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REL3367 ISLAM: FAITH AND SOCIETY

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SPRING 2021

The Islamic tradition has played an important role in the social, economic, and political development of societies in Africa, Asia, and Europe since Late Antiquity. The theological core of Islam is the belief in the unity of God (*tawhīd*) as expressed in the central text of the tradition, the Quran. In addition to the Quran as Divine revelation, the sum total of Muhammad's (570-632 CE) actions, thoughts, and beliefs (*sunna*) form the foundation of Islamic law (*sharī'a*) which guides the lives of the world's currently estimated 1.6 billion Muslims. In the intervening 1400 years since the beginning of Muhammad's prophesy an immense body of literature and norms have developed to meet the changing needs of Muslims in various cultural and historical contexts. While unified by a faith tradition, the historical development of Islam shall be historicized within local geographical contexts and through the impact of colonization and modernity.

This course is designed to be a comprehensive survey of Islamic civilization from the birth of tradition in seventh century Arabia to the contemporary period. Organization of this course is both topical and historical. Students shall be encouraged to engage with primary texts in consultation with the instructor and relevant secondary literature. The course will engage the 2 intellectual tradition of Islam as well as minority discourses within the tradition, particularly from Asia and Africa as well as focusing on issues of contemporary relevance.

GLOBAL LEARNING COURSE OUTCOMES

GLOBAL AWARENESS - Students will be able to describe the complex interplay among key ideas, historical events, and thinkers that have helped to shape and define the diversity of the Islamic world today.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE - Students will be able to analyze contemporary issues in the Islamic world through their historical background, Western colonial engagement with modernity, and postcolonial politics that continue to shape the dynamics of Muslim societies in the international system.

GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT - Students will demonstrate a willingness to engage with other societies and civilizations outside the Western hemisphere through the study of religion and politics. Global Learning Graduation Honors FIU's Excellence in Global Learning Graduation

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Medallion is awarded to students who complete at least four global learning courses, participate in a variety of global co-curricular activities, and complete a capstone consisting of one of the following: a substantial original research project and presentation on a global topic; extensive foreign language study; long-term study abroad; or, a globally-focused internship. The Peace Corps Prep certification is conferred upon students who complete at least four global learning courses, extensive language study, and a global problem-solving project. For more information, visit goglobal.fiu.edu.

TEXTBOOK

Frederick Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, Fourth Edition.

New York: Routledge, 2017

ISBN-13: 978-0138144777

ISBN-10: 013814477X

COURSE ASSESSMENT

Weekly Readings and Discussion (20% of grade)

Midterm (20% of grade)

Final paper (30% of grade)

Attendance (10% of grade)

Discussions

Most weeks, I will post a reading from a primary source in the Discussions section within the Modules heading on Canvas. By the following Tuesday, please post a response to this reading, which will be discussed in class. The response will be graded for evidence that you actually dealt with the content of the reading.

Discussions will include an in-person component as well. Based on my reading of your discussion responses, you will be assigned positions with which to have a round-table, "Socratic" style debate of the themes presented.

Midterm

An online midterm, with a combination of essay and objective sections, will be posted in the middle of the semester. It will be worth 20% of the total grade.

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Final Paper

Due by midnight on the assigned day of the final examination via Canvas. Consultation with the teaching assistant is recommended. Whenever possible, the term paper should fit into the student's wider academic trajectory. Select from topics provided or provide topic of interest for instructor approval. Sample topics could include: Sufi poetry in Islam, the American Muslim experience after 9/11, women's and minority rights after the Arab Spring, etc.

Proposals (1-2 pages of narrative, plus preliminary bibliography using a standard bibliographic style) are due during the tenth week. Some students may be required to submit a revised proposal.

Final Papers are due by midnight on the assigned day of the final examination- electronic copies to be uploaded to Canvas. Please note that, due to the late due date, no extensions will be permitted and no late papers accepted.

Attendance is mandatory.

Short **pop quizzes** may be given.

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WEEK 1

January 7: Introduction to Class – What is Islam?

January 9: Context of Islam

WEEK 2

January 14: The Prophet and the Origins of Islam

January 16: The Qur'an

Discussion 1 posted (Qur'an, Ibn Ishaq, *Sira* (tr. Guillaume))

WEEK 3

January 21: Early Islamic Conquests

January 23: Sectarian Divisions

Discussion 2 posted *The History of al-Tabari* Vol. 1, "The Events of the Year 16," 8-39)

WEEK 4

January 28: Caliphate

January 30: History to 1258

Discussion 3 posted

WEEK 5

February 4: Doctrines and Pillars

February 6: Qur'an Revisited (Shaykh Barakat visit)

Discussion 4 posted

WEEK 6

February 11: Hadith

February 13: Theology

Discussion 5 posted

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WEEK 7

February 18: Theology II, Mysticism

February 20: Law

Discussion 6 posted

MIDTERM POSTED – DUE MARCH 3

WEEK 8

March 3: Islam and Politics - State I

March 5: History from 1258 to 1800

Discussion 7 posted (Usama ibn Munqidh reading)

WEEK 9

March 10: The State II

March 12: Mysticism

Discussion 8 posted

WEEK 10

March 17: Sufi orders

March 19: Islamic social patterns

Discussion 9 posted (Lady Mary Montagu reading)

FINAL ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE

WEEK 11

March 24: Community Life

March 26: 1800 to the present

Discussion 10 posted

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WEEK 12

March 31: Themes in modern history

April 2: Islam and the West

Discussion 11 posted (Omar ibn Sa'id reading)

WEEK 13

April 7: Islam and modern challenges I

April 9: Islam and modern challenges II

Discussion 12 posted

WEEK 14

TBD

FINAL ESSAY DUE

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