

Morocco Odyssey

Education 461/MENAS 461

Fall Term 2017 Wednesdays 2-5, 2310 School of Education Bldg.

Instructors:

Michael Fahy

E-mail: michfahy@umich.edu Phone: 646-4089

Office: 4007 School of Education *Office hours by arrangement*

Jeff Stanzler (Contact Jeff for all administrative questions)

E-mail: stanz@umich.edu

Phone: 763-5950 Office: 4007 School of Ed.

Office hours: *Tuesdays 2:30-3:30; Fridays 3-4, or by appt.*

Canvas site: *“Morocco Odyssey Mentor Seminar F2017” (all readings will be on Canvas, or will be distributed in class)*

COURSE OVERVIEW

This seminar will provide an opportunity for you to share your knowledge and experience as you seek to engage a diverse network of students in web-based discussions of social and cultural issues. It will also provide a place where you can become acquainted with aspects of the history and culture of Morocco, and the social practices and cultural mores observed by our traveler, Nadia Selim, in her ongoing explorations of Morocco.

Earth Odysseys is a work-in-progress. Each term we ask university students to guide high school and middle school students through a process of reflective thought as they consider (and perhaps reconsider) their own cultural practices and viewpoints through looking at those of others. This will be a challenge for the students (as well it should be!) and supporting the students will require patience and understanding on your part, as well as hard work. It is also a process, like most good teaching, of trial and error. Perhaps the single most advantageous trait for an Odysseys Mentor to possess, or to cultivate, is a willingness to experiment with an idea, and to continually adjust your mentoring based on your interpretation of the work done by the students, and the challenges you think they encountered. We hope that in the process of doing this work, you will further explore your own educational beliefs and broaden your intellectual perspective. It has been said that a significant portion of what is labeled as teaching is actually learning--we welcome you to what we hope will be a challenging and enjoyable learning experience.

READINGS

We will read excerpts (all available on Canvas) from the books listed below. Other readings will be assigned on a week-by-week basis. *All course readings will be distributed via Canvas or in class.*

Berger, John (1992). *Pig Earth: Book One of the Into Their Labours Trilogy*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

Combs-Schilling, Elaine (1989). *Sacred Performances*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Eickelman, Dale (1988). *The Middle East and Central Asia : An Anthropological Approach*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

O'Neill, Zora (2016). *All Strangers Are Kin: Adventures in Arabic and the Arab World*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Porch, Douglass (2005). *Conquest of Morocco*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

READING THE ODYSSEY REPORTS

Once the online project begins on September 18th, two reports are posted each week for discussion. So that you have some background on and context for the reports, we ask that you read each week's reports for class, and that you come prepared with questions about the reports (what doesn't make sense, or what would you like to know more about?) and thoughts about what the richest discussion issues are that are framed or suggested by the reports.

JOURNAL REFLECTIONS

We will ask you to keep an online journal in which you alternately chronicle the process by which you conceive of, research, and put together your Odyssey activity, and share some thoughts about your experiences as a mentor. Your journal reflections should be posted on our Odyssey site, as responses to prompts in the **Teach** section, and the reflections are due the **day before** class at 5 p.m. The prompts are listed on the weekly schedule below for each week that we would like you to do a journal reflection. The first reflection, due on Tuesday, September 19th at 5 p.m., will require that you read

through the Odyssey reports. *To do this, look for a document in the **FILES** section on Canvas entitled “All Nadia’s Morocco Reports” that contains the full text of each of our reports.*

DOMAINS OF INQUIRY PROJECT

For this project, each of you will be assigned a broad area of inquiry relative to Morocco (geography and climate, for example) and we will ask you to give an *in-class presentation* on the subject, informing your classmates about important information in your specific area, but also framing the kinds of broader questions, and ways of seeing, that we and our students might profitably consider. You’re invited to meet with us to help you plan and shape this presentation. *More details on this assignment, including topics and presentation dates, will be provided in class.*

LECTURES, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, ODYSSEY REPORTS & CLASS TOPICS (subject to change):

September 6th

Introduction to the 2017 Morocco Odyssey

What does it mean to be an Odyssey Mentor?; Morocco in its Contexts; Situated Nature of Research; General survey of the History of Morocco, part one.

