Interdisciplinary Global Health Field Course: Maternal and Infant Health in Morocco, Women’s Rights and Family in Islam
Course Outline, Spring 2016

History/Anthropology/Religious Studies 3GH3 (3 credits)
Arabic 3MA3 (3 credits)
BHSC students can receive BHSC credits (3,6, up to 15 as ELE experience)

Course Instructor:
Dr. Ellen J. Amster
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McMaster course website: http://fhs.mcmaster.ca/morocco-maternal-health/index.html#

Student blog: www.maternalandinfanthealth.wordpress.com

Course Overview:
This global health field course is a rigorous interdisciplinary academic program that introduces students to the fundamentals of public health, global health, Arabic, Moroccan history, medical anthropology, and Islamic theology. It is a context-based approach to the study of global health and the determinants of health.

Before departure, students will receive an intensive introduction to public health, the Arabic alphabet, and maternal and infant health.

The rest of the course (4 weeks) will be in Morocco. In Morocco, students will have home-stays in Rabat with individual Moroccan families.

For the first 3 weeks in Morocco, students will take an intensive colloquial Arabic language course in the mornings, 3 hours per day, at AMIDEAST, an American non-profit organization promoting U.S. study in the Middle East since 1951. This linguistic component (3 credits) will be complemented by a health course (3 credits), that will commence in the afternoon with lectures and site visits in Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakesh, and Fez (2-4 hours) and on weekends.

The last week of the course will be devoted to a hands-on fieldwork experience in the remote rural village cluster of Zawiya Ahansal in the High Atlas Mountains.

This interdisciplinary global health program introduces students to maternal and infant health in the third world and considers a range of social, religious, economic, epidemiological, technological, legal and family issues that impact birth, pregnancy, motherhood and the health of newborns and children in the African Islamic country of Morocco.

The course has three components:
--An introduction to principles of public and global health (Canada, 4 days)
An urban health section (Morocco, 3 weeks)

A rural health section (Morocco, 1 week).

After return, a final research paper is due on July 10.

In urban Rabat and Casablanca, students will visit hospitals, national laboratories and hear lectures about TB and HIV morbidity and prevention from epidemiologists the National School of Public Health, legal activists in women’s rights NGOs, learn about sub-Saharan migration and asylum-seekers in North Africa, visit feminist, Islamic and international NGOs that care for women and children, and see the work of the oldest AIDS NGO in the Middle East. The focus is on the determinants of health in the Moroccan context.

In the remote rural area of Zawiya Ahansal, students will live with local families and have hands-on experience with issues of community health, (clean water, food preparation, environmental management, access to public health facilities), and an introduction to health and midwifery in Zawiya Ahansal, a remote village cluster in the High Atlas Mountains.

Two hours from the nearest clinic (by land rover) and supplied only with primary school education by the state, the 15,000 people of Zawiya Ahansal have created SMNID, an NGO that works with an American NGO, the Atlas Cultural Foundation, a project of Adirondack Sustainable Communities, Inc., a registered 501(c)3 organization.

The ACF approaches health, education, food and clean water as interrelated needs and collaborates with local, international and government partners for sustainable development projects. Students will develop technical skills in community education and rural health and create (collectively) a community health needs assessment through qualitative interviews. They will also design a Community Health Day.

Arabic instruction will be classroom instruction by the professors of AMIDEAST. Otherwise, classroom instruction will be by Dr. Amster and a series of guest lecturers from the National School of Public Health in Morocco, the Moroccan Health Service, Muhammad V University, Global Rights, Al-Akhawayn University and the directors of several health and feminist NGO’s.

Ellen Amster is the Hannah Chair in the History of Medicine in the Faculty of Health Sciences and a professor in the Department of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics and in the Department of History. She has fifteen years of experience in Morocco for medical fieldwork, Arabic study, and medical research. In 1999 she served as a simultaneous Arabic-English-French translator for ORBIS, an ocular surgery mission in Fez. She is a founding member of GNR-MENA, an international organization for the prevention of AIDS in North Africa and the Middle East.

Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives:

Students will learn three areas of health in the Morocco urban component (3 weeks):

- principles of a public health system and the role of NGOs in health provision
- concepts of disease and disability
**Determinants of Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health in Morocco**

This component addresses the array of social and environmental factors that affect women’s reproductive health and infant and child health.

