METHODOLOGY DESCRIPTIONS: Samples

1) My research methodology requires gathering relevant data from the specified documents and compiling databases in order to analyze the material and arrive at a more complete understanding and historical reconstruction of the lives of selected female scholars. I hope to shed light on the following questions through my research: 1) How did female scholars obtain their education? a) How important were factors such as kinship networks and socio-economic status in providing women access to their education? b) To what extent did women attend classes with other students and/or was their training obtained through private tutoring? 2) Did religious rules regarding veiling, seclusion, and women’s mobility in the public sphere affect the physical circumstances of women’s education? For example, did women interact directly with male students and teachers in formal educational settings, or did they participate through informal spheres such as gatherings in homes, mosques, libraries, and literary salons? 3) Are there any indications of a curriculum—or a set course of study— that a woman had to complete before gaining recognition as a hadith transmitter or as a legal scholar? What credentials qualified women to interpret Islamic law or to transmit hadith ? And how do these compare to the credentials and curricula of contemporary male scholars? 4) To what extent did female scholars obtain an education in a range of religious sciences beyond hadith transmission, such as Islamic law, Qur’ānic exegesis, or poetry?

2) As a literary critic my approach to literary texts involves examining the relationship between literature and society. Hence, I develop critically- and theoretically-informed interpretations that read texts as symptoms of the latent ideological conflicts and the unacknowledged political conditions of their production. More specifically, I call into question the text’s unconscious attachment to a cause, often an unpleasant event marked by trauma and exclusion, at the core of the way a society is formed, a cause that a society will try to repress but that will always keep returning (hence the symptom). In my work, therefore, I focus on understanding the main structure or principle that organizes the form and content of a text and that determines not only what is said but what is also unsaid in a text. This allows me to uncover the contradictions and gaps in a text that result from the clashing ideologies and social discourses, be it racial, gender, sexual, class, and national, or colonial, whose intersecting and interlocking simultaneity makes it almost impossible to achieve any satisfactory closure or resolution in a text.

3) This project will utilize both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, but is rooted in a qualitative epistemological position that recognizes the importance of locating the research within a particular social, cultural, and historical context. It also takes seriously the social construction of these contexts and the identities participants construct within them. Data Collection Data collection will consist of surveys, classroom observations and interviews with [host country] teachers, as well as journal logs from teachers. Initially, a survey instrument to measure teacher attitudes and beliefs regarding professional roles and responsibilities will be administered to a broad spectrum of participants (ideally, n=300). Subsequently, a purposeful sample will be identified to participate in the second round of data collection. A structured observation protocol will be developed to aid in field note collection and an interview protocol rooted in the literature will be developed to act as a guide for the semi-structured interviews. Multiple interviews are planned with each participant in order to provide more in-depth data collection and opportunities for follow-up. The goal is to interview approximately 20 participants who embody a range of identity positions and who come from different schools and communities. I will work with [host country] teacher training programs (IUFM), and with faculty at the Research Center in [host city], to identify potential participants. I will also ask teachers to respond to a series of journal prompts over the course of the project that allow them to provide a more detailed and longitudinal view of their daily lives as teachers—their experiences, reactions, beliefs, and ideas about their roles and responsibilities as educators.

4) A qualitative evaluation shall be utilized for this research project leveraging subjective methods such as interviews and observations to collect substantive and relevant data. These interviews shall be conducted with practicing diplomats from the [one host institution] as well as visiting diplomats to the [another host institution] conferences. Such a qualitative approach is valuable here due to the varying experiences of the diplomats in [host country] and other country cultural situations. Upon collecting the qualitative data derived from said interviews, careful analysis shall be done (both manually and utilizing nVivo software) to prepare a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) to analyze how to best customize the course to the target student populations. Recent research on intercultural communication and instructional design shall be consulted to validate collected data. A bibliography containing such research sources has been submitted separately with this Fulbright application. The research from this Fulbright project shall become an asset to the established body of literature on cross-cultural issues, however now with a special [host region] point of interest. As for my own research efforts, I will have the opportunity to implement by intercultural education expertise within another country and assist a recognized university in developing a ground-breaking and vital course.

5) I have an established collaboration with [host scholar] from the Department of Environmental Science, Faculty of Science, [host institution] We have already collaborated on a project to develop an annamox culture that anaerobically oxidizes ammonia for nitrogen removal from wastewater…. His extensive network of contacts will optimize my time in [host country] by providing ready-made avenues for me to contribute my knowledge of environmental science and engineering to several [host country] universities and for me to learn as much as possible about the [host country] approaches to nutrient removal and decentralized sanitation. During the proposed visit, we will investigate the application of the annamox process to remove nitrogen in domestic wastewater. …This process is called annamox (for anaerobic ammonium oxidation). The conventional approach to remove nitrogenous pollution in wastewater involves the aerobic biological oxidation (nitrification) of NH4 …However, this process typically requires separate reactors for the two processes, nitrifying bacteria are relatively slow growing, and the denitrification process requires carbon that is not always available … These probes allow detection of the anaerobic ammonium oxidizing bacteria by techniques such as fluorescent in situ hybridization (FISH). In FISH, microscopic visualization of specific microbes occurs in relatively intact samples, which allows insight into the spatial distribution of ....Work at the host institution thus provides an opportunity for me to work on a very cutting edge microbial process with a waste stream very different in nature from the waste I typically see.