September 13th

Ethnology of Morocco

Thinking critically about “Traditional” vs. “Modern” societies, and the relation of tribes and states; Exploring the mentoring work.

Supplemental Readings for Today’s Class: “Food for Thought” and Berger (on Canvas). *As you read the introduction of John Berger’s “Pig Earth” for class on Sept. 13th, please come to class prepared to talk about what Berger means when he talks about the peasant’s cyclic view of time, and later when he contrasts a culture of survival with a culture of progress. In addition, knowing what you know about the Odyssey project (in which our American friend, Nadia, shares her accounts of what she saw and experienced while living and working in Morocco), think about why we would assign you this reading for class...what are your conjectures about this?*

Other Assignments due:

Mentoring Assignment #1 (assignment will be distributed in class on 9-6,
due on Canvas on Tuesday, September 12th)

September 20th (Online Project begins on 9-18)

Nadia Selim and her Odyssey; exploring the idea of an Odyssey

Supplemental Readings for Today's Class: Porch and Combs-Schilling (on Canvas). *In preparation for today's class we are asking you to take the unusual approach of reading the two historical accounts in reverse chronological order: please read the excerpt from The Conquest of Morocco by Douglas Porch first, then read the chapter from Elaine Combs-Schilling's Sacred Performances, which addresses a period in Moroccan history that antedates the topic of Porch's account by over 500 years. As you read both accounts, we would like you to think not only about the "historical information" that each author provides, but also the style in which that information is conveyed. Please come to class prepared to discuss your response to the two author's accounts, thinking about the language, tone and points of emphasis that each employs, and any similarities or contrasts you might note. What did you learn about Morocco from the respective readings, if anything, that was surprising or otherwise made you think about the country and its relationship to the Western world in a different way?*

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Meet Nadia; Fitting Your Life into a Suitcase

Other Assignments due:

Mentoring Assignment #2 (to be distributed in class on 9-13, **due on Canvas on Tuesday, September 19th**)

September 27th

Morocco's Cultural Context; Legacy of Colonialism

Guest Speaker (tent.): Mohammad Abarsham

Supplemental Readings for Today's Class: Eickelman (on Canvas)

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Cairo; From Medina to Ville Nouvelle

Other Assignments due:

First Journal Reflection (Due the night before class at 5 p.m. in the TEACH space of the Odyssey website): Which report interests me as a focal point for my project, and why? What do I need to learn more about so that I can create a good activity?

October 4th
Language

Supplemental Reading for Today's Class: O'Neill (on Canvas). In *Nadia's reports and in the O'Neill reading we learn about Moroccan Arabic, known as Darija. We'll read about how language (or dialect) can be associated with status, with identity, and with culture, and we'll talk about all of this in class today, as well as discussing what makes Darija distinctive. Think about whether you've had any experiences where language seemed to be associated with status or social identity.*

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Language in Morocco; Language—Part Deux

Other Assignments due:

Second Journal Reflection (Due the night before class at 5 p.m. in the TEACH space of the Odyssey website): Share some thoughts about the inquiry questions you'll be exploring for your activity project, and about what you want to provide for the teachers to help them get the most out of your project for their students.

October 11th
Education in Context

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Student Protest, Censoring in Class

Other Assignments due:

Third Journal Reflection (Due the night before class at 5 p.m. in the TEACH space of the Odyssey website):

Discuss your understanding of a student posting to which you responded, what you felt was needed by way of a response, and why you thought so. You might talk about what a particular student response evoked for you personally, or about a choice you faced as you considered your response.

