

MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES

Programs

- Digital Humanities and Societies, Master of Arts (<https://catalog.hbku.edu.qa/academic-degrees/chss/mes/digital-humanities-societies-master-arts/>)
- Women, Society and Development, Master of Arts (<https://catalog.hbku.edu.qa/academic-degrees/chss/mes/women-society-development-master-arts/>)

Division Courses

Digital Humanities & Societies

DHS 621 Approaches to Digital Humanities **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course prepares students to develop a broad understanding of the theories, concepts, debates and impacts of digital culture. The course reflects the emerging discourses of digital humanities (incl. heritage). Students will be introduced to key debates and contemporary issues. The course will also expand the theory to the exploration of the concrete impact of the digitization onto different dimensions and sectors of society such as, but not limited to: women, e-health, online media and music, data, literature, etc.

DHS 622 Digital Communication and Media **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Digital communication has transformed many aspects of representation and broadcasting, challenging existing roles, methodologies and practices of the media industry. This course will examine both theoretical and practical aspects of digital media and communication. Through real-life examples and case studies focusing on the Middle East, students will explore the impact of user-generated content and social media, the role of digital cultures in political transformations, the effect of mass digitization, and challenges in digital publishing.

DHS 623 Methods in Digital Humanities **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

The Digital Humanities is a huge and growing field spanning many disciplines and skill sets. The focus of this course is on tools and methods that allow students to collect, create and analyze textual corpora as purveyors of stories, information. This is the point of view often taken by analysts who work for universities, think tanks and intelligence agencies who seek to understand cultural trends and mindsets from volumes of digital texts. For such analysts, close reading is an indispensable part of their work and computing tools help focus their reading while reading helps refine their understanding of the computer output. The course will give students intensive practice with methods and tools for collecting and analyzing corpora of text at the word and sentence level, and with working with large scalable dictionaries. The students will be also introduced to an array of practical Digital Humanities Tools and Applications

DHS 651 Emerging Technologies and Applications **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

There is now widespread recognition that digital technologies have profoundly changed the way we produce content, share information, interact with each other's, develop and commercialize products and services, create knowledge or financial value, while defining new environments for these functions to flourish. The course discovers how political, social, economic, financial powers and knowledge are reshaped in our contemporary digital era. The course introduces students to the need of digitalization, continuously developing platforms and the fundamental knowledge of emerging new realities.

DHS 652 Digital Publishing and Design **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides students with a comprehensive foundation of layout and design principles to integrate digital media essential for effective print-based and web based business publications. The students will learn the graphic terminology, type specification, and evolution of the printed piece from concept to final printed project. An overview of the industry standard software will be introduced to understand the basics of web pages creation, page layout and design and various methods of reproduction for print and electronic delivery.

DHS 654 Civil Society and Digital Activism **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course aims to study how the 'cyberspace' theory and 'new media' have empowered societies to impose change and development on regional or global scales in a variety of domains. The course introduces the students to the effective role of social media ranging from websites, social networking apps, and collaborative platforms to promote and state positions toward theoretical fields, such as: empowerment of minorities, racism, feminism, global crises, climate and environmental change, emerging industries, peer-to-peer production, urbanism, and self-development.

DHS 655 Exploring Digital Heritage Methods **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course addresses the needs of a growing cultural heritage industry; it provides opportunities to develop skills in which the material or tangible objects and digital culture relate. The course focuses on a wide spectrum of topics, starting with archaeology, arts, museum collections, historical data archiving, and built heritage. This course explores the techniques of how the tangible heritage is represented, transmitted and perceived in the digital world

DHS 656 Introduction to Human Language Technologies **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course is an introduction to the most important problems involved in Human Language Technologies (HLT) with a focus on the Arabic language. We will present the techniques and resources used and the theories they are based on. The course includes an overview of Natural Language applications. We will also explore the relationship between language and technology including language learning and speech technologies. Topics include machine translation, automatic speech recognition and generation, dialog systems as well as language technologies

DHS 657 Coding for Humanities**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course will provide students the technical skills necessary to conduct quantitative research in digital humanities and societies. In particular, this course will introduce students to the basic coding skills needed to be considered in any professional career nowadays. As an introductory programming course, we will introduce common practices to extract and collect raw data from a variety of digital sources, to organize, clean, explore, analyze, visualize and interpret such data, and to infer sensible information and draw conclusions

DHS 658 Digital Resources in the Humanities**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores a broad spectrum of perspectives on the digital humanities engage with a variety of digital humanities tools in order to choose the most appropriate technology to facilitate different work in different situations in order to develop familiarity with a range of digital humanities projects, as well as the ability to evaluate the tools and methods involved in creating those projects and become more thoughtful.

