
Amin, Qasim. *The Liberation of Women and the New Woman: Two Documents in the History of Egyptian Feminism*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2000.

Mahmood, Saba. *Politics of Piety: the Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Spellberg, D.A. *Politics, Gender, and the Islamic Past*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Tucker, Judith. *In the House of the Law*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

These texts form the backbone of our course, but throughout the semester we will be working with relevant primary documents whenever possible. The Qasim Amin aside, these secondary sources (along with those on reserve) are scholarly treatments of general themes or particular elements of our course. As you complete the reading for each secondary text, please always read for argument. You can do so with a few questions in mind:

- x Can you identify a sentence or sentences that constitute the thesis statement?
- x Can you state the author's thesis – even regarding a single chapter or article – succinctly in your own words?
- x If part of a larger work, how does a particular chapter fit into the bigger picture? If a stand-alone piece, can you relate this reading to another that we have completed in the course?
- x Can you identify at least two examples the author uses to support their argument?

As you read the primary documents with which we will work, please keep the following questions in mind:

- x Who is writing? What do you think was their purpose in so doing?
- x What is the larger relevant context? (Beware of anachronistic analysis!)
- x What is the author or collator's relative position of power in the context of the document's production?
- x If dealing with scripture, do these same questions apply? What are the implications of how we answer that question?
- x How does this document support or call into question claims made by the authors of our secondary sources?

From a skill-building perspective, then, the first and second learnii

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the issues that form the core themes of our course. The other part of my responsibility rests in being prepared for class, which to my mind consists of having both a direction in mind *and* an openness to exploring questions I had not considered.

Second, the success of the course requires that you fulfill your responsibilities. This means that you come to class regularly and that you are prepared to participate in course discussion of both primary and secondary readings. I reserve the right to employ the Socratic method in class to remind you of your responsibilities.

Participation: 20%

As the weighty percentage indicates, I consider your participation in this course to be an essential component of its success. Participation includes regular attendance. In this vein, anything beyond two unexcused absences will result in a reduction of your participation grade. (I realize that things come up – the key to managing your various responsibilities is open communication.) Chronic tardiness will not help your cause, either. However, participation includes much more than attendance. Your participation grade is a reflection of your **engagement** with the course. I understand that not everyone chooses to speak in each class, but there are lots of other ways to show engagement: Make eye contact during lecture. If I request that you post to the class discussion board, do so thoughtfully and punctually. Come by office hours now and then – even if you don't have a particular agenda.

A portion of your participation grade (approximately 5% of your total grade) will reflect the work that you do with our Writing Mentor, Kate Ferraro (ferrarok@grinnell.edu). Each of you is required to meet with Kate at least twice over the course of the semester, once before and once after spring break (at a minimum), and create a record of your meeting in your writing journal (available on P-Web).

Short Essays: 35%

We are really fortunate to have Kate with us this semester. As a writing mentor, she will join us for each class session and will hold office hours to serve as a resource for your writing. She is not an editor – she is here to be a listener, reader, and responder. You can chat with her about anything related to the writing process, from initial brainstorming to refining more polished drafts. This course is writing intensive, meaning that revision is an important part of what we do, and Kate will be a big part of helping you take advantage of the opportunity to work on your writing.

Kate will also lead peer review work in the class. Although I do not require peer review work in this course, Kate is an expert at setting out rubrics that will ensure you get the most out of the experience of working with your peers.

The first of three essays assignments (10%), which is due during the second week of classes, will provide you with an opportunity to work on course learning goals relating to reading secondary scholarly sources. At two-to-three pages in length (double-spaced),

success on this assignment depends very much on a clear thesis, crisp organization, and concise writing. (These skills also happen to constitute the third learning goal in our course.)

For the second of the three essay assignments (10%), you will write an in-class essay addressing the course material from the unit on scriptural and prophetic traditions. You will have the prompt for this assignment in advance and will prepare to write an essay as you otherwise would. You will be allowed to bring an outline (which can include passages from course readings that you will use in your essay). In grading these assignments, I will use the same standards that I apply in evaluating your other short essays. I expect that you will have good ideas, but the key will be how you present the material.

The final short essay (15%) will require you to reconsider your first essay in light of the course material that we cover in between the two assignments. At three-to-five pages, this short essay will be a “dry run” for your final course paper, which will ask that you respond to a question or set of questions that we build (and nuance) over the course of the semester. This essay highlights the important place that **revision** (which is very much related to the third learning goal) has for your work in the class.

You will also have the option of revising *one* of the three essays for further consideration.

Discussion Leader: 10%

This assignment will help you cultivate close reading skills as well as your capacity to organize and present material effectively (skills similar to those you need to write a good essay, no?). Beginning with the questions I pose above, you will work with a partner (including a meeting with me) to plan a class discussion on one of the following texts: Judith Tucker, *In the House of the Law*; Leila Ahmed, *A Quiet Revolution*; or Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety*. You should bring your own questions to discussion, no matter how small. If you have these questions chances are so do many of your colleagues.

Final Group Work: 10%

We will close out the semester by dividing into small groups, developing a response to a question or set of questions that we build over the course of the semester, and presenting/discussing/debating those responses as a group.

Final Paper and Annotated Bibliography: 25%

The final 10-to-12-page paper will be a revision and expansion of your first two essays – with a twist. You will consider the same question/set of questions as in the earlier essay and will use course resources to do so, but you will add an additional 7-10 sources that you identify via research. You will be meeting with Phil Jones of Burling Library on Wednesday, March 14 to begin this process.

A note about written work: In all cases, unless otherwise noted, you are to use normal margins, 12-point font, and double spacing. In text (parenthetical, with author and page number) citation is acceptable when accompanied by a works cited page. Please include a minimal header – your name, the course name and, if you choose, a title. All papers should be double-sided and should have page numbers.

Course Policies:

xI will return your e-mail within 24 hours whenever possible. If you have questions about finding material, etc., you can always check with a colleague first (to likely

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27: IN-CLASS WRITING ASSIGNMENT

LEGAL TRADITIONS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29:

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