October 18th

Self & Society

Guest Speaker (tent.): Nadia Selim

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Trust; An Unexpected Day

October 25th

Private & Public Space

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Parking; 9 Things I Learned
My First Week in Morocco

Other Assignments due today:

Fourth Journal Reflection (Due the night before class at 5 p.m. in the TEACH space of the Odyssey website):

Post your Project Statement, which includes a) your "driving question"-- your succinct framing of the issue you want the kids to think about, and b) a succinct statement connecting your driving question to a specific report and C) your "scope of work," a brief summary of the specific pieces that will make up your completed activity. You will be giving a brief oral presentation about your presentation in class on November 1st.

November 1st

Domestic Life & Family; The Many Meanings of Food

Activity Project Oral Presentations

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Shopping; Couscous Friday

November 8th

Gender Issues

Supplemental Reading for Today's Class: Reading TBA

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Girl in the Classroom;
Another Point of View

November 15th

Islam and Religious Life

Supplemental Reading for Today's Class: Mortimer & Humphreys (on Canvas)

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: Inshallah; Eid Al-Adha

Other Assignments due:

Final Journal Reflection (Due the night before class at 5 p.m. in the TEACH space of the Odyssey website): Looking back at the mentoring work so far, tell us about a learning moment you had. Perhaps it had to do with teaching and mentoring, perhaps it had to do with a cultural issue, or perhaps you learned something about yourself (either as a teacher or as a global citizen)

November 22nd NO CLASS MEETING

November 29th

Popular Culture; Brief In-Class Presentations of your Odyssey Activities

Odyssey Report to be read for today: C'est La Vie; Road to Cueta

Other Assignments due:

Odyssey Activity Project due on Canvas **by class time today.**

December 6th (Final class session)

Reflection on the Morocco Odyssey; Limnality & Identity

Odyssey Reports to be read for today: But where are you from from?

Other Assignments:

Due on Canvas by December 13th: Final Reflection Paper

ODYSSEY ACTIVITY PROJECT

Each of you will create an activity to be used by future Odyssey teachers and students. This activity must be linked to one of the Odyssey reports, and you will be charged with coming up with the activity idea, describing that activity so that a teacher can use it with her students, and assembling all of the other resources (readings, maps, web URLs, worksheets,

discussion questions) that a teacher would need to do your activity, including your description of the activity, how it links to a particular Odyssey report, and what the larger idea(s) are that your activity is designed to frame for the students. This larger idea will be your driving question(s)--what do you most want the students to be thinking about or otherwise exploring as a consequence of doing your activity. We will be asking you to write a series of entries in your online journal that take you through the various steps of pulling your project together, and we will also discuss the project in class.

Your finished activity is due by class time on November 29th (on Canvas) and should include the following elements:

- 1) An introductory (one-page) essay for the teachers and students that includes your driving question, how you derived it, why you feel it is important, and how you are connecting all of this to your activity.
- 2) Which report is your project linked to, how and why?
e.g. "Trust": Nadia's report illustrated how people could be much more actively engaged in the affairs of others than I was accustomed to. I was interested in how social pressures impact our ability or our willingness to gage with other people and even to cross certain social barriers to offer help. I decided to create an activity in students would be asked to consider look at situations, consider whether or not they would intervene in the situation, and then to write about their decision..."
- 3) Detailed description of the activity
A step-by step sequence of what will happen, from preparation to conclusion. This should include descriptions of discussions necessary before the activity, orientation to the activity, directions for both teacher and students, description of what will take place, questions you want the students to consider, possible connections to the student's lives, and debriefing/post-activity discussion topics and prompts.
- 4) "What does a teacher need?"
This should include actual materials needed, discussion questions, a list of activity prompts a teacher could use, or debriefing questions. It should also include the readings or resources you would want to the kids to read (with annotated descriptions).
- 5) Complete list of references used.

In summary, we want you to give the teacher a finished activity including

everything you think s/he will need to actually conduct your activity in their classroom. Your work will then become a part of our Odyssey teacher resources.

