

Las Positas College
3000 Campus Hill Drive
Livermore, CA 94551-7650
(925) 424-1000
(925) 443-0742 (Fax)

Course Outline for RELS 11

THE NATURE OF ISLAM

Effective: Fall 2010

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

RELS 11 — THE NATURE OF ISLAM — 3.00 units

Introduction to the nature of Islam as a religion or system for life, its culture and its impact on Muslim individuals and groups. Includes a brief history of Islam and Muslims in relation to the basic sources of Islam.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. evaluate Islam's geographical, philosophical, and ideological relation to the West
2. identify similarities and differences between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism
3. explain the historical occurrences from which Islam emerged
4. evaluate Islam as a significant and widespread belief system
5. discuss major figures in Islamic thought and belief
6. explain important divisions within Islam such as Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Sufis

V. CONTENT:

- A. The Seal of the Prophets – Muhammad
 1. The one and only prophet in an emerging monotheistic region
 2. Social causes for his ascent as the "final" prophet
 3. His life as prophet and his earthly transformation
- B. Muhammad's migration that led to victory
 1. His exodus from Mecca
 2. His arrival at Medina
 3. His political and social leadership which led to Arabic unity and further conquest
- C. The Standing Miracle – the Koran
 1. The earthly center of faith
 2. Its purpose, organization, and content
 3. Its culmination of the Biblical Old and New Testaments
- D. Basic Theological Concepts
 1. God
 2. Creation
 3. The human self
 4. Day of Judgment
- E. The Five Pillars
 1. Creed
 2. Canonical prayer
 3. Charity
 4. Observance of Ramadan
 5. Pilgrimage to Mecca
- F. Social teachings and Islamic law
 1. Economics
 2. Status of women
 3. Race relations
 4. Use of force
- G. The development and diversity
 1. Sunnis and Shi'ites
 2. Sufis

3. Major historical figures in Islamic thought
- H. Islam and the West
 1. Early relations between Islam, Judaism & Christianity
 2. Islam and the West in the Middle Ages
 3. Contemporary challenges and opportunities

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. **Discussion** - Instructor guided discussion of readings
- C. **Discussion** - Small group discussion and presentation
- D. **Guest Lecturers** -
- E. **Field Trips** -
- F. **Audio-visual Activity** - Video presentation and discussion

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Read chapter one (Understanding Islam) and be prepared to discuss the overview of similarities and differences between Islam and other world religions.
- B. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast the teachings of Allah and God as imparted by Muhammad, Moses, and Jesus.
- C. In your small group, choose one Pillar of Islam and prepare to discuss current contemporary applications with the class.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Other:
 - a. Midterm examinations
 - b. Final exam
 - c. Short writing assignments
 - d. Journal entries
 - e. Term paper

B. **Frequency**

1. One to two midterms given throughout the course
2. One final exam given at the end of term
3. One term paper
4. Three to five short writing assignments per term
5. Weekly journal entries

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Armstrong, Karen *Mohammad: A Prophet for Our Time.*, HarperOne, 2007.
2. Cleary, Thomas *The Essential Koran: The Heart of Islam.*, HarperOne, 1994.
3. Denny, Frederick Mathewson *An Introduction to Islam.* 3rd ed., Prentice Hall, 2005.
4. Haleem, M. A. S. Abdel *The Qur'an.*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
5. Lombard, Joseph *Submission, Faith and Beauty: The Religion of Islam.*, Zaytuna Institute, 2009.
6. Yusuf, Hamza *The Content of Character: Ethical Saying of the Prophet Mohommad.*, Sandala Limited, 2004.
7. Yusuf, Hazma *The Creed of Imam al-Tahawi.*, Rumi Bookstore, 2008.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: