**Essay Titles: Human Rights and the Middle East**

**Due Date:** April 2nd 2018

**Write an essay on ONE of the following topics:**

1. Abdullahi An-Na’im asserts: “…if human rights are indeed universal, that universality cannot be claimed without taking into account religious perspectives and experiences.” Do you agree with this assertion? In your answer discuss the universality of rights in relation to Islamic law.
2. Lila Abu-Lughod provocatively titled a 2002 article with the following question: “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” Using a case study of your choice respond to this question. In your response pay particular attention to how women in Muslim majority countries can be, or are, agents of change.
3. State party reservations to international human rights conventions raise serious questions about the universality of rights. With regard to either the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) discuss instances where reservations have been made on the basis of Islamic law. In your answer be sure to consider a) whether such reservations ought to be allowed on the basis of religious rationale and b) whether these reservations further or hinder the human rights of women and children.
4. Consider the human rights of religious minorities in the contemporary Middle East. Using specific examples from Muslim majority countries discuss instances in which the human rights of religious minorities have been/are being violated. Detail ways in which Islamic law, international human rights law, or some combination of the two, might afford better protection.