

Meeting time and location	Day/Time	Classroom Location
Daily	Jan 5-16	TBD
This course meets for 3 hours/per day (10 teaching days) in class and 12 hours of fieldwork (community-based learning) outside of class throughout the JTerm period. Instructional time requirements are met by the scheduled meeting times.		

Faculty Details	
Name	Khulood Alawadi
Email	ka70@nyu.edu
Workspace	C1-157
Office Hours	By appointment

Course Description

What can national dress reveal about identity, belonging, and power? How is it shaped, preserved, or reimagined—and is it fashion or something else entirely? While centered on the Emirati National Dress, the course explores how national dress emerges, becomes standardized, and adapts to shifting urban, environmental, and social conditions. Special attention is given to the crafts that underpin Emirati dress—embroidery, weaving, scenting - and their cultural and symbolic significance across men's and women's attire. We also examine the contemporary economies of craft, from local artisanal practices to global fashion systems, considering how tradition is preserved, commodified, or reinterpreted—and the tensions that may arise, including appropriation, dilution, or loss of meaning. Through debates, design experiments, and fieldwork with local organizations, designers, and artisans, students will produce a final exhibition and develop a nuanced understanding of the evolving relationship between Emirati dress, craft, design, and fashion.

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: None

Co-requisites: None

This course counts towards the following NYUAD requirements:
 Core Curriculum > Core Field Colloquium

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Links to Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:	PLO1 (a, b, c, d)	PLO2	PLO3	PLO4
CLO1: Form a holistic understanding of the cultural, symbolic, and political dimensions of National Dress, situating it within broader discourses of identity, belonging, fashion, and heritage.	Med, a High, c	Low	High	High
CLO2: Analyze the cultural, symbolic, and economic significance of national dress and craft practices, and evaluate how they are preserved, commodified, consumed, and represented within global fashion systems and through everyday behaviors.	Med, a High, c	Low	Med	High
CLO3: Elicit and generate knowledge from experiential learning environments and collaborative inquiry through observation, field note taking, interviews, and other forms of engaged learning that help bring critical reflection to experience.	High a Med, c	High	High	Med
CLO4: Reflect critically on personal and collective perspectives through engaged learning, discussion, and written analysis.	High a High c Med d	High	High	High
CLO5: Apply creative and technical skills to design and curate an exhibition that communicates a nuanced understanding of the evolving relationship between National dress, craft, design, and fashion.	Med a, Med c, High, d	High	Med	Med

Teaching and Learning Methodologies

- Seminar sessions of lectures, presentations and critical discussions based on the analysis of key texts with the aim of providing relevant historical knowledge, highlighting the intellectual contexts, and articulating key concepts and analytical implications;
- This course is Student-centered, which emphasizes in-class activities and the critical pedagogy approach to co-construct knowledge together including peer-to-peer learning.
- Experiential learning and field study guides our approach, whereby students will extract and generate knowledge through participatory learning, active observation, and critical reflection.
- Hands on studio sessions may include demonstrations of various techniques and tools relevant to the course topic, offering guided practice to build foundational skills.
- Regular critique sessions will provide opportunities for students to

present their work and receive constructive feedback from peers and instructors.

- We will host guest speakers from diverse backgrounds to share their insights and expertise, deepening our interdisciplinary understanding of the fashion world.

Course Materials

Students will read selections from the following texts. All materials will be available digitally as a PDF and/or links via the class Brightspace site.

To ensure a balanced and manageable reading experience, especially on days when the assigned materials are dense or exceed 50 pages, the readings will be divided between two groups (Group A and Group B). Each group will be responsible for reading and engaging with their assigned portion.

During class, students will be asked to share thoughts, reflections, or opinions based on their assigned reading. This is not a formal presentation but a chance to spark discussion and deepen collective understanding by hearing from peers with different reading perspectives.

This approach allows us to cover more ground without overloading anyone and encourages collaborative learning.