**For example,** we consider social influences on infant health, like the state’s official Islamic legal interpretations of sex out of wedlock as zina (adultery), and adoption (plain adoption is not allowed, only kafala, a kind of permanent foster-care). Unwed motherhood is thus criminalized and clandestine adoption is rendered difficult, which together increase the prevalence of child abandonment. Abandoned infants are collected by the police and deposited in the salles des abandonnés (rooms of abandoned children) in regional hospitals, where 10% die each month from failure to thrive syndrome. We will visit Solidarité feminine, an NGO directed by Aicha Channa that teaches job skills to unwed mothers to prevent abandonment. We explore the interconnections of health, law, government and women’s status.

In the remote rural component (1 week), students will focus on **community health**, the challenges of receiving maternal and infant care with limited state support structure, and how local people integrate biomedicine to traditional healing.

Students will also interview local NGO leaders about challenges and concerns, and interview traditional midwives (qablat) about birth.

**The rural component will have a greater focus on the environmental determinants of health.** Students will study:

- **Water** sources, water usage, conduct water quality testing in homes and rivers, and assist local women in gathering water.
- **Housing** and traditional architecture.
- **Garbage** and waste disposal.
- **Cultural birth practices** and traditional healing.
- **Nutrition**, especially for infants, pregnant women, and nursing mothers.
- **Education** and the challenges of girls’ education especially.

Students will help identify health needs in the community and participate in collaborative **health education**. Students will hike out to remote villages and bivouac. They will have the opportunity to help plan a **Community Health Day** and to tutor local children in English.

Students will receive intensive instruction in **Moroccan Colloquial Arabic** (Moroccan Arabic I) at AMIDEAST, a program of Arabic learning used for U.S. Peace Corps volunteers and Fulbright scholars to Morocco.

Arabic learning will be reinforced through homestays with Moroccan families. The Arabic course is 3 credits and 43 contact hours, 3 hours per day.

**By the end of the course,** students are able to **ask essential questions and understand responses**, express basic facts and opinions in **simple sentences**, and engage in **basic conversations** in Moroccan Arabic with native speakers. The 3 credits transfer to McMaster as **Arabic 3MA3**.

Students will gain basic knowledge in the **Islamic religion** and social manifestations of Islamic religious life. The course touches themes in **medical anthropology**.
We will visit saint shrines famous for curing specific ailments, discuss midwifery with a traditional midwife, and have a guided tour of saint shrines in Fez.

In Zawiya Ahansal, we will visit the shrine of Sidi Ahansal, where pilgrims ask the saint for guidance and healing.

Finally, students will have the unique experience of living daily life in a Moroccan family, enjoying meals together, and participating in the rhythm of daily life. Learning the customs and culture of Morocco and respecting Islamic cultural norms are valuable assets for future health care providers and global citizens.

**Required Texts:**

**COURSEPACK:**
A coursepack of articles is required and will be provided by AMIDEAST for us in Morocco. For each class, you must bring assigned readings and be prepared for discussion.

**BOOKS:**

The following books are required and available for purchase at the McMaster Campus Store. You may also purchase them used or on-line.


- M. Sharma and A. Atria, *Essentials of International Health*. Jones and Bartlett: Sudbury, MA.

**Recommended texts (not required):**


**Grading and Assignments**

Undergraduate student performance will be evaluated through
--an exam the first week, covering public health introduction
--participation in activities
--grades from Arabic study
--one-page essays collected as a Moroccan analytic journal (to be handed in and graded at the end of the course) and electronic blogging
--a community health needs assessment
--a public presentation of research
--a final 5-10 page research paper, due at the end of the course.
This paper will be on a topic formulated by the student and accepted by the professor. In Morocco, each student will receive 6 hours of instruction per day on average (3 hours Arabic, 3 hours lecture/site visit in Rabat, 6 hours in Zawiya Ahansal). Weekends will be devoted to site visits, travel and cultural experiences/activities.

Attendance and participation 25%
(includes analytic journal, blogging)
Pre-departure exam week 1 20%
Community Health Needs assessment 15%
Public presentation of research 10%
Final research paper 30%

Class policies

*The final paper must be word-processed, spell-checked and free of problems in mechanics.* The analytic journal can be handwritten. The final essay must be in 12 point font, double-spaced with 1 inch margins. **No papers can be accepted over email.** All papers must be submitted as hard copy (paper copy).

