTATION THREE</b>
<b>Week 6</b> M 2/13	The Rise of Feminism in the Middle East	Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East (1998), by Lila Abu-lughod (Part I)  Feminists, Islam and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt (1994), by Badran  <b>DISCUSSION FOUR</b> <b>PRESENTATION FOUR</b>

<b>Week 7</b> M 2/20	Toward Islamic Feminism	<p>Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East (1998), by Lila Abu-lughod (Part II)</p> <p>Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences (2009), by Margot Badran</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION FIVE</b> <b>PRESENTATION FIVE</b></p>
<b>Week 8</b> M 2/27	New Feminist Approach to Women, Quran and fiqh (Jurisprudence)	<p>Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective (1999), by Amina Wadud</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION SIX</b> <b>PRESENTATION SIX</b></p>
<b>Week 9</b> M 3/6	<b>SPRING BREAK MARCH 4-11</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>
<b>Week 10</b> M 3/13	Quran, Women and Patriarchy	<p>"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an (2002), by Asma Barlas</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION SEVEN</b> <b>PRESENTATION SEVEN</b></p>
<b>Week 11</b> M 3/20	<p>Women's Perspectives of Quran</p> <p><b>Final paper topic/literature due 3/19/17 by email</b></p>	<p>Inside The Gender Jihad: Women's Reform in Islam (2006), by Amina Wadud</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION EIGHT</b> <b>PRESENTATION EIGHT</b></p>
<b>Week 12</b> M 3/27	Gender and Equality	<p>Gender and Equality in the Islamic Legal Tradition ( 2013), by Ziba Mir-Hosseini et al</p> <p>Documentary: Women's Mosque of America</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION NINE</b> <b>PRESENTATION NINE</b></p>
<b>Week 13</b> M 4/3	A Critique of Islamic Feminism and Mobilizing for Gender Equality	<p>Feminist Edge of the Quran (2014 ) Aysha Hidayatullah</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION TEN</b> <b>PRESENTATION TEN</b></p>

<b>Week 14</b> M 4/10	<b>Let us Hear Your Reflections!</b>	<b>Book reviews presentations</b>
<b>Week 15</b> M 4/17	Oral Presentations and last week of class	<b>Final paper due 4/23/17, 11:59 pm or earlier</b>