SYLLABUS

OMAN: MANAGING MODERNITY, TRANSLATING TRADITIONS (1 credit)
January 5-23, 2013

Course description:
This course will introduce students to the breadth of historical, cultural and economic issues that currently face the modern nation-state of Oman in the twenty-first century. Students will be introduced to the ancient cultural and political history of the Sultanate, and will be exposed to its tribal routes and customs, as well as to the “Renaissance” that has enabled Oman to gain recognition as a progressive, tolerant and modern nation.

The course is organized into three weekly themes:
• Week One: Introduction to Oman: History, Politics and National Renaissance
• Week Two: Social Institutions and Change: The Roles of Religion and Gender in Oman
• Week Three: Oman’s Economic Realities and Imperatives

Class Readings:


Requirements:
Class participation: Attendance and participation in each class is mandatory. The point of putting you in contact with local experts is not only to allow you to listen to their lectures, but also to allow you
to interact with them. You are expected to have read the assigned readings prior to the lecture in order to ask informed, substantive, and appropriate questions of the lecturers. You also are responsible for participating in weekly briefing and debriefing discussions that will synthesize materials presented in lectures and assigned readings (40% of final grade).

**Weekly papers:** You will submit three short papers analyzing the readings and lectures for each of the three themes. Each paper will be between two and three pages long (60% of final grade, 20% per paper).

**Grading:** Papers will be graded on content, depth of analysis and understanding of readings and lectures. Participation will be graded by observing attendance, attitude, preparation, active involvement in class discussions and question and answer sessions with lecturers, and culturally-appropriate behavior on excursions.

The grading scale is:

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<td>A</td>
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**WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION TO OMAN: HISTORY AND NATIONAL RENAISSANCE**

**Readings/Assignments for Week One:**

  - Chapter 1: Beginnings
  - Chapter 2: Muscat

  - Prologue
  - Chapter 2: The Sands of Their Desire
  - Chapter 3: Arabia Felix
  - Chapter 4: The Flight of the Challenger
  - Appendix 1: Key Dates in the History of Ubar

  - Chapter 1: In the Dreamtime of Oil: Wealth and Development in an Anomalous Time

  - Introduction
  - Chapter 1: Foundation of the Modern State
  - Conclusion

**Paper One (due on January 12):** Reflect on one topic of particular interest to you that was discussed in the course thus far. This could be a topic that was raised by a lecture or reading. Why is this topic
of interest to you? Why is it important to Oman? What did you learn about it? Integrate the week’s readings and lectures into your response. The paper should be 2-3 pages long. It will be graded on style and form, content, depth of analysis, and understanding of readings and lectures as demonstrated by their appropriate incorporation into the assignment.

Lectures:
- Connecting Ancient Civilizations: Oman, the African Exodus, the Frankincense Trade and the Lost City of Ubar (Dr. J. Larry Brown, Academic Dean, Center for International Learning)
- Oman: Then and Now (Mr. Ahmed Al Mukhaini, Director, SASLO Training Center)

WEEK TWO: SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND CHANGE: THE ROLES OF RELIGION AND GENDER IN OMAN

Readings/Assignments for Week Two:

- Chapter 1: Who are Muslims?
- Chapter 2: Democracy or Theocracy?

- Chapter 1: Muhammed and the Quran: Messenger and Message (partial)

- Chapter 4: Circles of Knowledge: Religious Learning, Pious Pasts and Alternative Sociality

- Chapter 5: Private and Family Life


Lectures:
- The History and Unique Practice of Ibadhi Islam (Dr. Hatem Al Abdul Salam)
- The Changing Roles and Status of Omani Women from 1970 to the Present (Ms. Malak Al Shaibani, CEO, CreativeLinks)

Paper Two (due on January 19): Reflect on one of the following topics:
1. How has the role of Ibadhi Islam impacted the transformation of Omani society during its Renaissance?
2. In what ways have changes in women’s roles transformed the political, social and economic arenas in Oman? What are the challenges that remain for the future?

Integrate the week’s readings and lectures into your response. The paper should be 2-3 pages long. It will be graded on style and form, content, depth of analysis, and understanding of readings and lectures as demonstrated by their appropriate incorporation into the assignment.
WEEK THREE: OMAN'S ECONOMIC REALITIES AND IMPERATIVES

Readings/Assignments for Week Three:
   Chapter 4: Planning, Finance, and the Business Environment
   Chapter 5: Natural Resources and Industrial Development


   Chapter 7: Perhaps He Has a Son: Succession, Depletion and the Uncertain Future

Lectures:
   • Oman’s Economic Development since 1967 and the End of Oil (Dr. Said Al Saqri, Senior Economic Advisor to H.M. the Sultan for Economic Planning Affairs)
   • The Sultanate of Oman Monetary Policy in the Context of the Gulf Cooperation Council Monetary Union (Dr. Khalfan Al Barwani, Senior Economic Advisor, Central Bank of Oman)

Paper Three (due January 23): “What is Oman’s future after oil?” is a major question in Oman today. There is a clear emphasis on diversification of the economy, particularly in the sectors of tourism and human capital development. Do you think diversification currently provides adequate answers to Oman’s future challenges? Integrate the week’s readings and lectures into your response. The paper should be 2-3 pages long. It will be graded on style and form, content, depth of analysis, and understanding of readings and lectures as demonstrated by their appropriate incorporation into the assignment.

NOTE: The syllabus for this course may change somewhat from year to year, based on guest lecturer availability.