*Plagiarism*, which is submitting someone else’s work as your own or copying verbatim from a book or other source and presenting it as your own, will result in an automatic F.

*For the format of your final paper, consult the guidelines provided on the course website. For any questions, consult The Chicago Manual of Style.*

*Everyone must participate actively in class. This means you must read the material on the day it is due, bring the reading with you to class, and come prepared for class discussion with questions.*

*Disabilities.* If you need special accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact us as soon as possible.

*Religious observance.* Students will be allowed to complete examinations or other requirements that are missed because of religious observance. Please contact us before you miss class/an assignment to inform us of the circumstances.

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Travel Itinerary and Program of Study

*Introduction to Public Health and Morocco: McMaster (Canada)*

Tuesday, May 3  **Introduction to Public Health**

  **Morning lecture: Overview and Principles of Public Health**
Reading due: S and A, Chapters 1 and 2.

**Afternoon lecture:** Understanding Public Health  
(Disease, Disability, and Death, Social and Environmental Determinants of Health, Health and Disease Trends, Population transitions (esp. epidemiological transition).

Reading due: S and A, Chapters 4, 5, 7.

**Wednesday, May 4**  
**Introduction to Global Health/Women and Global Health**

**Morning lecture:** Introduction to Global Health  
(Principles of Global Health, Global Burden of Disease, Disease Trends, Culture and Health, World Health Systems and International Agencies).

Reading due: S and A, Chapters 3, 6, 10, 11

**Afternoon lecture:** Global Health and Women  

Reading due: S and A, Chapter 12

**Thursday, May 5**  
**Introduction to Maternal and Infant Health, Intro to Arabic**

**Morning lecture:** Introduction to Maternal and Infant Health  
(Women’s Health, Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Health, Gender-Based Violence, Conflict, Infant and Young Child Health).

Reading due: S and A, Chapter 8 and 9.

**Afternoon discussion/lecture:** Introduction to Arabic alphabet

Reading due: No reading due.

**Friday, May 6**  
**Introduction to Islam and Moroccan Healing Narratives**

**Morning lecture:** Moroccan Healing Narratives  
(Patient-based medicine, alternate conceptions of disease, therapy,

**Morning Lecture: Islam: A Basic Introduction**

Reading due: No reading due.

**Afternoon lecture: Traditional Medicine in Morocco**
(Galenic medicine, Islamic saint visitation, *Qur’an* as medicine).

No reading due.

**Urban Health in Morocco: Rabat and Casablanca**

Saturday, May 7  **Flight to Casablanca** (Depart Toronto Pearson Airport, see Group Flight Itinerary).

Sunday, May 8  **Arrive Casablanca airport**, take van to Rabat, arrive
Late afternoon
Settle into Hotel Oum Lil
Dinner at restaurant

Monday, May 9  **Orientation at AMIDEAST in Rabat**
9:00 AM, Depart Hotel for AMIDEAST with baggage
10:00-12:00 PM  Briefing and Orientation Session
*Welcome by AMIDEAST Morocco country director*  
*Safety and security briefing*
*Distribute written materials, emergency phone numbers, host family information*  
*Host family orientation*  
*Distribute cell phones*
12:00 PM    Lunch at AMIDEAST
2:00 PM    Meet homestay families and depart to homes
DINNER WITH HOMESTAY FAMILIES

Tuesday, May 10  **A History of Public Health in Morocco**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Lunch at home with families
Afternoon class at AMIDEAST (3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.)

Afternoon lecture: A History of Public Health and Disease in Morocco, 1900-1970
(Pre-colonial Morocco, French Colonial Health Service: epidemiology, segregated urban planning, water distribution and access, Muslim maternal and infant health, Muslim demography and population growth, the “colonial” epidemiological transition (malaria, typhus, TB), colonial welfare.)

Wednesday, May 11  Moroccan Health Care System and Epidemiology

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Lunch at home with families

Afternoon Class at AMIDEAST, 2:30pm-5:00 PM

Guest lecture: Dr. Mohammed AKRIM, “Tuberculosis in Morocco and Its Co-Morbidity with HIV/AIDS”

Reading due: Jamila Bargach, Orphans of Islam, Chapter 1 (p. 23-44)

Assignment in journal, one page:

Summarize Dr. Akrim’s lecture. What are the characteristics of tuberculosis infection and policies for prevention in Morocco? How does the tuberculosis epidemic complicate maternal and infant health outcomes?

