REL 465: GENDER IN ISLAM
Professor Tazim R. Kassam
Mon/Wed 3:45-5:05 in 101 Slocum
Office Hours: Tue 1.00-3.00 pm
Spring 2010

PLEASE NOTE: This is a tentative List of Topics & Readings. The schedule and readings may change based on our progress. The required texts are listed below. Other readings will be posted on Blackboard. The videos we will watch are also “readings.”

REQUIRED TEXTS

• Understanding Islam and the Muslims: The Muslim Family, Islam and World Peace edited by by T.J.Winter and John A.Williams (Fons Vitae: 2002).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

• Attendance: 10% 2% off for each absence
• Lead discussion (thrice): 25% Instructions given in class
• Weekly Reflection Papers: 35% Due Sat 9.00 a.m.
• Research Paper: 40% Due: Mon May 10, 9.00 a.m.

Outline & Bibliography Due: Wed Mar 10 in class
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Jan 20
Introduction to Course

Jan 25 & 27
Islam: A Brief Primer

- Understanding Islam and the Muslims: The Muslim Family, Islam and World Peace edited by T.J.Winter and John A.Williams (Fons Vitae: 2002). Read all.
- Video: Islam: Christian Science Monitor 60 min

Feb 1 & 3
Women & Religion: Is Islam the exception?
Definitions: feminism; agency; gender etc.

- Video: Women Serving Religion (29 min)

Feb 8 & 10
The Gaze: Orientalism & Liberalism
Who’s veiling whom?

- Video: Veiled Revolution 26 min
Feb 15 & 17

Textual Authority and Authorities
So what did God really say about women?

- Stowasser, Barbara, Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation (New York and Oxford: 1994) pp
- Video: Islamic Conversations - Leila Ahmed 30 min

Feb 22 & 24

What did Muhammad say/do?
How do we know? Who’s “we”?

- Video Hijab: Act of Faith 37 min
- (Video: PBS: Legacy of the Prophet 2 hr! Maybe)

Feb 22 & 24

Did Eve cause Adam’s fall?
Bodies of Desire


Mar 1 & 3

Instructions on using/taming my body
Making (family) laws (shariah)

- Video: Beyond the Veil - Iranian challenge (22 min)
Mar 8 & 10

Speaking in words and buildings
Women inscribed in history

- Leila Ahmed (above)
- Smith, Margaret, Rabi’a and Other Women Mystics of Islam, Oneworld, 1994 reprint, pp.1-50
- Deghuilem, Randi, Consciousness of Self: The Muslim Woman as Creator and Manager of Waqf Foundations in Late Ottoman Damascus”, in Beyond the Exotic: Women’s Histories in Islamic Societies ed. Amira Sonbol, 2005:SUP 102-118.

********* Mar 15 & 17 SPRING BREAK *********

Mar 22 & 24

Battle cry: Jihad is Gender Equality
Agency in “Islamic Feminism”

- cooke, miriam, Chapter 3, “Reviewing Beginning,” in Women Claim Islam: Creating Islamic Feminism through Literature, (Routledge: 2001) pp

Mar 29 & 31

Agency: Social Movements

- Mahmood, Saba, Politics of Piety (Princeton: 2005) (Egypt - Women’s mosque movement)
- Ahmad, Sadaf, Transforming Faith (SUP: 2009) (Pakistan - al-Huda movement)
- Video: Class of 2006: Morocco’s Female Religious Leaders 60 min

April 5 & 7

New voices and visions
Fiction, art, humor

- Shirin Neshat Women Without Men (feature film 2009)
- Video: Expressing the Inexpressible: Shirin Neshat 42 min
- Video: Stand-up Comedy Arabs Gone Wild
- (Maybe Miriam Satrapi’s Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood)
TBA: April 12 & 14; April 19 & 21; April 26 & 28; May 3

Before Spring Break, you will get an updated schedule listing the topics and required readings for the second half of the semester. The list may include your suggestions.

*Please don’t skip or skim the following section. Rules aren’t always fun, but by knowing them, you’ll save yourself (and “us”) some grief.*

**UNIVERSITY RULES**

**Academic Integrity**

Syracuse University believes that promoting academic honesty is the responsibility of everyone in the Syracuse University community. We expect all students enrolled in Syracuse University programs to adhere to standards of academic integrity. All cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the relevant Dean in the home College or School for that given course. Penalties will be dependent upon the seriousness of the infraction, and can be appealed to the relevant College/School Academic Integrity Committee. To learn more about SU’s policy, go to [http://academicintegrity.syr.edu](http://academicintegrity.syr.edu)

*My short version:*

The penalty of plagiarism in this course is an F grade. It’s simple: *don’t copy, don’t modify, don’t lift phrases or ideas. Learn how to give full credit.* Essentially, plagiarism is a combination of stealing and lying. Don’t do it. To learn what plagiarism means practically speaking, go to this great resource at Indiana University: [https://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/](https://www.indiana.edu/~tedfrick/plagiarism/)

**Disability**

Syracuse University is committed to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Our community values diversity and seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunities for all students. Students seeking disability-related services must contact the The Office of Disability Services at Syracuse University, Room 309, 804 University Avenue, Syracuse, New York 13244-2330.

*My short version:*

I would like to make every effort to support you and create a positive learning environment for you. In order to do make necessary accommodations, however, SU requires you to be registered at the Office of Disability Services (315-443-4498) and bring me an Authorization letter from ODS. (I’d try to help anyway, letter or not).
Texting:

Texting, twittering, e-mailing or surfing means you are not paying attention. Plus, you are distracting nearby students. If I catch you, I will ask you to leave and count you as absent. Cell phones must be turned off. Laptops may be used for taking notes only. You must get my permission and e-mail them to me at the end of class.

Etiquette:

No stretched feet on desks or chairs. Encourage others to express their views; many are shy. Disagree respectfully. Listen to each other. Learn their names. Don’t fall asleep (a special problem when watching videos). This is a late afternoon class. Get enough rest before it.