

R S 319 • Introduction to Islam
#43255 • Fall 2018
(also listed as ANS 301M #32282, ISL 310 #41285)
(Flags: “Global Cultures”)

Instructor: Prof. Azfar Moin
Teaching Assistants: Mr. Alex Kreger
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Course Aims: This course provides an introduction to the religion of Islam. It is designed for students with a general interest in the Islamic world, in religion, or in history. We will examine the theology, history, and main social and legal institutions of Islam. Islam, as a major system of belief in the world, is experienced by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Consequently, besides studying the basic tenets and texts of the religion, this course will focus on the variety of ways in which Muslims and non-Muslims have understood and interpreted Islam. We will review the debates surrounding the life of the prophet of Islam, Islamic pre-modern and modern history, the Islamic concept of God and society, the role of women, and finally, Islamic government and movements. The course is designed for students with a general interest in the Islamic world, religions, or history.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to relate an informed and critical history Islam; students should also be able to describe the key institutions and traditions of Islam; finally, students should also be able to discuss contemporary political developments in the Muslim world.

Global Cultures Flag

Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Prerequisites:

None

Format and Procedure:

This is primarily a lecture class with some time dedicated in class each week for group discussion and in-class exercises. It requires critical readings of assigned texts before class as

well as active, informed participation in class discussions. Students must bring readings to class along with notes and questions.

Required Texts

1. Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time* (HarperOne, New York: 2006)
2. Gary Wills, *What the Quran Meant and Why it Matters* (Viking Press, New York: 2017)
3. Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (Modern Library, New York: 2002)
4. Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War and the Roots of Terror* (Three Leaves Press, New York: 2005)

Grading

- Attendance and participation (based on in-class exercises) 15%
- Quiz: 5%
- Essay (4 pages) 20%
- Mid-term 20%
- Final exam 40%

Attendance

- Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to come to class regularly with the assigned readings done in advance and prepared for class discussion. Being late to class and leaving early counts as an absence. A student with more than six absences may be given a formal “Absence-Failing” notice. In short, poor attendance will impact your grade.
- When you know you won’t be in class on a given day because of illness or some other reason, you should be sure to ask a student who takes good notes whether you can have a copy of that day’s notes. Religious holidays sometimes conflict with class and required work. See the policy at the end of the syllabus for “Religious Holy Days.”

Participation

From time to time, I will hand out short exercises in class that will be graded on a participation basis. Taken together, these assignments will make up the attendance and participation grade of 15%.

Written Assignments:

- Late essays will result in the loss of 5% of paper grade for each day they are late. No paper will be accepted if more than four days late.
- All written assignments will be graded on clarity and style as well as argument and analysis.

- Assignments are due at the beginning of the class, and must be uploaded to Canvas. Please make sure your papers are double-spaced, numbered, in Times New Roman font 12 with one inch margins.
- References and citations in written work must adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Grade ranges:

Papers will be graded using a plus/minus scheme with the default cutoffs in Canvas with the following standards.

- A: Excellent! (Unusual understanding and performance, with exceptional nuance.)
- B: Good. (Normal understanding and performance. Solid work.)
- C: Some problems. (Acceptable but needs more accuracy or greater depth.)
- D: Major problems. (Lack of effort and understanding.)
- F: Not acceptable university work

Cell phone/Laptop use

- Laptops or other web-enabled devices such as iPads, tablets, smart-phones are not permitted unless allowed explicitly by the instructor (typically, allowances will be made for participation exercises).
- Cell phones must be switched off or set to silent mode.

