

Course Outline: 2012-13
RS 3121g Introduction to Islamic Ethics



Location: V210

Time: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 11:30am-12:30pm

Instructor: Dr. Ingrid Mattson, London and Windsor Community Chair in Islamic Studies

Contact info: imattson@uwo.ca; Room A227; ext. 269

Prerequisites required for this Course: any college/university level class in Islamic Studies or permission of the instructor.

Course Description and Goals: Islamic ethics is the study of the methods used by Muslims to discover the best way they should engage with other individuals and the rest of creation. Islamic ethical reasoning is a wholistic approach to behaviour, reuniting the principles and tools of Islamic law with the exemplary conduct of the prophets, especially the Prophet Muhammad, in a manner that is appropriate to an actual ethical case. In this class, we will examine principled reasoning in classical Islamic jurisprudence, the theological status of reason in Islam, the principles and priorities of traditional ethical reasoning, the arguments for a goal-oriented approach to ethics, the contemporary emphasis on the context of the ethicist and the construction of religious authority, and the importance of individual moral formation. By the end of this class, you should be able to argue a controversial ethical issue using the tools and principles of Islamic ethical reasoning.

Required Textbook: Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *Shari`ah Law: an Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2008). ***You must bring the book to each class every day.** Other readings will be available on the OWL class website.

Assignments & Method of Evaluation of Assignments:

1. Participation: you will begin with 10 points at the start of class. For each two classes missed, and for each class you do not bring the assigned reading to class, 0.5 will be deducted.
2. 5 Quizzes @ 8 points each = 40 points
3. Debate with supporting written research: 20 points
4. Final exam: short answer and essay questions: 30 points

Additional Statements:

1. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices (such as, but not limited, to laptops, PDAs, cell phones) may not be used in the classroom for anything other than notetaking, although I recommend that students do not use them for notetaking. You will remember more if you close the devices and look at the instructor or another student who is speaking in the class. Taking notes in your class textbook with a pencil is highly recommended.

No electronic devices may be used during tests and exams unless granted an accommodation on the basis of a disability.

2. **Statement on Academic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.”

3. **Plagiarism-detecting Software/Computer Marking:** All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

4. **Support Services:**

- UWO Registrar’s Office: <http://www4.registrar.uwo.ca>
- Huron’s Faculty of Theology, Office of the Dean:
http://www.huronuc.on.ca/faculty_of_theology/info_for_current_students
- srice@uwo.ca, 519-438-7224, ext. 289
- Huron’s Writing Skills Centre: http://www.huronuc.on.ca/student_life/writing_services
- UWO Student Support and Development Services:
http://communications.uwo.ca/current_students/student_services.htm

5. **Accommodation for absences:**

If documentation is required for either medical or non-medical academic accommodation, then such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to your Faculty’s Dean’s office (or academic counselor), and not to the instructor. For the Faculty of Theology, all such documentation must be submitted to room A227. It will be the Dean’s office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

- a) **Non-medical absences:**

See above for participation grade and deductions taken for non-medical absences. Students who are no-shows for their debate can lose up to 25% of their grade for that assignment. Students who miss quizzes will be required to write an 800 word essay within a week of the absence.

- b) **Medical absences:** See also the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness —Undergraduate Students, at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>)

For work representing 10% or more of the overall grade for the course, a student must present documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Documentation must be submitted as soon as possible to your Faculty Dean’s office (Huron Arts & Social Science students should take their documentation to the Academic

Counsellor, through the Academic Services Centre at Huron), together with a Request for Relief specifying the nature of the accommodation requested. The request and documentation will be assessed and appropriate accommodation will be determined by the Dean's office in consultation with the instructor(s.) Academic accommodation will be granted ONLY where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete his/her academic responsibilities.

The UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) and Request for Relief are available at the Student Centre website (<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>), Huron University College Academic Counselling website (www.huronuc.on.ca) or from the Dean's Office or Academic Services Centre at Huron.