



## Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2025

### 8,624: Gesellschaft/Society: Islamism - Religious Ideology and Political Movements in Muslim Societies

ECTS credits: 6

#### Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Individual work individual grade (30%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Individual work individual grade (35%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written examination, Digital, Individual work individual grade (35%, 120 mins.)

Examination time: Term time

#### Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,624,1.00 Gesellschaft/Society: Islamism - Religious Ideology and Political Movements in Muslim Societies](#) -- English --  
[Dominguez Diaz Marta](#)

#### Course information

#### Course prerequisites

No prior knowledge of Islam, Middle Eastern societies or of Muslim Politics is required.

#### Learning objectives

By the end of the course, you must:

- have acquired specific knowledge of the most salient, religiously inspired political ideologies existing in today's Muslim World.
- have attained a scholarly grounded knowledge of the historical background, emergence and consolidation of those ideologies and the groups that have embraced them.
- have acquired nuanced understanding of the context in which these movements emerge and consolidate and capacity to understand the connections between political events, long-term phenomena and political ideologies
- have developed critical perspectives on modern Islamic social trends and salient related political ideologies within the framework of current scholarly debates on the field.

#### Course content

This is an introductory course to some of the most salient political groups and developments that consider Islam as the main source of inspiration for their political agendas, groups that have been popularly described under the umbrella term 'political Islam.' All major monotheistic religious traditions have generated in modern times discourses of 'Revivalism' and a significant number of them can be seen as endorsing particular political agendas. This course seeks to provide an introduction to help students untangle the meanings associated with the term *political Islam*, particularly in what refers to current actors and the complex combination of political and religious ideologies as part of current movements.

With this aim, the course will explore the emergence and consolidation of key ideological trends that define political Islam today, such as Wahabism, Salafism, or Jihadism. We will seek to understand the complex nature of politically motivated religious movements and will explore the issue of political violence, as it articulates through claims attributed to the religion of



Islam today. We will discuss central tenets typical of certain politicized religious rhetoric within Islam commonly attributed to 'extremist' ideologies (such as martyrdom, jihad, or the idea of the Caliphate) and will acquire ground knowledge on some of the movements that have shaped the face of Islamic 'Fundamentalism' today (from Al-Qaeda, to Hamas, Hizbollah or the Islamic State).

## Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course is a combination of taught lectures, presentations prepared by students, seminars and discussions in class. There will be a screening of a movie as part of the program. The course covers the following topics:

1. Introduction to the course and to Islam
2. Religious reform in Islam
3. Wahabism
4. Salafism
5. Jihad - Takfirism
6. Islamist Politics - Ikhwanism (Muslim Brotherhood)
7. Muslim Secularists Against Jihad
8. Political Islam shi'ite style - Khomeinism
9. Panislamic Jihad - Al-Qaeda
10. Nationalist Jihad - al-Shabab, Boko Haram, Hamas
11. 'Second Generation' Jihad groups - ISIS, al-Qaeda affiliates
12. Shi'ite militant groups - Hizbollah, the Houthis

How will students learn?

We will use innovative teaching methods that train the students' critical thinking capacity. Although the course contains lectures, they are neither the only nor the most important element for learning. The teaching significantly differs from the unidirectional model of passive learning characteristic of 'old-style lecturing'. Instead, we will use *active learning* pedagogical methods, in which the role that students play in the learning process is key. Instead of merely listening and note-taking, students are encouraged to proactively interact among themselves and with me. We will do think-pair-share activities, engage in debates, and use simulation techniques, as well as problem-solving drills and applied exercises. We also use a number of media materials as well as readings.

Contextual Studies are considered part of **Contact Learning**; thus, taking part properly implies **regular attendance**. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that there is **no timetable clash** between the courses they have chosen. A detailed course outline and all relevant documents will be made available on **StudyNet**. Only the current timetable as published on **Courses** does apply.

