



Summer School 2023: Tunisia and the Arab World in Revolution

Purpose: The curriculum for this course focuses on Tunisian and Arab protest and revolution since 2011. It seeks to immerse students into the happenings, ideas, and discourses of the region's contentious politics over the last twelve years. The context, thought, and processes of transformation all guide the lectures as well as the seminars of the course. Students will have an opportunity to interact with scholars, decision-makers, and civil society activists to gain an understanding of the processes of socio-political change over the past decade. In so doing, they will "test" via daily practicums and fieldwork sessions ideas and theories imparted in lectures. Thus, this course supplements textual with contextual learning, i.e., local knowledge and experiences through daily encounters, interaction and engagement with actual civic, political and cultural actors.

Language of Instruction: English

Note: While the course is delivered and assessed in English, international students will be encouraged to draw on readings in their own languages. This is enriching for the course and for the principle of pluralist knowledge.

Dates: July 24-August 7, 2023

Summary:

Demos-Center for Democratic Sustainability is pleased to launch the summer school on Tunisian and Arab "revolution," in cooperation with the Faculty of Literature, Arts, and Humanities of the University of Tunis-Manouba. The school covers an all-inclusive program of key theoretical readings, empirical accounts, and world-experience activities that combine the two. The modules taught deliver a well-rounded knowledge journey, which engages theory, experience and actual civic and political practitioners. That journey begins in Tunisia, the birthplace of the Arab Spring, and home to some of the world's oldest centers of Arabo-Islamic learning. The program's three modules are delivered by leading scholars. In addition to class-room teaching-learning, fieldwork and encounters with civil society, media, political and activist figures and leaders, men and women, official and unofficial, will supplement knowledge imparted in the theoretical classes. The program delivers a most intellectually stimulating learning on theory, practice and on the latest revolutionary trends. Over two weeks

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of classes, debates, web-based activities, study visits and fieldwork tasks, the students enrolled in the program will be trained via constructivist methods that equip them with a knowledge foundation and skills suited to both graduate study and other career paths.

The summer school is open to international students. Enrolled participants shall have full access to reading materials, slides and handouts. Thus, the program will introduce and enhance learners' theoretical, empirical and critical grasp of the main questions concerning revolution, international and Arab. In so doing, the course leaders and tutors' chief aim is to meet learning outcomes such as:

1. Acquisition of a comprehensive regime of theories, concepts and readings on world and Arab revolutions
2. Enabling an intellectual competitive edge on comparative revolutions
3. Training participants into the relevant knowledge foundations of the subject matter, thus empowering them with the skills to navigate both academic and professional careers

Structure: The program will consist of four mini-modules on the following topics:

1. **The Tunisian Revolution:** A 'walking lecture' tour of major sites and stations in Tunisia's revolution (17 Dec. 2010-14 Jan. 2011) from Habib Bourguiba Avenue to Bardo. Students will learn about the who, what, where, and how of the Arab Spring's launch. This module will also cover the major junctures in the 11 years of Tunisia's political (democratic) transition. The dualities of institution-building and the development of civic/political forces, on the one hand, and the shortcomings of political transition, on the other, will be explored.
2. **The Arab Spring Revolutions:** Lectures and testimonies charting how Tunisia's revolution spread to neighboring regional countries, from Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain (2011-) to the more recent crop of uprisings in Algeria, Sudan, and Lebanon (2019-). Emphasis will be on the diverging trajectories of initially similar popular revolutions calling for freedom and dignity. What structural features, internal and external actors, and fateful strategies and decisions explain variations in how the Arab spring has played out in these different settings? The prospects for regional democratization will also be discussed.
3. **Research Methods Practicum:** On-site introductions to Tunisian archives relevant to social science research will be combined with practical instruction on semi-structured and focus group interviews. Trips span national libraries, documentation



centers, and other archival repositories of possible use in their own research. Guest speakers will include scholars and researchers from within the Tunisian academy. Basic hows and whys of interviewing will be covered. Students will have opportunities to conduct their own interviews with members of civil society, academics, and political and development experts. Conveners will provide students with 'live' methodological feedback. MA and PhD students would benefit from this fieldwork, which is a rigorous introduction to source material, interviews, and networking.

