



UNAOC collaborates with *The New York Times* to train US, Tunisian, Egyptian, and French journalists on covering elections



Reporting On Elections

The New York Times
Knowledge
Network

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Ahead of the imminent elections in Tunisia and Egypt, the UNAOC is working with The New York Times Knowledge Network, which offers online adult and continuing education opportunities, to provide a six-week online course to Tunisian, Egyptian, Moroccan, French, and American journalists and journalism students.

Each of the aforementioned four countries is expected to enter major parliamentary or presidential elections in the next twelve months. The UNAOC and The *New York Times* Knowledge Network are collaborating to provide a course that addresses both practical challenges and ethical considerations involved in reporting on elections.

Guest lecturers — all of whom are *New York Times* journalists — will look at the principles and techniques of election coverage practiced by their newspaper. The course, which will be run concurrently in Arabic and English, will engage approximately 100 participants through live

sessions, where participants will be able to interact with one another and their instructors and guest lecturers.

Journalists from both large and small independent media are participating—including the popular *Nawaat* blog in Tunisia, which was created shortly after the revolution. Reporters from several French and Arabic newspapers are also taking part in the course, including *Le Temps*, *Le Quotidien*, *Al-Ahram*, *Al Masry Al Youm*, *Daily News Egypt*, and *El Shorouk Daily*.

Students from journalism schools in various countries will also participate, including the American University of Cairo, Sciences Po in France, and several US institutions such as CUNY, Columbia University, University of Missouri, University of Arkansas, University of Wisconsin and Medill.

At the end of this course, participants will be able to better interview candidates or outside experts, analyze polling data, learn how to report on results fairly and accurately, and have a deeper understanding of journalistic ethics. The course will also provide an opportunity for journalists from different countries with vastly different media cultures to compare notes on the challenges they face in doing their jobs.

“The New York Times Knowledge Network is all about enriching the learning process for professionals,” said Felice Nudelman, executive director, education, The New York Times Company. “Now more than ever, it is crucial that journalists from all over the world receive exposure to the techniques used by leading media organizations so they can improve election reporting in their own countries. The online format of the course allows guest lecturers from The Times newsroom to communicate directly with the participants no matter where they are located.”

“While the conditions in which elections take place vary greatly from place to place, there is much that journalists can learn from each other. Ultimately, what we want is to help foster a network of journalists across countries that helps improve cross-cultural understanding on a broad range of issues,” says UNAOC Director Marc Scheuer.

The New York Times Knowledge Network, which uses the Epsilen™ platform, was launched in September 2007 to deliver lifelong learning programs on timely subjects. Through The New York Times Knowledge Network, extensive resources from The Times and other participating universities and institutions are readily available to students online, whether they are enrolled in an on-campus course or continuing their education through a distance learning program.

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