Expected Schedule of Classes

(Note: Readings marked with “*” will be available from the course website)

Date		Topic/Theme	Reading	Assignment
Aug 30	Th	Introduction to the course		
Part I: The Foundational Story				
Sep 4	T	Why study Islam today?	Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 3, 54-62 Armstrong, <i>Muhammad</i> , Intro., 20-30	
Sep 6	Th	Mecca	Armstrong, <i>Muhammad</i> , Ch. 1, 21-52 Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 4, 65-82	
Sep 11	T	Jahiliyyah	Armstrong, <i>Muhammad</i> , Ch. 2, 53-88 Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 5, 83-92	
Sep 13	Th	Western stereotypes about the “East”	Documentary: “Orientalism” https://utexas.kanopy.com/video/ward-said-orientalism	Quiz
Sep 18	T	Hijrah	Armstrong, <i>Muhammad</i> , Ch. 3, 89-124 Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 6, 93-111	Essay Assigned
Sep 20	Th	Jihad	Armstrong, <i>Muhammad</i> , Ch. 4, 125-164 Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 8, 130-145	
Sep 25	T	Salam	Armstrong, <i>Muhammad</i> , Ch. 5, 165-214	
Sep 27	Th	Women and the veil	Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 11-13, 187-211	Essay Due
Part II: History and Institutions				
Oct 2	T	After Muhammad	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 23-37	
Oct 4	Th	Caliphate and Sharia	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 41-53	

			Wills, <i>Qur'an</i> , Ch. 9, 146-63	
Oct 9	T	Sunni and Shi'a	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 53-77	
Oct 11	Th	Persians and Turks	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 81-96 Selections from Nizam al-Mulk, <i>Book of Government</i> *	
Oct 16	T	Mongols	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 96-111	
Oct 18	Th	(Mid-term review)		
Oct 23	T	Mid-term	(please bring blue-books)	In-class Mid-Term Exam
Oct 25	Th	An Age of Saints	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 115-117 Moin, "The 'Ulama' as Ritual Specialists," In <i>The Wiley-Blackwell History of Islam</i> , 377-81*	
Oct 30	T	Shi'i Imperialism	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 117-124 Moin, "The 'Ulama' as Ritual Specialists," 385-87*	
Nov 1	Th	Sunni and Sufi Imperialism	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 124-138 Moin, "The 'Ulama' as Ritual Specialists," 382-85, 87-90*	
Nov 6	T	The Alevis of Turkey	Guest Lecture Reading TBA	
Part III: Modern Geopolitics and Political Islam				
Nov 8	Th	Reaction to Western Imperialism	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 141-156	
Nov 13	T	Nationalism and Democracy	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 156-176	
Nov 15	Th	Post-Colonial Islam	Armstrong, <i>Islam</i> , 176-187 Mamdani, <i>Good Muslim, Bad Muslim</i> , 3-16 (Introduction)	
Nov 20	T	The Cold War and Political Islam	Documentary: <i>Among the Believers</i> Mamdani, <i>Good Muslim, Bad</i>	

			<i>Muslim</i> , 17-62 (Chapter One)	
Nov 22	Th	Thanks Giving Break		
Nov 27	T	The Cold War and Political Islam (continued)	Mamdani, <i>Good Muslim, Bad Muslim</i> , 119-177 (Chapter Three – note: Chapter Two is optional)	
Nov 29	Th	After 9/11	Mamdani, <i>Good Muslim, Bad Muslim</i> , 178-228 (Chapter Four)	
Dec 4	T	The Way Forward	Mamdani, <i>Good Muslim, Bad Muslim</i> , 229-260 (Conclusion)	
Dec 6	Th	Review for final exam	All readings up to Dec 1	
Dec 15	Sa		7:00 pm-10:00 pm	Final Exam

Important University Notices and Policies

University of Texas Honor Code and Academic Integrity:

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. If you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, or other violations, please feel free to ask me. Students who violate the University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possible failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. The policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For more information, you can talk with me or visit the Student Judicial Services Web site:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sis>.

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

Accommodations: Documented Disability Statement

If you require special accommodations, you must obtain a letter that documents your disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing).

Present the letter to me at the beginning of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations you need. No later than five business days before an exam, you should remind me of any testing accommodations you will need. For more information, visit

<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Emergency Evacuation Information

The following recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/> :

- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.