LIT 224-001: Topics in International Literature  
Spring Theme: “Women’s Literature of the Middle East”

“Woman must write herself…woman must put herself into the text as into the world and into history by her movement.” Helene Cixous

Course Description
This course is an exploration of major themes in the literature of various cultures. LIT224 is a three credit General Education course that satisfies the Diversity requirement. Successful completion of WRT101 is a prerequisite for this course.

Student Learning Objectives:
The students who successfully complete the requirements of this course will be able to:

1. Identify the historical and cultural forces that shape the production of literary works in a global, regional or national/state context; recognize the major literary works of the context under study.
2. Employ strategies of active reading and close textual analysis to interpret and evaluate literary texts from the geographic area designated by the course.
3. Demonstrate, in discussion and writing, an understanding of the literary techniques that writers use in constructing their texts.
4. Analyze works of literature in relation to their correlative aesthetic and literary movements.
5. Make connections between literary works to synthesize ideas and draw conclusions about a global topic or context.
6. Incorporate properly formatted research in support of an argument; and demonstrate competency in evaluating information from a critical source.

Course Requirements:
Students will be required to do the following:

1. Analyze works of literature using a variety of approaches.

2. Participate in class activities such as discussion, writing, and presentations.

3. Write 15-20 pages or 3750-5000 words for the course. This may include the following: journals, quizzes, papers, exams, research papers, class presentation, summaries, and responses.
Sample Required Texts


Evaluation
You will write several short (2-3 page) response papers that will be both analytical—in terms of text and sociopolitical context—and critical. You will also give a short presentation on one of the texts for which you will give the class a series of discussion questions; and there will be a midterm exam and term paper.

Response papers: 50%
Class presentation: 10%
Midterm Exam: 15%
Term Paper: 25%

Attendance Policy
Your presence is vital to our classroom community, so regular attendance is required. You will be permitted *four absences* after which your grade will be negatively affected. You are expected to come to class every morning prepared to discuss assigned texts and to produce written responses both in class and at home.

A note on plagiarism: please give credit where credit is due! Honesty is expected of you. It is expected that the work you hand in will always be your own, and that you will never copy
sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or whole essays from any other person's work, for that is plagiarism. If you are ever unclear about how to cite another person or author's ideas, come see me or consult the staff in the writing center.

Written assignments must be formatted according to MLA standards. You will find citation guides on our library’s website. Please note that you will also be expected to produce a documented term paper with secondary sources; and you may find appropriate—relevant—resources in our library. You are encouraged to schedule an appointment with one of our reference librarians if you did not attend an instructional seminar in your writing class.

BCC’s Writing Center is located in L125, and you are encouraged to work with our faculty and professional writing tutors. Please note that the center is indeed a tutoring center—you are not to drop off your paper for proofreading as this is not a function of the center.

Sample Class Schedule/Reading List (subject to change depending upon class progress):

**Week 1**
- Introductions
- How we think of the Middle East—stereotypes, contradictions, and racism.
- Islam: Myths & Realities
- Leila Ahmed *Women and Gender in Islam*, Chapters 3 & 8

Fawzia Afzal-Khan “Playing with Images, or Will the RE(A)EL Muslim Women Please Stand Up, Please Stand Up?” (*Muslim Women* 1-17)

**Week 2**
- Women & War: Who toes the “front line?”
- Maniza Naqvi “Paleontology of Occupation” (*Muslim Women* 109-110)

**Representations of Islam**
- Mohja Kahf “Little Mosque Poems” (*Muslim Women* 116-123)
- Mohja Kahf “Muslim Women Rule and Other Little-Known Facts” (*Muslim Women* 179-183)
- Azizah al-Hibri “Muslim Women’s Rights in the Global Village: Challenges and Opportunities” (*Muslim Women* 158-178)

Response Paper #1

**Week 3**
- **IRAQ**
- Nuha Al-Radi *Baghdad Diaries: A Woman’s Chronicle of War and Exile*

**Week 4**
- *Baghdad Diaries*
- Daisy Al-Amir *The Waiting List: An Iraqi Woman’s Tale of Alienation*, selections tba

**Week 5**
- **AFGHANISTAN**
- Bina Sharif “An Afghan Woman” (*Muslim Women* 246-253)

Response Paper #2

**Week 6**
PALESTINE
Nathalie Handal “The Conflict,” “Baladna,” “Rachel’s Palestinian War,” & “Detained” (Muslim Women 96-104)
Suheir Hammad “first writing since” (Muslim Woman 90-94)
Naomi Shihab Nye 19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East, selections tba

Week 7
ISRAEL
Galit Hasan-Rokem & Tamar Hess The Defiant Muse, selections include:
Rahel “To My Country”
Esther Raab “Last Prayer” & “Night”
Yokheved Bat-Miriam “Miriam” & “Hagar”
Lea Goldberg “Toward Myself”
Haya Vered “The Zero Hour”
Hamutal Bar Yosef “Jaffa, July 1948”
Rachel Halfi “The Water Queen of Jerusalem”
Response Paper #3

Week 8
SYRIA
Mohja Kahf The Girl in the Tangerine Scarf

Week 9 Spring Break!

Week 10
IRAN
Anisa Mehdi “Journal Entry from Tehran” (Muslim Women 142-149)
Furugh Farrukhzad “Face to Face with God” (attached)
Marjane Satrapi Persepolis

Week 11
Persepolis
Response Paper #4
Midterm Exam

Week 12
LEBANON
Hanan Al-Shaykh Beirut Blues

Week 13
Beirut Blues
Response Paper #5

Week 14
EGYPT
Nawal El Saadawi Woman at Point Zero

Week 15
ALGERIA
Week 16
Children of the New World
Film: “The Battle of Algiers”
Term Papers due! Your term paper shall be 10-12 pages; and must be a critical literary analysis of a minimum of three texts from a representative region of the Middle East.