

Syllabus for:
**CROSS-CULTURAL
PERCEPTIONS AND
REPRESENTATIONS**
SEMR/POLS 4018
Spring 2018

Instructor: Prof. Riham Bahi
Office: 2011 HUSS Bldg.
Email: rbahi@aucegypt.edu
Office Hrs: Mondays 2:00-3:30 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides a unique opportunity for students at AUC to share their educational experience with students from the United States. The medium for this shared experience will be videoconferences held over the internet with university classes in the U.S. and Europe. This semester, we will hold 5 videoconferences with classes from different American institutions.

What will be “unique” about the course this semester is our participation in an internet-based teleconferencing program known as *Soliya*. Students in the course will be matched with students from a number of different universities around the world, and together they will participate in 8 moderated discussions via the internet.

For each videoconference, we will be reading the same texts as the students at our partner institution. The videoconferences provide not only the medium for the shared component of this course; they also suggest the substantive theme of the course. For, while we encounter the apparent cultural other over the internet, we will be exploring with them the question of our relationship to the other - esp. how our perceptions of the other have developed over time and how they continue to influence the political interaction between “East” and “West” today.

LEARNING OUTCOME:

After successfully completing this course, which involves participation in and listening to class discussions as well as completing written assignments, you will have an enhanced ability to do the following:

- Clearly identify, analyze and develop informed opinions
- Develop and present well-reasoned written or spoken positions
- Recognize and understand the nature and importance of diverse cultural perspectives (including your own)
- Reflect and understand the meaning and importance of an informed, involved membership in a global community comprised of peoples with diverse values and views

COURSE TEXT

There is no single text or set of texts for this course. Materials will be made available to students as the course progresses. Readings will be available electronically via Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance	10%
Participation	30%
Reaction papers	30%
Term paper	30%

Weekly Reaction Papers:

Each student will be responsible for writing a reaction paper for the assigned readings as well as reaction papers to dialogue sessions. Reaction papers should cover the readings main ideas and critically assess them. They should include at least one quote which represents a central theme or argument, with an explanation of its importance. These papers should each be between 500-700 words in length. Reaching right or wrong conclusions about the material is not the issue.

Term Paper

Each student will be responsible for a term paper to be handed in the last week of classes. This paper should tackle an issue that arose in the videoconference dialogues and examine it in greater depth. It may expand on an issue first broached in one of the student's reaction papers, if the student so chooses. Extra research may well be necessary to fully treat the issue in question. However, this is not, strictly speaking, a research paper. Instead, you need to choose a contentious issue (in consultation with the instructor), take a position on it and argue for your position. Research may be used to support the argument but the argument is primary. This paper should be about 3000 words in length.

Participation

Student participation is essential if our dialogues are to work; it will be much more important for this course than for others that you have taken. It is for this reason that 30% of the grade will be reserved for participation. Attending the class alone will produce a poor grade. All students are expected to have read thoughtfully the assigned readings and come to class prepared to

participate in the dialogue and make substantive contribution to the discussions. Participation grade will depend on both the quality and quantity of student's comments and questions. Students should come to class every week with a written list of at least 2 questions about the week's topic or what the readings lead you to think about. ***Please refer to the discussion guide available on Blackboard.***

NOTE ON WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Late work will be accepted but penalized, so make sure you meet your assignment deadlines. Assignments not submitted during class on the due date will be assessed a late penalty of 5% per day (including weekends). Assignments must be properly formatted (12 point font, double-spaced and proper margins). Stapled and prefaced with a cover page clearly indicating the student's name and ID number. Assignments that do not conform to these criteria will not be accepted for assessment. Written assignment must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style. Please consult the following link for a proper citation guide: www.chicagomanualofstyle.com

NOTE ON PARTICIPATION

No matter how good your written work is, you are required to participate in class discussions and online dialogue sessions as the main part of your grade. The definition of ""contributing to class discussion"" is saying something that {1} shows you have done the reading, {2} makes a connection between the discussion at hand and the reading or between ideas, and {3} demonstrates that you are thinking. In this course you will be expected to be serious about reading, thinking, writing, and conveying your thoughts verbally to other students. All of these are difficult tasks. I am happy to help you develop these skills; please come talk to me about it. I'd also like to highlight that a critical aspect of class participation is listening attentively to others. You will be evaluated not only on your own efforts to contribute to class discussion, but also in your efforts to listen respectively to others and engage their ideas.

NOTE ON POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT POLICY

The Department of Political Science has adopted a number of measures to raise academic standards within the department. Two of these measures concern you directly:

i) For every piece of work handed in for any Political Science course, ten percent of the grade will be reserved for an evaluation of proficiency in the use of English. This is intended as an incentive to continue to pursue the perfection of your English language skills beyond the English language classes offered at the beginning of your AUC career. If you believe that you might have difficulties in this area, you are strongly advised to make liberal use of the Writing Center on campus.

ii) The discovery of any instance of plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for the course with no opportunity for withdrawal from the course. This will be in addition to the filing of a report on the incident with the Academic Integrity Committee, as mandated by

university policy. If you are uncertain about the definition of plagiarism, please ask me before submitting work for this course.

COURSE CALENDAR & READINGS (*are available on Blackboard. Please consult Blackboard regularly for course updates*)