

**American University of Beirut
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of English**

**English 258F: Feminism in Ethnic American Literature
Fall 2020
TR: 12:30-1:45, Nicely 320**

Instructor	Dr. Sirène Harb
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Office	Fisk Hall 223
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Office Hours (Via Skype)	Monday 11:00 am-1:00 pm and by appointment (Skype ID: sireneharb)

ENGL 258 Gender and Sexuality

(3 credits, prerequisite: ENGL 203 or higher, based on placement, may be repeated for credit for a maximum of 6 credits.)

General Course Description (University Catalogue)

A course that examines works of literature in relation to contemporary theories of gender and sexuality. Emphases will vary from term to term, but may include third world feminisms, queer and post-queer theory, affect theory, rhetorics of the body, and new materialist approaches (may be repeated for credit for a maximum of 6 credits).

Course Description

Focusing on fiction, memoirs, essays, and poetry, this course explores works penned by US women writers of Middle Eastern, Asian, Mexican and African descent. We will analyze how these writers shape a feminist consciousness through their choice of themes and characters; we will also examine how their writing reflects the complex relations between gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity and class. In our exploration of these issues, we will probe individual and collective experiences and how they relate to gendered configurations of power, voice, and language.

Some of the questions we will address include: How are gendered subjects “othered” by US mainstream culture and by their own communities? What are some forms of resistance to marginalization and othering projected in their writing? We will explore these questions by focusing on cultural, social and historical issues which are of particular significance to these women. These issues include Gender and Slavery (African American Literature), Feminism and Storytelling (Chinese American Literature), Feminism and Cultural Translation (Arab American Literature) and Feminism and Borderlands (Mexican American Literature).

Course Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. Identify basic literary terms
2. Examine approaches to the study of feminism in ethnic American literature
3. Analyze primary works of ethnic American literature using methodologies that are grounded in the humanities
4. Compare/contrast representations of gender and voice in works of ethnic American literature
5. Explain the connections between literature and feminism
6. Demonstrate critical thinking skills by developing effective arguments
7. Examine diverse intellectual and literary traditions and their impact on the formation of human values and cultures

Resources Available to Students

Two of the required texts are available at the **AUB bookstore** (*The Woman Warrior* and *Beloved*). The remaining texts will be uploaded on **Moodle**. You must read and prepare all the assigned texts.

Required Texts:

The Woman Warrior, Maxine Hong Kingston

Beloved, Toni Morrison

Selections from *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa

Selections from *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*, Sandra Cisneros

“The Spiced Chicken Queen of Mickaweauah, Iowa,” Mohja Kahf (From *Dinarzad’s Children*)

Selected Poems, Suheir Hammad

Selected Poems, Mohja Kahf

Grading Criteria: Grading will be based on these fixed criteria (non-curved)

Class Participation	20%
Exam 1	25%
Reflection Paper	25%
Exam 2	30%

Your class participation grade is based on your participation in discussion forums:

I will be frequently posting discussion questions/prompts addressing a specific aspect of the reading and/or its application, as a way of starting a discussion thread. You are expected to post a response to every prompt (not less than 60 words and not more than 80

words). In some instances, you might also be asked to read and post a reply to one of your classmates' comments. These forms of participation are of course asynchronous (they do not happen in real time) and there is a deadline for the process. This deadline will appear on Moodle, where I will be posting the thread and you will be posting your answer. Please look carefully for the information regarding the deadline to post your comments. Failure to post a comment will result in a deduction of ten points from your overall participation grade.

Schedule

The online format of this course involves a synchronous and an asynchronous component. We will do close reading of the texts in live sessions (class time) while the asynchronous segments will involve introductions to a particular author or period, definitions of terms, etc. The live sessions will be given via WebEx. Please make sure to download this program and learn how to use it (set up a WebEx meeting with another person to see how this functions) in preparation for our sessions. For any questions or inquiries about technical issues, you can contact the IT help desk via email (it.helpdesk@aub.edu.lb); their extension is 2260.

Week	Assignments
1	Sep. 8: Course Introduction Sep. 10: Ethnic American Literature: An Introduction
2	Sep. 15: Library Session: Using Electronic Databases Sep. 17: Feminism and Feminist Literary Criticism: An Introduction <i>and</i> <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , “No Name Woman”
3	Sep. 22: Feminism and Storytelling: The Chinese American Tradition <i>and</i> <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , “White Tigers” Sep. 24: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , “Shaman”
4	Sep. 29: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , “At the Western Palace” Reflection Paper Abstract Due Oct. 1: <i>The Woman Warrior</i> , “A Song for a Barbarian Pipe”
5	Oct. 6: General Discussion Oct. 8: Mexican American Feminism: Border Crossing in Chicana Literature and Selection from <i>Borderlands</i> , “La conciencia de la mestiza”
6	Oct. 13: Selection from <i>Borderlands</i> , “La conciencia de la mestiza” Oct. 15: Session 2: <i>Borderlands</i> (Cont) and Selection from

	<i>Woman Hollering Creek</i> REFLECTION PAPER DUE
7	Oct. 20: Selection from <i>Woman Hollering Creek</i> Oct. 22: Black Feminism: Rewriting Gender and Slavery in African American Literature and <i>Beloved</i> (1/4) From beg. till (“Sethe rubbed...beating back the past.”)
8	Oct. 27: Exam 1 (<i>Beloved</i> not included) Oct. 29: No Class
9	Nov. 3: <i>Beloved</i> (2/4) (“Upstairs <i>Beloved</i> was dancing...high-topped shoes that she didn’t like the look of at all. At all.”) Nov. 5: <i>Beloved</i> (3/4) (“When the four horsemen came ...Both are surrounded and tied”)
10	Nov. 10: <i>Beloved</i> (4/4) (“The air gets sweet then....end”) Nov. 12: Feminism and Cultural Translation in Arab American Literature and “The Spiced Chicken Queen of Mickaweaquah, Iowa” (total)
11	Nov. 17: “The Spiced Chicken Queen of Mickaweaquah, Iowa” (Cont) Nov. 19: Selected Poems by Hammad and Kahf
12	Nov. 24: Selected Poems by Hammad and Kahf (Cont) Nov. 26: General Discussion
13	Dec. 1: Exam 2 (<i>Beloved</i>, “Spiced Chicken” and Selected Poems by Hammad and Kahf)

Course Policy

--Preparation and class participation (via discussion forums) are a primary requirement.

--Reading assignments are to be completed before the class meeting for which they are assigned.

--You should be prepared to discuss the required texts and participate constructively in the discussion forums.

--Written and all other assignments should be handed in on or before the due dates indicated in the course outline.

Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student’s education. Ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student’s

professional career. Anything less than total commitment to honesty undermines the efforts of the entire academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for ensuring the academic integrity of the University (*AUB Student Handbook*).

University Policies

Academic Integrity: Please refer to AUB Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/generaluniversitypolicies/Documents/StudentCodeConduct/StudentCodeConduct.pdf> , in particular section 1.1, which concerns academic misconduct including cheating, plagiarism, in-class disruption, and dishonesty. Please be aware that misconduct is vigorously prosecuted and that AUB has a zero tolerance policy. Course policy is that credible evidence of cheating will result in course failure.

AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform me immediately so that we can privately discuss options. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, you are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office: accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

Non-Discrimination AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at www.aub.edu.lb/titleix . To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator Ms. Mitra Tauk at 01-350000 ext. 2514, or titleix@aub.edu.lb . An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at www.aub.ethicspoint.com