DHS 659 Digital Innovation and Transformation**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides analytical tools and frameworks to help students gaining a sound understanding of the potential and place of new developments and knowledge production in social media and digital industries. Students will appreciate the importance of innovation as a target and the way knowledge management will contribute to this innovation. Students will see knowledge as a commodity and how this commodity can be managed

DHS 660 Digital Disinformation and Propaganda in the Middle East and North Africa**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This module combines practical and academic skills for students with no prior knowledge of the region to engage with contemporary debate on the ideas of digital propaganda, PR, and surveillance. It is designed for those interested in being able to tackle concerns about fake news, media distortions, and information hegemony in both the Middle East and the wider global context. The course consists of lectures, class discussions/seminars and student presentations. The module is suitable for interdisciplinary pathways, and incorporate current debates in both media and politics

DHS 661 Digital Writing**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter

The course is called "Digital Writing" because it will employ state of the art technology that allows students to investigate their writing patterns in terms of topical structure and the various textural gestures (stance, sentiment, emotion, mood, register cues, genres cues) writers can use to embellish the topical structure.

DHS 669 Independent Research Project**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

The Digital Humanities and Societies program requires students to either undertake an internship or an independent research project. This course allows students to explore their specific research interests within a relative field through a research agenda. The student will work closely with academic advisor and supervisor to implement this project within a given time period. The project may be capitalized on for the purposes of the thesis.

DHS 691 Internship**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

The Digital Humanities and Societies program requires students to either undertake an internship or an independent research project. This course allows students to explore their specific research interests within a relative field through a research agenda. The student will work closely with academic advisor and supervisor to implement this project within a given time period. The project may be capitalized on for the purposes of the thesis.

DHS 695 Master's Thesis Hours**1-6 Credits**

Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

Designed like an independent study, this course supports students in their endeavor to conduct research in the field of Digital Humanities. Students can produce a research-based thesis or a project-based thesis of up to 15,000 words or equivalent. The thesis should showcase the student's ability to collect/assess data, build an argument, and critically apply the main theories in their area of study. The thesis is an opportunity for students to gain the requisite skills necessary for writing a publishable article.

Middle Eastern**ME 611 History, Politics and Cultures of the Middle East****3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course takes a cultural and historical approach to politics of the Middle East; it investigates the nature of political authority and the complex relationship between religion, traditions, social movements, class structures, and the challenges Middle East societies faced from colonialism and globalization. The course provides a critical appraisal of normative paradigms and approaches through which the Middle East has been studied, the narratives covering its history, how knowledge has been organized, and the repercussions of particular approaches and theories.

ME 613 Social, Economic and Development Theory**3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course examines the major theoretical paradigms in critical social theory and economic development. It gives focus to assumptions made on social and economic development, and examines the evolution of different schools of thought and theoretical constructs. The approach of the course is interdisciplinary, combining insights from sociology, economics, political science and history. It applies models and methodologies through which historical processes can be conceptualized with respect to the ideological frameworks that guide social power and development policy.

Women, Society & Development**WSD 621 Introduction to Women and Gender Studies****3 Credits**

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Providing an overview of core concepts, debates and developments in the field of women and gender studies, this course underscores shifting paradigms (e.g. from 'women' to 'gender' studies) in our theoretical understanding of the subject. Themes, such as intersectionality, the social construction of gender, transnationalism, solidarity, patriarchy, discrimination, empowerment, embodiment, performativity etc., are highlighted through an interdisciplinary framework that positions gender within various power structures institutionalized in the media, political sphere, labor market and/or field of cultural production.

WSD 622 Women, Work and Economic Development in the Middle East 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course evaluates economic development theories from a gender perspective focused on the role of women in the MENA region. Providing a critical overview of women in the workforce, the course questions the institutional context in which gender is articulated in the household sphere and in the labor market. The persistent gender gaps in labor force participation rates (against rising educational outcomes for women) is also considered from a perspective which contrasts the modern discourse with its regional, historical antecedents.

WSD 623 Research Methods in Womens and Gender Studies 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Prerequisite(s): SS 612

This course will familiarize and equip students with research methods and skills relevant to women and gender studies. It focuses on qualitative methods, and draws from feminist approaches to science, epistemology and knowledge production. Students will receive training in re-search design, concepts, methods (interviews, participant observation, etc.), ethical requirements, critical writing skills. The course will enable students to evaluate different methods and assess their relevance to their own research projects. The course aims at developing a well-designed research proposal.

WSD 651 The Anthropology of Gender in the Middle East 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Students are expected to analyze core themes characterizing the field, such as the honor and shame complex, Islamic feminism, relational selves, patriarchal bargains, kinship, etc. While focused on gender and women's issues in the Middle East, the subject will also be linked to the core developments in the field of anthropology, such as the shift from neo-positivist to interpretive and reflex Feminist Perspective stances.