FINAL REFLECTION

In an essay of **at least** 6 pages in length, double-spaced (not including the illustrations of your posting or those of the students), please answer the questions below. *Be careful both to make assertions and to support them...what led you to reach the conclusions you reached, or to ask the questions that linger in your mind?*

We'll discuss your thoughts about these questions at our final class meeting on December 6th. The essay, to be handed in on our Canvas site, is due by Wednesday, December 13th.

A) Select two postings made by the same student over the course of the Odyssey that indicate progress made by the student in question. Talk about what you see in the two posts, identifying their strengths and their shortcomings (if applicable), and discuss how the second post indicates progress made by the student. Be specific in breaking down the qualities of the posts and describing the measure(s) of progress you're employing. Please include the text of the actual postings.

B) Please walk us through a "second look" at an interaction that you had earlier in the semester. Start by choosing an interaction you had with a student sometime during the first 2-3 weeks of mentoring. Show us the student work to which you were responding, and the response that you made. Tell us about the thinking that informed the posting you wrote and then, based on what you've learned from the ensuing weeks of mentoring, or perhaps based on your seeing different kinds of opportunities, we'd like for you to *craft and write out* a new response to the same student posting. In addition to showing us this new response, please explain the thinking that went into your new posting, and tell us what it demonstrates about what you've learned about yourself, your students, or about doing the mentoring work.

C) Discuss some of what you've discovered about yourself as a teacher and learner from your Odyssey experience as you engaged in and made sense of the mentoring work. Draw from your experience at supporting the intellectual work of younger people and challenging them to think more deeply, as well as your engagement with the broad set of cultural issues evoked by the reports and discussions. Be sure to illustrate your insights by excerpting particular interactions from the Odyssey that support and illustrate your points. Please also don't be shy about speaking of lingering

challenges and uncertainties—you've tackled some challenging issues in your mentoring, and you don't need to pretend that you have everything figured out.

WEB RESOURCES

We have some good information resources here—there are more listed on the Odyssey website, and we'll share others in class:

National Geographic's "Morocco" website:

<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/countries/morocco-guide/>

Portland State University's Middle East Teaching Tools "Morocco" page:

<http://www.middleeastpdx.org/resources/countries/morocco/>

Among the Berbers (National Geographic)

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0501/feature4/index.html>

Looklex Encyclopedia—Morocco (*follow Travel Guides to Morocco, then Tetuoan*): <http://looklex.com/e.o/morocco.htm>

COURSE GRADING

Virtually every mentor in the history of Earth Odysseys chose this class because of their enthusiasm for helping kids to learn about more about their world, to sharpen their thinking, and to feel more confident in their writing and in articulating their point-of-view. As a consequence of this intrinsic motivation, most mentors do top quality work. Still, you should know the criteria upon which your grade will be decided:

- 1) Diligence and the quality of thought as shown by your participation in, and preparation for seminar.
- 2) Staying current with course readings, and all written assignments.
- 3) The quality of your research paper and other class assignments.
- 4) Most Importantly...the quality and frequency of your on-line interactions with the students, and your demonstrated engagement with doing this mentoring work, and with your reflection on this work.

You will have a key role in supporting the students as they seek to engage with ideas and to conduct a rich and respectful discourse. Your mentoring

work constitutes the most important aspect of the course. The general rule is that you're expected to spend 5 hours per week outside of class doing your online work (or other out-of-class assignments), and to be consistent in responding to the students, as well as completing reading and other course assignments. **We expect each of you to make an average of at least ten substantive postings per week for each of the ten weeks** of online discussions.

Grades will be determined based on the following:

- Quality and consistency of online mentoring work (25%)
- Seminar participation & attendance, engagement with readings, in-class presentations (20%)
- Odyssey activity project (20%)
- Final reflection (20%)
- Journal writing (15%)

Grade Scale

A	4.0	95 - 100
A-	3.7	90 - 94
B+	3.3	86 - 89
B	3.0	82 - 85
B-	2.7	78 - 81
C+	2.3	74 - 77
C	2.0	70 - 73
C-	1.7	67 - 69
D	1.0	60 - 66
F	0.0	0 - 59