Required books:

- The Fashioned Body by Joanne Entwistle
- Tribal Modern: Branding New Nations in the Arab Gulf by Miriam Cooke
- Rethinking Fashion Globalization by Sarah Cheang
- Fashion Criticism: An Anthology by Francesca Granata
- Fashion, Performance, and Performativity by Andrea Kollnitz
- The new politics of the handmade: craft, art and design by Anthea Black

Journal papers:

- Akinci, Idil. "Dressing the Nation? Symbolizing Emirati National Identity and Boundaries through National Dress." *Ethnic & Racial Studies*, vol. 43, no. 10, Aug. 2020, pp. 1776–94. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2019.1665697>.
- Koch, Natalie. "The Corporate Production of Nationalism." *Antipode*, vol. 52, no. 1, Jan. 2020, pp. 185–205. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12588>.
- Al-Qasimi, Noor. "Immodest Modesty: Accommodating Dissent and the 'Abaya-as-Fashion in the Arab Gulf States.'" *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, Jan. 2010, pp. 46–74. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.2979/mew.2010.6.1.46>.
- Māẓimī, Aḥmad ibn Ya'qūb. "The Apocalyptic Hijab: Emirati Mediations of Pious Fashion and Conflict Talk." *Hawwa*, vol. 19, no. 1, Mar. 2021, pp. 5–27. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1163/15692086-bja10015>.
- Hahner, Leslie A., and Scott J. Varda. "Modesty and Feminisms: Conversations on Aesthetics and Resistance." *Feminist Formations*, vol. 24, no. 3, Dec. 2012, pp. 22–42.

EBSCOhost,
search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.418196
49&site=eds-live

- La Fornara, Lisa M. "Islam's (In)Compatibility with the West: Dress Code Restrictions in the Age of Feminism." *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, vol. 25, no. 1, Jan. 2018, pp. 463–94. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edshol&AN=edshol.hein.journals.ijgls25.22&site=eds-live.
- Akinci, Idil. "Culture in the 'Politics of Identity': Conceptions of National Identity and Citizenship among Second-Generation Non-Gulf Arab Migrants in Dubai." *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies*, vol. 46, no. 11, July 2020, pp. 2309–25. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2019.1583095>.
- "Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry with Intellectual Property." *WIPO Magazine*, vol. 4, Jan. 2019, pp. 9–14. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsbl&AN=RN621476864&site=eds-live.
- Miladi, Nouredine, et al. "Digital Youth in Qatar: Negotiating Culture and National Identity through Social Media Networks." *Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research*, vol. 15, no. 2, Nov. 2022, pp. 151–77. EBSCOhost, https://doi.org/10.1386/jammr_00045_1.
- Na'amneh, Mahmoud M. "Brand Consumption among Emirati Youth: A Socio-Cultural Perspective." *Social Identities*, vol. 27, no. 6, Nov. 2021, pp. 718–28. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2021.1948827>.
- Potluri, Rajasekhara Mouly, et al. "An Exploratory Treatise on the Ethnocentric Tendencies of Emirati Gen Z Consumers." *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, vol. 13, no. 3, Feb. 2022, pp. 763–80. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-07-2020-0197>.
- Brooks, Andrew, et al. "Fashion, Sustainability, and the Anthropocene." *Utopian Studies*, vol. 28, no. 3, Feb. 2018, pp. 482–504. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.5325/utopianstudies.28.3.0482>.
- Crewe, Louise. "Ugly Beautiful?: Counting the Cost of the Global Fashion Industry." *Geography*, vol. 93, no. 1, Apr. 2008, pp. 25–33. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.40574213&site=eds-live.