4. Civil Society Encounters: Interactive sessions with activists and political parties will take place in the evenings/nights. Students will learn first-hand about the work and experiences of these civic and political actors. Question-answer segments, trips to association or party headquarters, and overviews of some activities taking place in Tunisia's lively civil society will enrich student learning through one-of-a-kind 'participant observation.'

5. Arabic Language Instruction: One hour of Tunisian daily dialect instruction. This is 'live language' immersion for the purpose of navigating the culture.

Alongside the four modules will be **guided study trips of major political and cultural sites** in Tunis and Sousse (Zaytuna Mosque, Sadiqiyya School, Tunis Souq, Sousse Fort, etc.). Students will get a flavor of these Mediterranean cities at the crossroads of the Arabo-Islamic world and Southern Europe. They will come to appreciate the richness of architecture, history, urban life, the people, and the cuisine of cities steeped in centuries-old civilization and political activity.

Schedule: Mon.-Friday: 8:30-12:00

Study Visits: 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Saturdays (July 29th and August 5th): Day-long study trip

Program Pedagogy

- Learners in this summer school program, will be mentored by highly-published scholars and specialists, with vast knowledge of Tunisian, Arab, and MENA politics, history, society, culture and language
- Students joining the program will be taught by university professors trained in Western and international universities, with a proven track-record in international universities

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- Learners will be introduced to the field of knowledge with full induction into use of libraries, archives, institutions of learning, media and particularly press resources, cultural centres, and civil society organizations
- Participants will benefit from a combination of classroom teaching-learning and study visits that provide opportunity to appreciate links between theory and practice as well as direct experience of the field
- Enrolled learners will be aided by a pedagogy that equip them with research skills for MA and doctoral study, and in some case put graduate students on course for developing ideas and questions for their future research projects
- Students will be introduced to key texts by leading world, Arab and Tunisian scholars
- Students will be trained into mastering the art of conducting research, theoretically and empirically, in an engagingly friendly, creative and multicultural learning environment conducive to shared and constructivist student-centered learning
- Teachers and learners will be motivated into the practice and appreciation of discussion and exploration of ideas via multi-disciplinarity
- All participants will be guided into, and expected to commit to, the discovery of ideas through set tasks involving assessed field assignments aimed at practicing taught research methods such as use of interviews, in addition to focus group, participant observation and archival research techniques
- Participants will be aided in ways of relevance to their specialisms and/or career paths, be they in academic research or other fields in government, business or the media...
- Whilst doing the program, students will navigate Tunis as an ancient cosmopolitan city of learning though its libraries, museums, diverse environs and historic institutions as well as widen knowledge of the country via study visits to a number of cities with Islamic, Roman and Andalusian heritage

Fees: \$2100 per student. This includes:

- Instruction
- Accommodations
- Breakfast
- Local transportation to tour/study sites

Certificate: Upon completion of the course, students will be granted an official certificate.

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Learning Beyond the Classroom: Fieldwork

The study visits constitute a vital component of the summer school program. It is geared towards maximized constructivist learning that is reflective, creative and interactive. For, it revolves around motivated learners exploring knowledge through independent thinking and peer and self-instruction.

Study visits rely on driven and motivated learners who are required to measure up to the rigor of the diverse activities by:

1. Participation in all study visits scheduled for this module
2. Note down the learning acquired in each activity
3. Complete assessed tasks (see below)

The study visits are intended to cover diverse activities in Tunis, and/or environs, or a different city.

Date (TBA)	Fieldwork / Practicum Activity
	National Archives
	National Library
	Tunisian Documentation Unit
	History Department Archives: Mannouba University
	Habib Bourguiba: The Revolution Boulevard
	Local Government Municipality
	Reps of Former Revolution Protection Commission
	Session with Nobel Laureate Groups
	Al-Sha'ab Newspaper

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	Tunisian Association for Democratic Women
	Sidi Bouzid Hirak Reps
	Zaitouna Mosque & the Medina of Tunis

Assessment: Course instructors will use a combination of student-designed and traditional forms of assessment. These include:

1. **Short reports** based on field work activities
2. **Interview assignment:** field work assessment where students interview a member of civil society, an academic, or a politician, etc.
3. **Annotated bibliography**
4. **Presentation** or a short podcast about some aspect of a course theme and/or fieldwork