The Liberal Arts Program presents

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“Theater or Transitional Justice: Reforming the Judiciary in Egypt”

Professor Sahar Aziz

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ABSTRACT INFO:
Discussions on transitional justice in Egypt presuppose a political transition. More than three years after Egypt’s historic January 25th uprising, nothing may be farther from the truth. Mass protests that had the potential to produce revolutionary changes in the political system were prematurely coopted to produce little more than a reshuffling of the elite coalition within an authoritarian system. State institutions were so deeply entrenched in a corrupt patronage system that, if overhauled, risked the liberty and livelihood of its top echelon. As a member of this so-called “deep state,” the conservative judiciary’s response to the uprisings was part of a larger phenomenon that ultimately left the authoritarian regime untouched but for a new president and his new elite inner circle. As a result, transitional justice proved elusive, leaving many Egyptians with no remedy for the decades of tyranny under Mubarak. Couched in the rule of law and transitional justice literature, this presentation examines the judiciary’s role in determining why the January 25th uprisings did not produce the political transition necessary for there to be transitional justice.

BIO:
Sahar F. Aziz is an associate professor of law at Texas A&M University School of Law where she teaches Torts, National Security, Civil Rights, and Middle East Law. Her scholarship focuses on the intersection of National Security and Civil Rights Law, incorporating critical race theory, feminist theory, and constitutional law into her examination of the disparate impact of Post-9/11 Laws and Public Policy on ethnic, racial, and religious minority groups in the United States. She also writes on Rule of Law and Democracy in Egypt including gender rights, transparency laws, and election laws. Professor Aziz has been featured on CNN, CSPAN, Russia Today, PBS, and Al Jazeera America and published numerous commentaries on national security, civil rights, and rule of law in Egypt on The New York Times, CNN.com, and Al Jazeera America. Professor Aziz earned her J.D. and M.A. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Texas. She received her B.S. from the University of Texas in Arlington. She is a board member of the Egyptian American Rule of Law Association.

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