Further readings for the curious ones:

- Fashion by Georg Simmel
- Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection by Herbert Blumer
- Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison by Michel Foucault
- Cities of Salt by Abdul Rahman Munif
- Girls of Riyadh by Rajaa Alsanea
- The Bamboo Stalk by Saud Alsanousi

From NYUAD Library Special Collections:

- Sultani, traditions renewed: changes in women's traditional dress in the United Arab Emirates during the reign of Shaykh Zāyid bin Sultan Āl Nahyān, 1966-2004 by Reem Ṭariq Mutwalli

Assignments and Grades

	Grade Percentage	Submission Date	Linked to Course Learning Outcome(s)
Participation	10%	daily	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Material Culture Interpretation	20%	Jan 9	1, 2, 3, 4
Ethnographic Shorts	20%	Jan 12	2, 3, 5
Reflection essay	20%	Jan 15	1, 2, 3, 4
Site-specific Intervention	30%	Jan 16	1, 2, 3, 5

Description and Distribution of Graded Activities

Interpreting National Dress Through Material Culture 20%

You will be given an item of national dress or adornment, treating them as cultural texts. Students will apply the four-step material culture methodology (description, deduction, speculation, and evaluation) to interpret its cultural significance. To deepen the analysis, you will use photography as both a research tool and a storytelling medium.

A photography task will accompany each of the four steps: 1. Recording the object as a specimen 2. Documenting the object in real space 3. Abstracting the object 4. Narrating the object.

You will submit a written analysis (approximately 1,000 words) covering each of the four steps alongside the accompanying photographs. A template will be provided.

Ethnographic Shorts 20%

In small groups, you will be assigned a location or individual (e.g. a men's tailor, abaya shopkeeper, perfumer, or embroiderer) from a curated list of shops and ateliers across Abu Dhabi. Your task is to prepare and conduct a short ethnographic interview that captures the story, practice, and personality of this place/person. You will then produce a 1–2 minute social-media-ready video that tells their story in a compelling way.

Your video should be visually engaging, emotionally resonant, and accessible to a wide audience. Think of it as a mini-documentary or profile piece designed for platforms like Instagram Reels or TikTok, quick to watch, but rich with meaning.

Site-Specific Intervention 30%

In small project teams, students will design, prototype, and install a site-specific small-scale intervention that explores the symbolic and spatial dimensions of national dress, craft and adornment. These installations should provoke reflection on the themes we've explored in the course. Projects will be temporary and could be performative, visual, or material in nature.

Each team will present their site-specific intervention in the class exhibition. The goal of the

presentation is not only to show what you made, but to share how you engaged with the space, the material, and the course themes. You will also submit documentation of the installation (e.g. photos, video) and a short, clear exhibition text to accompany your intervention (50-100 words, written in the third person). This text should help someone encountering your work understand it.

Reflection Essay 20%

This assignment invites you to reflect on your learning throughout the course, connecting theoretical concepts, field experiences, and personal perspectives on national dress, craft, and identity. Your reflection should demonstrate critical thinking, cultural awareness, and an ability to situate your own learning within the broader themes of the course.

You are encouraged to reference course materials (readings, lectures, guest talks) and primary experiences (interviews, fieldwork, class discussions), but formal citations are not required.

Throughout the course, you are expected to maintain a reflection journal which is a space for writing down thoughts, sketches, questions, observations, and reactions to each day's activities. This may be digital, handwritten, visual, or multimodal. Your journal will serve as the foundation for your final essay

We will host a Reflection Circle the day before the final course exhibition, once you submit your Reflection Essay. This is an opportunity for collective meaning-making: to share insights, lingering questions, and personal takeaways from the course. Rather than preparing you for the essay, it is meant to help you reflect aloud on what you've written and hear how your peers experienced and interpreted similar themes. Attendance and thoughtful participation is expected.

Participation 10%

See Appendix 2 for rubric.

Grade Conversion Table

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
[100-95]	(95-90]	(90-87]	(87-83]	(83-80]	(80-77]	(77-73]	(73-70]	(70-67]	(67-60]	(60-0]

Scores will be rounded up at precisely .5, so 89.5 becomes 90 but 89.49 does not.

Course Schedule

WEEK 1

Mon Jan 5, 2026 Why dress matters

- Why dress matters
- The language of our clothes
- Theories of Fashion, Simmel vs Blumer

The following books will inform our class discussions; please note that no advance reading is expected before the first day.