Thursday, May 12  ONEP and the Water Supply in Morocco

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

Lunch at Site visit to ONEP, Office National de l’Eau Potable

12:00 PM, Bus departs AMIDEAST for ONEP Bou Regreg water treatment plant

12:30-1:30 PM, Lunch at ONEP
1:30-5 PM, Presentation and field trip to ONEP Barrage/Potable water treatment plant

Assignment in journal, one page:

What are the special challenges to the provision of potable water in Morocco, for both the cities and the surrounding rural areas?


Friday, May 13

Violence Against Women and the Mudawwana

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Lunch at home with families

Afternoon class at AMIDEAST (2:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.)

Guest Lecture Stephanie Bordat, Regional Director of MRA, “Violence Against Women: Unwed Mothers, Marital rape, Criminal Codes and the Mudawanna.”


Due in class: One-page essay in response to the question:
What social factors influence maternal health, for married and unmarried women?

Saturday, May 14

Rest Day, Historical Tour of Rabat

Morning: Dr. Amster will give us an optional historical tour of Rabat, from the Oudayas fort neighborhood and its picturesque café to the king’s palace, the traditional arts museum, the old madina (Arab city) and Rabat’s French colonial past.

Bus departs from AMIDEAST at 9 am

Students are free for shopping and sightseeing.

Assignment in journal, one page: Compare your house in the U.S. and the house of your host family in Morocco. What is similar and what is different? Consider the use of space in the home, family dynamics, and food.
Sunday, May 15  
Cultural activities organized by AMIDEAST (Beach)

Monday, May 16  
Migration, Refugees and Health in Morocco

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Lunch

Afternoon class at AMIDEAST (3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.)

Guest Lecture Professor Khadija Al Madmad, “Migration, Refugees and Health in Morocco, Women’s link worldwide”
Université Ain Chock, UNESCO Chair of Migration
3:00-5:00 p.m.

Reading due: Bargach, Orphans, Chapter 3.

Tuesday, May 17  
Non-Governmental Organizations and AIDS

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Lunch at home with families (or in nearby restaurant—note that site visit today, van departs at 2 pm)

Afternoon site visit, Association de Lutte Contre le SIDA

Depart from AMIDEAST at 2:00 pm with van.

The association works in concert with the NIH and is the first North African AIDS prevention NGO. We will discuss public awareness campaigns, youth outreach, national campaigns, HIV testing, needle exchange, sex workers, collaborations with France and WHO.

Guest Lecture: Dr. Fatiha Ghoufrani, “AIDS Prevention and the ALCS in Morocco”

Return by 5:30 PM

Assignment in journal, one page: What are unique challenges to AIDS public education and outreach in Morocco?

Reading: Jamila Bargach, Chapter 4
Wednesday, May 18  **NGOs and the Politics of Development—Infants. Discussion**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.  
Lunch

**Afternoon class at AMIDEAST** (3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.)

Class Discussion of Jamila Bargach, *Orphans of Islam* up to now

**Reading due:** Bargach, *Orphans of Islam*, Chapter 7 and previous chapters, 1-5.

**Assignment in journal, one page:** What ethical and health-outcome ambiguities are raised by the “NGO-ification” of care for abandoned infants?

Thursday, May 19  **NGOs and the Politics of Development--Mothers**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-11:00 A.M.

**Afternoon site visit: La Solidarité Feminine, Casablanca**

11:00 AM-12:30 PM, Van will take us to Casablanca  
12:30 PM  Lunch at Solidarité Feminine

We will meet Aicha Channa, founder of La Solidarité Feminine, a secular feminist NGO that gives shelter to unwed mothers and their babies and job training to mothers, to prevent abandonment.

Tour the NGO, 2:00-4:00 PM

Return to Rabat by 6:00 PM

Dinner at home with families.

**Reading due:**

Review Bargach, Chapter 7. (refresh your memory)  

Friday, May 20  **Women’s Status in Morocco and Islamic Law**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.  
Lunch.

**Pre-trip briefing session, AMIDEAST 2:30**
Afternoon class at AMIDEAST 3:00PM-5:30PM:

Guest Lecture Stephanie Bordat, Director of MRA, “Islamic Law, Unwed Motherhood in Morocco and Legal Issues in Adoption”

Due in class: One-page essay in response to the questions:
--What is the difference between Moroccan and American legal approaches to adoption? (from Bargach readings)
--How does it affect health outcomes for infants?
**Come ready to discuss with Dr. Bordat and ask questions.

Reading due: Review Bargach Chapters 2,3,4

Traditional Urbanism and Islam in Fez: Sufism as a Form of Healing

Saturday, May 21  Travel to Fez, Introduction to Sufism

Morning we meet at 8:00 AM and travel by van to the hotel in Fez, arrive 11:00 AM.
Check into Hotel Batha
Lunch at restaurant
1:30 Walking tour of Fez


Description of Fez: The city of Fez, the historic capital of Morocco before the colonial period (1912-1956) contains in microcosm much of pre-colonial Moroccan history: the principal Moroccan dynasties, the development of Islamic learning, migration of Jews and Arabs from Islamic Spain, and urbanization of the Berbers. The history of Fez is literally reflected in the city’s topography—“saints” (awliya’) are buried in the mosques, shrines and streets of the city.

In this weekend module of the course, we examine the relationship between Islam, sainthood, Sufi shrine spaces, history and traditional Moroccan healing practice.

Afternoon (2:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.): Walking tour from Tala’aa Kabira, visiting madrasas, Mawlay Idris mosque, tanneries, guilds, Merinid tombs, Bu Inania Madrasa.
**Reading due:**
Ellen Amster, “Healing the Body, Healing the Umma: Sufi Saints and God’s Law in a Corporeal City of Virtue” *(coursepack).*  

Titus Burckhardt, *An Introduction to Sufism*, p. 9-34 *(coursepack).*  

Dinner at Riad or Restaurant, Sleep hotel.

**Sunday, May 22**

**The History of Fez: Islamic Urbanism**

Breakfast in hotel (7:30-8:30 AM), check out of hotel, put luggage in van.

9:00 A.M.-12:00 PM We meet Sayyid El Nahid, Professor of Al-Akhawayn University.

He will give us a guided tour of Fez, we will consider its urban development and the relationship to population growth, health, water distribution, industry, resource distribution, religion, Islamic architecture and observance.

Lunch 12:00-1:30 PM. Lunch in restaurant.

2:00 PM-4:00 PM Tour continues.

4:00 PM Depart for Rabat.

5:00 PM Visit to Volubilis, Roman ruins

7:30 PM Return to home-stays

**Reading due:**

Selections from *Salwat al-Anfas* (al-Kattani), translated by Ellen Amster, *(coursepack).*

**Assignment in journal, one page:** How does Sufi Islamic belief and thought find reflection in the physical space and healing practices of Morocco? Give at least 3 specific examples in your answer.

**Modernity and Health in Morocco: Urbanization, Globalization, Nutrition, Work**

**Monday, May 23**

**Change and Women’s History in Morocco**
No Class Meetings today (rest time).

Lunch at home with families.

**Reading due:**


**Assignment in journal, 1 page:** Conversation about women. Sometime today, ask a Moroccan (can be anyone, man or woman) a question about women and society. It can be anything, like What is the role of women in Islam? Should women wear the veil? Should women hold public office? What do you think of feminism? Has the position of women improved in the last 20 years?

Write at least one page about your conversation. What were your reactions? Where did you agree and disagree?

**Tuesday, May 24**

**Birth and the Galenic Medical Tradition in Morocco**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.  
Lunch

**Afternoon class at AMIDEAST** (3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.)  
Lecture Amster, “Galenism and Birth--The Four Humors (Blood, Yellow Bile, Black Bile, Phlegm).”

**Reading due:**

Carla Makhlouf Obermeyer, “Pluralism and Pragmatism: Knowledge and Practice of Birth in Morocco” *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, (180-201) (coursepack).  


Wednesday, May 25  **Colonial Legacies and Determinants of Health: Shantytowns, Tuberculosis, Malnutrition**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.

**Site visit: Shantytowns and Habous quarter in Casablanca. Departure 12:00 PM from AMIDEAST.**

Box lunch on the bus, we will arrive at 2:00 PM

2:00-4:00 PM, Architectural visit of Casablanca with Casa Memoire.

We will discuss the development of modern urbanism in Morocco, the current population explosion, the relationship of poor urban planning to tuberculosis, the industrial development in Morocco, poor nutrition, and the efforts by the French protectorate state to address these “medico-social” problems. We will visit these colonial experiments through the urban landscape of Rabat and Casablanca, in shantytowns, former shantytowns, the unique habous quarter of Casablanca, and current Moroccan solutions in urban areas. We will pay special attention to the problem of water.

Return by 6:00 PM, Dinner with homestay family.

**Reading due:**

Thursday, May 26  **The Berbers, from Rural Tribes to Urban Elites**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M. Lunch at home with families.

SITE VISIT to Berber Museum and Cultural Center, Bus leaves AMIDEAST at 2:00 PM.

**Afternoon class at Berber Museum** (3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.)

Guest lecture, “Scratch a Moroccan, Find a Berber. Berber History and Urbanization in Morocco.”

This lecture will discuss the language, culture and rural origins of the Berber population in Morocco. Consider different architectural styles, Berber village life, language and gender
relations, saint visitation and local religion, and the migration of labor to big cities like Rabat.

**Reading due:**

Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress, *The Berbers*, p. 80-87, 234-270 (*coursepack*).

Waterbury, John, "Tribalism, Trade and Politics: the Transformation of the Swasa of Morocco," in *Arabs and Berbers* (*coursepack*).

**Assignment in journal, 1 page:**
Ask your host family:
What words in colloquial Moroccan Arabic (*darija*) are Berber? Find at least one Berber television program and describe it.
Is your host family Arab or Berber? If they are Berber, ask where they came from and when they came to Rabat.

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**Friday, May 27**

**The U.S. in Morocco, the Peace Corps and USAID**

Morning: Arabic instruction at AMIDEAST, 9:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Lunch.

**AMIDEAST LECTURE: U.S. Peace Corps, 2:30-3:30 PM**

We will hear from the U.S. Peace Corps in Morocco Rabat office for an overview/lecture about maternal and infant health programs. Peace Corps volunteers will describe their work and specific challenges.
M’hamed El Kadi and a US Peace Corps Volunteer
30 minute break

**AMIDEAST Lecture: “USAID in Morocco” 4:00 PM-5:30 PM**

A representative from USAID will speak to us about the challenges of development work and the evolution of US policy in the region.

**Reading due:** No reading due.

**Assignment in journal, 1 page:**
What are advantages and disadvantages to the current structure of the US Peace Corps program for maternal and infant health?

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**Saturday, May 28**

**Travel to Zawiya Ahansal via Beni Mellal**
This will be an all-day travel, because Zawiya Ahansal is very far from Rabat. We will take the van to Beni Mellal, leave around 9:00 AM and arrive around 3:00 PM, stopping on the road for lunch.

3:00 PM Arrive Beni Mellal, check into hotel.

Lecture “Berbers in the High Atlas” (refresher)

Dinner at restaurant (In Hotel Ouzoud)

Sleep Beni Mellal

**Reading:** Titus Burckhardt, “An Introduction to Sufism.”

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**Sunday, May 29**

**Introduction and Arrival to Zawiya Ahansal**

8:00 AM Breakfast, check out of hotel

9:00 AM We will be met by Land Rovers in Beni Mellal that will take us to Zawiya Ahansal. There are no good roads or railways that go to this remote area, so we will travel by Land Rover.

Lunch on the road.

2:00 PM Arrive Zawiya Ahansal. Students will live in the house of the sheikh, the religious leader of Zawiya Ahansal, and receive all meals and bottled water. Settle in to accommodations.

Afternoon: Introduction to Zawiya Ahansal:

Orientation to “life in Zawiya Ahansal” and group rules (including appropriate handling of empty water bottles). (Cloe Erickson, founder of the Atlas Cultural Foundation).

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Environment (dogs, snakes, scorpions).

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Hygiene precautions, diarrhea, dehydration

Visit Association SMNID of Agouddim, Youssef Oulcadi, SMNID president, will discuss current projects of SMNID. Students will interview.

Visit shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal and historic saints’ houses where pilgrims stayed for guidance.
Dinner

Evening discussion: The sheikh will tell us about religious life in Zawiya and the Sufi tradition. We will examine different forms of local sacred architecture and practice.

**Assignment for journal, 1 page:** What are the principal differences you observe between life in urban Rabat and rural Berber Zawiya Ahansal?

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**Monday, May 30**

**Exploring Community Life and Community Services—WATER**

Breakfast

Ellen: Introduction to fieldwork project and methods. Discussion of Community Health Needs Assessment project, water sampling and testing, field observations.

Government Services and Water Provision in Agoudim

--Cloe will give tour of school, post office, local government offices, discuss local services and politics.
--Visit Agoudim water sources to understand local water system in preparation for discussion with Sheikh. River spring, new government water cistern, microhydro system.
--Discuss MSU group water sampling finding.

Lunch at Sheikh’s house (with discussion)

Afternoon: Discussion of Class readings (Ellen).

**Hike to Village of Amezray**

Tour of Amezray/Oufila

--Visit traditional healer’s home in Amezray, student interviews.
--Visit village water sources, SMNID and ACF have provided the village of Amezray with a number of communal spigots for water.
--Take water samples from river, homes.

Tour of local architecture in Villages of Amezray/Agoudim
Cloe will discuss the traditional granaries and their restoration in the villages, health conditions in local homes (burning of organic fuels, wood, stoves in winter).

Dinner and discussion with sheikh.

**Reading due:**


**Assignment for journal, 1 page:** Compare Gellner and Cornell’s arguments about Islamic belief and practice in Berber areas. How do they differ, and do you find either of them applicable to your experiences in Zawiya Ahansal?

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**Tuesday, May 31**

**Remote Villages and Community Health**

Breakfast

**Morning:** Hike to Tamdaroute (2.5-3 hours)
The villages of Taghia and Tamdaroute are farther from state services than Amezray. Currently, neither village has a paved road, a clinic, or running water piped in—women must walk to procure water as well as wood for cooking. In this bivouac/excursion, we will consider how these factors impact health and health services.

Bivouac (camping) at Taghia-Tamdaroute.

Lunch

**Afternoon:** Creating Community Health Awareness Days

We will meet with traditional birth attendants and a local women’s association. Cloe will introduce students to the ACF program for Community Health Days, public hygiene education for and by local women. Students will use their knowledge to help design a
next Community Health Day program for her women’s association.

Dinner

**Evening:** Ellen will discuss the role of history/religion in current disparities between villages. Youssef will discuss Association efforts being made to address disparities, as well as issues of education and gender and association efforts to expand higher education to girls.

**Due, one page:** Compare and contrast life in “connected villages” of Agodin and Amezray with the remote villages of Taghia and Tighanimin.

Wednesday, June 1  **Women’s Education, Gender, and Health Outcomes**

Breakfast and breakdown of camp.

Interview with Mariam and board members of women’s association. Students will interview Mariam about local water, nutritional, and health care needs, and beliefs and practices surrounding childbirth.

10:30 a.m.-1:00 pm, Hike back to Agoudim

Lunch

2:00-4:00 PM, Visit Agoudim with Cloe

**Visit to weekly Suq (market).**
Discuss impact of emerging economy and relative affluence on consumption patterns (fruits/veg), as well as consumption of pre-packed goods in the absence of waste disposal and recycling.

**GENDER AND WATER, discussion:**
The traditional division of labor in Berber villages makes women and girls responsible for fetching water, which takes 3-5 hours per day. The Village of Amezray lies near the region’s springs, which provide potable water to residents. We will discuss the social changes brought by the ACF’s 5km of pipe laid to bring water to the village.
Dinner

Evening: The Sheikh will discuss the process of developing a piped water system in villages of Agodin and Amezray, the changes he has witnessed since its development, and the challenges of developing a similar system in the remote villages of Taghanimin and Taghia.

Assignment for journal, 1 page: Describe “determinants of health” for women and infants that you have observed in this region.

Thursday, June 2

**Understanding Community Health**

Morning: Divided Group Activities

Together: Visit tutoring program in Amezray, interview Ismail Fakak, director.

Guides (Divided groups): Interview local residents about life in village, family life and roles, community services, health issues, etc.

Guides (Divided groups): Collect wood and water with local women.

Lunch

Afternoon: Developing a Community Health Needs Assessment Tool

Group discussion: Community Health Needs Assessment Q and A with Cloe Discussing water quality Discussing community observations

Evening: Farewell feast at the sheikh’s house, local music, goat dinner, dancing.

