

REL 4145: Gender, Women, Sexuality and Religion

Meeting Times: Monday 3-4:55 PM (Periods 8-9) and Wednesday 4:05-4:55 PM (Period 9)

Class Venue: Monday: Anderson Hall 0101 and Wednesday: Anderson Hall 0032

Instructor: Professor Ali Altaf Mian, Ph.D.

E-mail: alimian@ufl.edu

Office Location: Anderson Hall 107-A

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:30 to 5:30 PM

Course Synopsis

This course surveys key debates in Muslim gender and sexuality studies and is divided into six units: (1) Historical Foundations, (2) Textual Formations, (3) Anthropological Interventions, (4) Feminist and Queer Activisms, (5) Literary Representations, and (6) Film and the Fine Arts. This course is discussion-based and seeks to enable students to conduct rigorous research and use oral and written forms to communicate their findings.

Required Texts: All Readings on Canvas

Assignments/Grade Breakdown:

Item:	Points:
Weekly In-Class Writing Assignments	300
Group Presentation	100
Oral Exam	200
Presentation on Film and the Fine Arts	200
Attendance and Participation	200

Weekly In-Class Writing Assignments (300 points)

There will be 8 in-class writing assignments based on assigned readings and class discussions. The in-class writing always take place on our longer day (Monday). Each writing assignment is 50 points. The lowest two scores will be dropped.

Group Presentation (100 points)

You will work in groups of 3-4 persons to prepare a 15-minute presentation on a Muslim feminist and/or queer activist or activist organization. The group presentations will take place on Monday Oct 23 and Wednesday Oct 25. Detailed instructions on this assignment will be posted on Canvas in due time.

Oral Exam (200 points)

The oral exam tests your knowledge of the content as well as skills to communicate effectively your argument. A pool of possible questions will be posted on Canvas two weeks prior to this exam. Oral exams shall take place on Zoom during class time from Monday 13 November through Monday 20 November.

Presentation on Film and the Fine Arts (200 points)

Each student will make a presentation on a contemporary Muslim practitioner of the fine arts or film director, discussing how the artist's work illuminates this course's key themes. A writing component

also needs to be submitted along with the in-class presentation. These presentations will take place in class during the last two weeks of class. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas by mid-October.

Attendance and Participation (200 points)

Class attendance and participation are mandatory. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class session. You can miss two sessions without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will detract 50 points from your grade. Excused absences are consistent with university policies as listed in the undergraduate catalog (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) and require appropriate documentation. Class will begin and end on time. Five late arrivals (anything over 5 minutes) will be considered one absence.

Grading Scale

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
940-1000	94-100	A	4.00
900-939	90.0-93.9	A-	3.67
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
834-866	83.4-86.6	B	3.00
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
767-799	76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
734-766	73.4-76.6	C	2.00
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
634-666	63.4-66.6	D	1.00
600-633	60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-599	0-59.9	E	0.00

More information on grades and grading policies can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all. The use of laptops or tablets is only allowed for purpose of note-taking.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

On all work submitted for credit by University of Florida students, the following pledge is implied, “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” Please note that acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or assignment that was written by someone else.
- Copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without proper citation and quotation marks.
- Using and copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from Chatgpt or any other AI software for any kind of course assignments.
- Paraphrasing or restating in your own words, text or ideas written by someone else without proper citation.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu> 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Schedule of Assignments and Readings

***=in-class writing assignment**

Wed 23 August Introduction to the Course

UNIT 1: HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Mon 28 August Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam* (“mock” in-class writing assignment)

Wed 30 August Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

Mon 4 Sept No Class (Labor Day)

Wed 6 Sept	Rana Mikati, “Fighting for the Faith? Notes on Women and War in Early Islam”
Mon 11 Sept*	1) Scott Reese, “The Myth of Immobility: Women and Travel in the British Imperial Indian Ocean” 2) Afsane Rezaei, “The Ritual Fusion: Individuality, Tradition, and Sensory Memory in Iranian Women’s Islamic Gatherings in Los Angeles”
Wed 13 Sept	Rahemtulla and Ababneh, “Reclaiming Khadjia’s and Muhammad’s Marriage as an Islamic Paradigm: Toward a New History of the Muslim Present”

UNIT 2: TEXTUAL FORMATIONS

Mon 18 Sept*	Marion Holmes Katz, <i>Wives and Work: Islamic Law and Ethics before Modernity</i> (excerpt)
Wed 20 Sept	Marion Holmes Katz, <i>Wives and Work: Islamic Law and Ethics before Modernity</i> (excerpt)
Mon 25 Sept*	Kecia Ali, <i>Sexual Ethics and Islam</i> (excerpt)
Wed 27 Sept	Kecia Ali, <i>Sexual Ethics and Islam</i> (excerpt)
Mon 2 Oct*	Zahra Ayubi, <i>Gendered Morality: Classical Islamic Ethics of the Self, Family, and Society</i> (excerpt)
Wed 4 Oct	Zahra Ayubi, <i>Gendered Morality: Classical Islamic Ethics of the Self, Family, and Society</i> (excerpt)

UNIT 3: ANTHROPOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS

Mon 9 Oct*	Lila Abu-Lughod, <i>Writing Women’s Worlds: Bedouin Stories</i> (excerpt)
Wed 11 Oct	Lila Abu-Lughod, <i>Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society</i> (excerpt)
Mon 16 Oct*	Saba Mahmood, <i>Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject</i> (excerpt)
Wed 18 Oct	J. Andrew Bush, <i>Between Muslims: Religious Difference in Iraqi Kurdistan</i> (excerpt)

UNIT 4: FEMINIST AND QUEER ACTIVISMS

Mon 23 Oct	Group Presentations on Feminist and Queer Activisms
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Wed 25 Oct Group Presentations on Feminist and Queer Activisms

UNIT 5: LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS

Mon 30 Oct* Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood* (excerpt)

Wed 1 Nov Ismat Chughtai, *The Quilt*

Mon 6 Nov* Leila Aboulela, *River Spirit* (excerpt)

Wed 8 Nov Jokha Alharthi, *Bitter Orange Tree* (excerpt)

Mon 13 Nov Oral Exams

Wed 15 Nov Oral Exams

Mon 20 Nov Oral Exams

Wed 22 Nov No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

UNIT 6: FILM AND THE FINE ARTS

Mon 27 Nov In-Class Presentations on Film and the Fine Arts

Wed 29 Nov In-Class Presentations on Film and the Fine Arts

Mon 4 Dec In-Class Presentations on Film and the Fine Arts

Wed 6 Dec In-Class Presentations on Film and the Fine Arts