- The Fashioned Body "Theorizing Fashion and Dress" p.40-77
- Fashion

Criticism "The Importance of Being Dressed" p.31-33 • Fashion (Simmel)
p.541-558 (18)

- Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection (Blumer) p.275-290 (15)

Tues Jan 6, 2026 A Uniform Approach

- History of dress & sartorial traditions in the UAE
- Nationhood and the Emirati Identity
- Nation-building, Nation-branding
- The color controversy

Readings to be done before class:

- The Fashioned Body "Fashion and Identity" p.112-139 (28)
- Dressing the nation? Symbolizing Emirati National Identity p.1776-1791 • Tribal Modern "Performing National Identity" p.123-137 (15)

Wed Jan 7, 2026 Global & Local Fashion systems, Design strategies & challenges

- West vs rest
- Seasons and seasonality
- Capital: economic, cultural, social, symbolic
- Decolonizing the discourse around fashion globalization
- Cultural appropriation, inspiration vs mimicry
- Local vs Global Design Practices
- Co-creation practices, methods of production
- Intellectual property

Readings to be done before class:

- Curbing Cultural Appropriation in the Fashion Industry p.1-16

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Visit to Bisht artisan studio

Looking ahead:

- Material Culture Interpretation Assignment due on Friday 9th

Thurs Jan 8, 2026 Craft

- Economies of Craft
- Contemporary Reinterpretations & Innovation
- Maker Movements

Readings to be done before class:

- The new politics of the handmade p. 61-78 (18), p.97-116 (20), p.125-146 (22)

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Guided tour of House of Artisans
- Talli & Sadu workshop

Looking ahead:

- Material Culture Interpretation Assignment due on Friday 9th

Fri Jan 9, 2026 Multiple Modesties, Multiple gazes

- Choice, conviction, obligation or commitment?
- Transformation, Performativity
- Spatial dress practices
- The panopticon gaze, external and local gaze
- Self-orientalization and the orientalist gaze
- Transgressive bodies, felt bodies, surveilled bodies
- Style choices and Emirateness, othering
- Emirati dress portrayals in popular culture

Readings to be done before class:

- Immodest Modesty “Abaya as Fashion” p.46-69 (24)
- The Apocalyptic Hijab p.5-25 (21)
 - Fashion, Performance, and Performativity “The Emirati Burqa” p.41-54 (14)

Readings for the curious ones (not required):

- Discipline and Punish “Panopticism” p.184-213 (30)
- Islam’s (In)compatibility with the West? P.463-494
- Fashion Criticism “Fashion’s Military Fascination” p.151-152 (2)

Due:

- Material Culture Interpretation Assignment

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Guest lecture by Intangible Heritage Team (Dept. of Culture & Tourism)

Looking ahead:

- Ethnographic Short due on Monday 12th

Sat Jan 10, 2026 Emirati Fashion Designers Panel

Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Panel discussion with Emirati / Khaleeji male and female fashion designers and business owners (clothing, footwear, accessories)

WEEK 2

Mon Jan 12, 2026 Consumptionscape

- Retail & consumption spaces
- Social media
- The changing room(s)
- UAE’s creative economy

Readings to be done before class:

- Digital youth in Qatar: Negotiating culture and national identity through social media networks p.151-172 (22)
- Brand consumption among Emirati youth p.718-726 (9)
- Ethnocentric tendencies of Emirati Gen Z consumers p.763-776 (13) Due:
- Ethnographic Shorts

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Class dinner. Continue discussion on days topic.

