

# Decolonizing Public Health Teach-In

## ARAB & MUSLIM IDENTITIES

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### Abstract

In this workshop, we will interrogate the way Arabs and Muslims are defined both within the U.S. and abroad. We will also briefly explore the nuances within these interconnected, yet disparate identities, and the way they have been shaped by Western media and current events, such as the “War On Terror”, September 11, and the ongoing uprisings and conflicts in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region. With popular misconceptions and the political agendas of key governments in mind, public health practitioners must reevaluate how to approach Arab and Muslim populations in their health studies. In the wake of the U.S. Census Bureau’s decision to not include a MENA category on the 2020 census, it is crucial to develop educational materials and tools to help researchers sparse out chief health risks among different Arab and Muslim sub-populations. We must not only consider how historic and ongoing colonization has impacted the chronic and mental health of groups in the Arab and Muslim world, but also how these health issues manifest in diaspora communities and can be passed down to future generations.

### Recommended Readings

- Abuelezam, N. N., El-Sayed, A. M., & Galea, S. (2017). Arab American health in a racially charged US. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 52(6), 810-812.  
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- El-Sayed, A. M., & Galea, S. (2009). The health of Arab-Americans living in the United States: a systematic review of the literature. *BMC public health*, 9(1), 272. Retrieved from  
<https://bmcpublikealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-9-272>
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[https://sites.evergreen.edu/politicalshakespeares/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2014/12/Said\\_full.pdf](https://sites.evergreen.edu/politicalshakespeares/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2014/12/Said_full.pdf)