

# Northwestern

## Program in Middle East and North African Studies

**Introductory Topics in Middle East and North African Studies: Arab American Studies (co-list ASIAN\_AM 203-0-2)**

**MENA 290-3-20 taught by Cable, Umayyah**

Throughout three sections—1) Immigration & Racial Formation, 2) Representation and 3) Cultural Politics—this class offers an introduction to the formation of Arab-American cultural identity and the social and political issues at the heart of the Arab-American community. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, we will read a variety of texts (including history, anthropology, literature, and cultural studies) to explore the following questions: What are the historical circumstances that have shaped Arab immigration to the U.S.? How has U.S. foreign policy impacted Arab-American histories and experiences? Where do Arab-Americans "fit" within the U.S.' racial classification system? How do the intersections of multiple identities and backgrounds inform Arab-American communities, cultural politics, and activism? What is anti-Arab racism, where does it stem from, and how does it manifest in daily life? What is Islamophobia and how and why are the categories of "Arab" and "Muslim" so often collapsed or conflated in popular and political rhetoric in the United States?

**Seminar in Middle East and North African Studies: Protest and Popular Culture in the Middle East (co-list ANTHRO 390-0-21)**

**MENA 301-1-20 taught by Winegar, Jessica**

This course will examine the connection between popular culture and politics in the Middle East and North Africa. Popular culture - including films, music, poetry, street art, the internet, and television - has been a critical means for expressing political viewpoints and indeed motivating political action. It has also been used by groups and governments seeking to maintain power and repress populist sentiment. This course will take a careful and critical view of different examples of popular culture from across the region, asking what kind of politics they embody and enable. We will concentrate on what popular culture tells us about social change and hierarchies of power related to nation-states, generations, social class, gender, race/ethnicity, and religion.

**Advanced Topics in Middle East and North African Studies: Anthropology of Islam: Symbol, Discourse, Practice (co-list REL ST 359-0-21; ANTHRO 390-0-29)**

**MENA 390-3-21 taught by Yıldız, Emrah**

This seminar is designed to analyze anthropological approaches to the study of Islam and Muslims in the MENA region and the

Islamic world. We will begin the course by critically revisiting the historical legacies that mediate contemporary debates on and representations of Muslims and Islam. We will explore what it means to take Islam as an object of anthropological analysis and the kinds of normative assumptions that underlie references to "religion" and "tradition." Second, we will closely examine seminal interventions advanced by Ernst Gellner, Clifford Geertz and Michael Gilsenan before turning to Talal Asad's analysis of anthropological categories of religion and his attempts to reformulate the study of Islam as a discursive tradition. Situating these debates within the broader intellectual history of anthropological thought, we will then proceed to examine the analytical purchase of symbolic, discursive and practice-centered approaches in studies of Islam. In the second half of the course, we will shift our attention to more ethnographically grounded materials that explore Muslim engagements with, and responses to, various facets of modernity such as gender inequality, capitalist economics and neoliberalist development, religious minorities and the secular nation-state as well urban life and practices of leisure.

**Advanced Topics in Middle East and North African Studies: Revolution and Revolutionary Movements in Modern Iran (co-list INTL ST 390-0-20)**

**MENA 390-3-23 taught by Golkar, Saeid**

Mass uprisings have been one of the most powerful threats to autocratic governments, and Iran is no exception. Large protest movements have challenged different regimes throughout the country's contemporary history, including the 1905 Constitutional Revolution, 1963 Uprising, 1979 Islamic Revolution, and 2009 Green Movement. Why have so many mass uprisings and revolutions occurred in Iran? Has Iran been a revolutionary country? Why did the 1979 Revolution succeed, but the 2009 Green Movement fail? These are some of the questions that will be studied in this course. The aim of this course is to compare the Iranian revolutions in 1979 and 2009 by studying the processes, causes, and outcomes of these revolutions. This course will be divided into three sections. It will begin by briefly examining the recent theories of revolution and revolutionary movement. The second part of the course will focus on the Iranian Revolution that overthrew the monarchy regime in 1979. We will also study the causes of the Iranian revolution using most influential theoretical approaches, such as structural, cultural, discourse, mobilization, feminist, and Marxist. The third part of this course will be focused on the Green Movement, or Green Revolution, that followed the disputed 2009 presidential election. The course will cover the nature of the Green Movement, as well as the causes for its failure, and its impact on "Arabs' awakening." The course will culminate with a general theory of revolution and revolutionary movements in Iran.