Tues Jan 13, 2026 The Elephant in the Room

- Disposal & renewal cycles
- Environmental sustainability in fashion production & consumption
- Rethinking fashion globalization
- The new luxury

Readings to be done before class:

- Fashion, Sustainability, and the Anthropocene p.482-500
- Ugly beautiful? p.25-33 (9)

External Community-Based Learning Activity:

- Visit “Lest we Forget”

Looking ahead:

- Reflection Essay due on Thursday 15th

Wed Jan 14, 2026 The Future of the National Dress

- Embedded technologies, textile technologies
- Disembodiment, Phygital fashion
- Speculative costumes
- Cultural annihilation, preservation, revitalization

Readings to be done before class:

- Pilgrim bodies nano-tech attire p.1-2 (2)

Looking ahead:

- Reflection Essay due on Thursday, 15th

Thurs Jan 15, 2026 Reflections & Exhibition Design

- Reflection Circle
- Teamwork to prepare projects, materials, space etc. for the class exhibition.

Due:

- Reflection Essay

Fri Jan 16, 2026 Course Exhibition

- Final course exhibition and presentations

Due:

- Site-specific installation deliverables
-

Potential Community-based Learning (CBL) Engagements

- Visit “Lest we Forget” a UAE-based archival and research initiative dedicated to preserving and documenting the Emirates' cultural memory and engage with the founders (2 hours)
- Visit to Bisht artisan studio (2 hours)
- Guided tour of House of Artisans (1 hour)
- Talli & Sadu workshop (3 hours)
- Guest lecture by Intangible Heritage Team (Dept. of Culture & Tourism) (1 hour)
- Emirati Fashion Designers Panel (3 hours)

Academic Policies

Attendance

Due to the condensed nature of J-Term, each day of absence is the equivalent of missing more than a full week in a regular semester – with less of an opportunity to make up for missed material. An unexcused absence results in the deduction of one full letter grade from the final course grade (e.g., from an A- to a B-). Excusing absence is at the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss more than two classes will not be able to complete the course: if one or more of these absences are excused, students will be withdrawn; if all of the absences are unexcused, students will fail.

Regular attendance is mandatory for all class sessions. Students must come prepared, having completed the assigned readings and creative tasks. Students are expected to contribute thoughtfully to seminar discussions, demonstrating a close reading of assigned texts and a willingness to engage with diverse perspectives. This includes asking critical questions, offering insights, and responding to peers in a respectful and constructive manner. Active listening is just as important as verbal participation. Absences or tardiness will impact your grade unless communicated in advance and excused for legitimate reasons.

The Use of Artificial Intelligence (e.g., Chat GPT)

Generative AI tools may be used in this course, but only in ways explicitly permitted in each assignment brief. When you use these tools, you must clearly cite and attribute their use, whether in concept development, ideation, writing, or visual outputs—using footnotes, captions, or a references section. Failing to do so constitutes academic misconduct and violates NYUAD's Academic Integrity Policy. Please consult individual assignment descriptions for guidance on the appropriate use of generative AI tools.

Not Permitted:

- Using generative AI to create full drafts of written assignments.
- Relying on AI to generate entire design concepts, sketches, prototypes, videos, or other final media deliverables
- Submitting AI-generated work as your own without proper acknowledgment and reflection on your creative process

Permitted (with proper citation):

- Using AI for moodboarding, ideation prompts, or preliminary concept exploration
- Generating inspiration images as long as you critically reflect on and clearly document their use
- Employing AI as a tool *within* your process—not *as* your process

Remember: ideas, visuals, or text produced by generative AI are not your own intellectual property. They must be treated as external sources—aggregated from the work of others—and acknowledged as such.

Student Commitment and Expectations:

Students should keep their calendars free of other commitments during J-Term for weekdays, weekends, and evenings until they have the final syllabus on the first day of class and can see what is required. J-Term courses are academically rigorous and, because of their intensive nature, demand a lot from students. Every day of a J-Term class is the equivalent of more than a week of classes in a regular semester. Students should expect to spend several hours each day preparing assignments for class. J-Term courses also feature distinctive community-based learning components, which add co-curricular activities outside of class time. These co-curricular activities are required and missing one is comparable to missing a regularly scheduled class period. Missing required co-curricular activities conducted outside of formal class time will negatively affect the final grade.