## Course literature

Students are required to read one or two articles weekly, that will be posted beforehand on StudyNet. The following list gives students an idea of the type of materials used in the course:

- Burke, Jason. 2011. *The 9/11 wars*. London: Allen Lane.
- Esposito, John L., and Emad Eldin Shahin. 2013. *The Oxford handbook of Islam and politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Gunaratna, Rohan. 2002. *Inside Al-Qaeda: global network of terror*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Giustozzi, Antonio. 2019. *The Taliban at War: 2001-2021*. Oxford University Press.
- Hamid, Shadi, and William McCants, eds. 2017. *Rethinking Political Islam*. Oxford University Press.
- Hansen, Stig Jarle. 2012. *Harakat Al Shabaab in Somalia : The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group, 2005-2012*. Columbia University Press.
- Hroub, Khaled. 2010. *Political Islam: context versus ideology*. London: Saqi.
- Maher, S. 2016. *Salafi-Jihadism: The history of an idea*. Oxford University Press.
- Osman, Tarek. 2016. *Islamism: What it means for the Middle East and the World*. Yale University Press.
- Scott, Rachel. 2020. *The Challenge of Political Islam*. Stanford University Press.
- Willi, Victor J. 2021. *The fourth ordeal: a history of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, 1968-2018*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wolf, Anne. 2017. *Political Islam in Tunisia: The History of Ennahda*. Oxford University Press.

## Additional course information



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## Examination information

### Examination sub part/s

#### 1. Examination sub part (1/3)

##### Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	30%
Duration	--

##### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

##### Remark

15-minute individual presentation and Q&A session

##### Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

##### Supplementary aids

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#### 2. Examination sub part (2/3)

##### Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	35%
Duration	--

##### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English



## Remark

A paper of 4000 words written at home

## Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

## Supplementary aids

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## 3. Examination sub part (3/3)

### Examination modalities

Examination type	Written examination
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written exam
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Synchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Individual work individual grade
Weighting	35%
Duration	120 mins.

### Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

## Remark

120-minute individual written examination in class

## Examination-aid rule

Closed Book

The use of aids is prohibited as a matter of principle, with the exception of pocket calculator models of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series and, in case of non-language exams, bilingual dictionaries without any handwritten notes. Any other aids that are admissible must be explicitly listed by faculty members in the paragraph entitled "Supplementary aids" of the course and examination fact sheet; this list is exhaustive.

Procuring any aids, as well as ensuring their working order, is the exclusive responsibility of students.

## Supplementary aids

The examination will be conducted as a digital examination with the following admissible media:

- **Private notebook** (compulsory) – no tablets!
- **Mains adapter** (compulsory)
- External computer mouse (optional)
- External computer keyboard (optional)

We would like to point out explicitly that the examination cannot be taken with tablets/iPads.

You will need the following for the examination:



- Appliance and system requirements: [cf. StudentWeb](#)
- Special software: [LockDown Browser](#)
- HSG log-in including access modalities
- WLAN – operational access to Eduroam

Please make sure that

- all the updates have been carried out before the examination.
- In the run-up to digitally conducted examinations, technical tests (mock examinations without grades) are carried out. Participation is urgently required!
- You yourself are responsible for the perfect working order of your appliance, [cf. also StudentWeb](#).
- Keyboard stickers in the language in which the examination is conducted (such as English, German, as well as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, etc. in language examinations) are permitted. The stickers must be identical with the original characters of the language concerned.

Any use of additional appliances that are not listed above will be strictly prohibited throughout the examination.

Any necessary actions with another software or additional appliances require the express prior approval of the persons in charge of the examination and are only permitted under supervision.

Any infringement of these rules of conduct may be sanctioned as an infringement of the rules of the University.

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## Examination content

Part A (30%): An individual 7-minute presentation on a topic given by the lecturer. Students can freely decide on the aids used to write the presentation. In a Q&A session of 8 minutes the student will be asked questions about the content of the presentation, the research process and on how the presentation was produced.

Part B (35%): A 120-minute exam held in class in which students will not be allowed to consult any materials, neither use any additional aids.

Part C (35%): A paper of 4000 words written at home. Students can freely decide on the aids used to write the paper. In a Q&A session the student will be asked questions about the research process and on how the paper was produced.

## Examination relevant literature

Students are in charge of independently finding scholarly appropriate materials for parts A and C. The lecturer will provide the materials needed for the exam (part B).



## Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 13 (Monday, 25 March 2025) are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 23 January 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 17 March 2025);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 14 (Monday, 31 March 2025);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 07 April 2025).