WSD 652 Women, Law and Citizenship 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Designed to study the connection between society, culture, and law, this course examines citizenship, women, gender and family law. It asks whether laws pertaining to women and gender can be universalized. It also questions whether gendered law is a product of cultural, economic or political forces. What are the differences between positive, natural and customary laws? What is "full legal equality" and what role does context play in determining legal priorities? Do theories of liberation, equality and citizenship meet practice?

WSD 653 Gender and Digital Cultures 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course investigates innovative gender theory perspectives pertaining to the digital realm. Studying social media, digital activism, digital human relationship platforms and sexuality, we consider the impact of the latter on gender narratives, representation and embodiment in real-life urban and rural social environments. Students will learn how digital technologies challenge current understandings of gender theories, provoke new forms of knowledge in the digital realm and work to transform systems of gender oppression.

WSD 655 Women, State and Modernity in the Arab World 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Exploring the interrelations between women, the state and modernity, this course critically appraises the tensions surrounding the transformation in the status of Arab women. Modernity and nationhood are given special consideration as the driving ideologies framing gender relations in the region today. Engaging with the issues requires zooming in on the gendered legacies of colonialism, nation-state building; state feminism; the debate on 'authenticity'; religious and secular movements; patriarchal bargains; and gendered violence and war.

WSD 656 Family and Kinship in the Middle East 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course traces the history of the family in the Middle East, from pre-modern to modern times. A comparative lens is cast on dominant forms of kinship (tribes and clans) in their urban, rural and Bedouin settings. The impact of modernization, globalization and modern economies on kinship institutions is also examined in terms of the rise of the individual and the nuclear family. The concomitant discourse provoked on gendered identities, reproduction and sexuality is the focus of research and discussion.

WSD 657 Women, Media and Communication 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores the intersection of media and feminist theory by investigating the portrayal of Arab women in both Middle Eastern and global media. Coverage of such topics as sex trafficking, rape, domestic violence, religion, and local/regional politics is analyzed alongside claims of the marginalization of feminine voices and narratives. Lastly, students will consider the role of women in producing media and the barriers they continue to face when entering media.

WSD 658 Special Topics in Women Studies 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Introducing students to timely, innovative and cutting-edge topics, methods and theories in the field of Arab Women's Studies, this course is research-led. As such, its precise content will depend on the expertise of faculty and the research interests of students. The scope of research is thus wide, ranging from topical subjects, such as women's participation in the Arab revolutions, to pioneering feminist research methods, such as auto-ethnography, to state-of-the-art theoretical developments in the field of women and gender studies.

WSD 659 Independent Research Project 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

The Women, Society and Development program requires students to either undertake an internship or an independent research project. This course allows students to explore their specific research interests within a relative field through a research agenda. The student will work closely with academic advisor and supervisor to implement this project within a given time period. The project may be capitalized on for the purposes of the thesis

WSD 660 Women in Comparative World Religions 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Providing an introduction to the academic and comparative study of the world's religious traditions through gendered analysis, this course engages in a thematic examination of the beliefs, practices, institutions, and cultural expressions of the World's major Religions. It will address how sacred power, sacred story, ritual, sacred space and time, religious experience, religious ethics and morality shape women's lives. What is the relationship between gender, religion, politics, and social conflict across and between religious traditions?

WSD 661 Women in World History 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides an overarching survey of world history, from the ancient to the early-modern eras, exploring several key themes in the fields of gender and identity studies. The goal of the course is to assist students in understanding the critical significance of gender, sexuality, and identity to historical world events and to the ways in which they continue to impinge on the contemporary world.

WSD 662 Women and Gender in the Literature and Cinema of the Middle East and North Africa 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores various strands of feminist conceptual frameworks with a focus on Women's Studies and Feminist Studies in the MENA region. The aim is to integrate feminist theory with a selection of literary and cinematic works produced mainly by women writers and filmmakers in this region (including a few films made by male filmmakers), in order to investigate the cultural, social and political significance of their creative expressions, and the extent to which these works address issues at stake in their societies.

WSD 670 Gulf Feminism 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course introduces feminist movements in the Arabian Gulf, by providing an overview of feminist movements in the MENA region, then focusing on the specificities of women in the Gulf. It will introduce main authors, themes, and debates about women's rights in the Arabian Gulf, with an in-depth focus on the intersections between Feminism and postcolonial theory.

WSD 691 Internship 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

The Women, Society and Development program requires students to either undertake an internship or do an independent research project. This internship course is the opportunity to skills within a workplace setting, and also to gain experience in an organization, which is focused on issues relating to the degree program's scope.

WSD 695 Master's Thesis Hours 1-6 Credits

Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

Designed like an Independent Research Project, this course supports students in their endeavor to conduct research in the field of Arab women studies. Students can produce a research-based thesis or a project-based thesis of up to 15,000 words. The thesis should showcase the student's ability to collect/assess data, build an argument; and critically apply the main theories in their area of study. The thesis is an opportunity for students to gain the requisite skills necessary for writing a publishable article.