Academic Integrity:

At NYU Abu Dhabi, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students, faculty, and staff take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others. In turn, these values create a campus climate that encourages the free exchange of ideas, promotes scholarly excellence through active and creative thought, and allows community members to achieve and be recognized for achieving their highest potential. Students should be aware that engaging in behaviors that violate the standards of academic integrity will be subject to review and may face the imposition of penalties in accordance with the procedures set out in the NYUAD policy [here](#).

Moses Center for Student Accessibility (CSA): mosescsa@nyu.edu

New York University is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. The Center works with students to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations that support equal access to a world-class education. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance. Disability-related information is never disclosed without student permission. Find further information [here](#).

Health Resources:

As a university student, you may experience a range of issues that can interfere with your ability to perform academically or impact your daily functioning, such as heightened stress, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, sleep disturbance, strained relationships, grief and loss, and/or personal struggles. If you have any well-being or mental health concerns please visit the

Counseling Center on the ground floor of the campus center from 9 am-5 pm, Monday - Friday, or schedule an appointment to meet with a counselor by calling: +971-2-628-8100, or email: nyuad.healthcenter@nyu.edu. If you require mental health support outside these hours, call NYU's Wellness Exchange hotline at 02-628-5555, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also utilize the Wellness Exchange mobile chat feature, details of which you can find on the NYUAD student portal. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

The Writing Center:

The Writing Center is an excellent resource for you to use throughout your university career. Consultants will meet with you to discuss your writing for any writing project. They don't do the work for you—they don't edit or proofread your work or give you ideas—but they can help you figure out what you need to do to improve your writing. To register and to schedule an appointment, go to <https://nyuad.mywconline.com>. It is wise to schedule appointments well in advance because appointment slots fill up. These services are available remotely for students studying outside of the UAE.

Appendix 1

Students who successfully complete a CCOL-J course should be able to:

- 1) Critically examine historical and contemporary topics of global significance, which includes formulating clear, precise questions and arriving at well-reasoned conclusions using: a) qualitative, b) quantitative, c) contextual, and d) creative modes of reasoning;
- 2) Communicate effectively for various audiences and purposes, including participation in public settings;
- 3) Demonstrate self-understanding and intercultural competency; and
- 4) Identify and reflect critically on conceptual and ethical complexity.

Appendix 2

Participation Grading Rubric

10: Excellent	Excellent preparation by in-depth reading of the assigned material, leads/contributes in a significant way to discussions, demonstrates consistent active involvement, and offers thoughtful analysis and critique of the course material. Consistently contributes insightful ideas and feedback during discussions and critiques. Actively engages in all class activities, demonstrating enthusiasm and creativity. Demonstrates leadership by initiating discussions or helping peers.
---------------	--

8: Good	Good preparation (knows facts, considers implications), offers interpretation and analysis, leads/contributes well in discussion and is consistently involved in the class. Regularly contributes thoughtful ideas and feedback during discussions and critiques. Shows active participation in class activities and demonstrates creativity in assignments.
6: Adequate	Adequate preparation (knows basic facts of the readings but does not show evidence of trying to interpret and analyze), does not participate voluntarily in discussions, demonstrates sporadic involvement. Participates in discussions and critiques, though contributions may sometimes lack depth or originality. Completes assignments on time and demonstrates basic understanding and creativity.
4: Poor	Poor preparation (has a superficial knowledge and understanding of the readings), tries to respond when called on, infrequent involvement in discussions or speaks without engaging with the reading or classmates' comments. Participates minimally in discussions and critiques, offering few ideas or feedback. Assignments are often incomplete or lacking effort.
2: Very poor	Very poor preparation (no evidence for reading assigned material), does not respond substantially when called on, participates very rarely in discussions. Rarely participates in discussions and critiques, often not prepared or engaged in class activities. Assignments are frequently incomplete or significantly lacking in effort.
0: No participation	Consistently fails to participate in discussions, critiques, or class activities. Assignments are consistently incomplete or not submitted. Shows no effort or engagement in the course.