Friday, June 3

**Travel to Marrakesh, Gateway to the Sahara**

Morning: We will return by Land Rover to Marrakesh. Check into Hotel Assia in Marrakesh.
Depart 8:00 AM

Lunch on the road.

Visit to the Cascades d’Ouzoud, the famous waterfalls. Discussion of tourism (and sex tourism) in Morocco.

Arrive 3:00 PM or so to Hotel Assia, Check in.


**Site visit:** *Jma’ al-Fna, Public Space and Entertainment*

Jma al-Fna (“The Gathering-Place of the Dead”) was a public square where traders from West Africa and Northern Morocco came to be entertained after the journey to the market. Still today the square is a place where snake charmers, story tellers, acrobats, fortune tellers, and others entertain the crowds. Of interest to us are the many traditional healers and dentists who ply their trade in the square, and the “fortune tellers” who write amulets for healing.

Dinner at Jma’ al-Fna, 7:00 PM or so.

Evening free.

Sleep at hotel.

**Saturday, June 4**

**Visit Marrakesh/Travel to Casablanca**

Morning: Breakfast, Check out of hotel Assia.

**Morning site visits:** We will visit the Sa’adian tombs and discuss the creation of Marrakech by the Sa’adiyyan dynasty as a rival imperial capital to Fez.

We will visit the Bahia Palace, created by Bu Ahmad, a vizir of the Moroccan sultan in the late 19th century—an example of adoption of European cultural forms by Moroccan elites.

We will visit a “modern” Moroccan traditional medicine store, where traditional herbs, practices, and cosmetics have been repackaged for a “modern” audience.
We will visit the Majorelle Gardens, created in the colonial period and maintained with support by Algerian-born fashion designer Yves Saint-Laurent.

Lunch in Marrakesh.

Afternoon drive to Casablanca, Dinner at hotel.

Check into Hotel Atlas near airport.

Sunday, June 5

**Return to Toronto**

Flight from Casablanca to Toronto—VERY EARLY FLIGHT,

You will wish to arrange your own transportation from the Toronto Pearson airport to your home.

June 15

**Public presentation of research**
Visit the course website for resources/articles to help you prepare your presentation:

[www.maternalandinfanthealth.wordpress.com](http://www.maternalandinfanthealth.wordpress.com)

*You will receive an email with guidelines for the presentation and for the final essay.  
*If you have a power-point presentation, be sure to bring it on a flash drive rather than emailing it to yourself—this is important.  
**Bring a flash drive rather than emailing it to yourself.**

July 10

**Final research essays due**

**Special Notes**

Student housing will be housed in individual host families (2 students per family), except when students and professors are traveling. In this case, the housing will be in hotels. All students and the professor will have a Moroccan cell phone at all times provided by AMIDEAST, for any problems that may arise.

Morocco will be difficult for students with disabilities. Some rural and remote homes do not have standard toilets but often have “Turkish style” toilets, which are a hole in the ground with pads for the feet. Buses and other forms of public transportation are not
equipped for wheelchairs, and are often very overcrowded. Rabat has paved streets and relatively modern conveniences, but Zawiya Ahansal is very rustic living and will prove challenging for students with special needs.

Canadian students do not need a special visa for Morocco but they will require a valid passport. Vaccinations are also recommended for Hepatitis A B and C, as well as typhoid. If the tetanus booster shot is not current, the CDC recommends that it be refreshed. For a more current list of recommended vaccinations, contact the CDC directly.

Morocco is very hot in summertime, so light cotton clothing that covers the skin is recommended, as well as “running clothing” or camping clothing that covers the skin and removes moisture and is lightweight. Dehydration, especially in the desert, is a constant problem. A guide for study in Morocco will be provided to each student. Zawiya Ahansal is a remote and mountainous region located between 5,000 and 12,000 feet in Morocco’s Central High Atlas Mountains. It is a high desert region with temperature extremes in May and June ranging between 32 and 100 degrees F. Regional equivalents are the City of Rocks in Idaho and southern Utah. Students should be prepared and comfortable with working in all weather and should be physically fit to hike mountainous terrain. Students also need to be physically able to work and hike at 6000 feet above sea level for an extended time. Students will be living with local families in registered guest houses and should therefore be respectful of Muslim culture. Sleeping rooms will be shared by students and are gender separated.