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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY

REL 4364: QURAN, GENDER, AND JIHAD¹

Thursdays at 2:00PM - 3:15PM in Graham Center 280

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Iqbal Akhtar (Edin.)
TA: Michael Aboagye (maboa002@fiu.edu)
Office: Deuxieme Maison (DM) 359B
Phone: +1 305.348.7098
Office hours: By appointment
Email: iakhtar@fiu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This hybrid course shall explore contemporary political, social, and economic themes among various Islamic societies around the world. The first part of the course shall introduce students to Islamic civilization, including the position of the Quran and Muslims in the Islamic tradition. The second part of the course shall focus on contemporary global debates on issues, such as feminism, human rights and democracy, that affect Muslims in an international context. The third part shall explore male and female Muslim voices in the United States in the years since 9/11.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- Understand the basic beliefs and practices of the Islamic religion.
- Gain an awareness of the complexity of issues facing contemporary Islamic societies.
- Better understand the position and perspective of Muslims in the twenty-first century United States.
- Integrate this understanding into an awareness of issues facing contemporary Islamic societies.

GLOBAL LEARNING COURSE OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- Understand and assess the nature of the relationship between Islamic faith and practices and the challenges faced by Muslims on the world stage and in the contemporary United States. (*Global Awareness*)
- Demonstrate an ability to analyze the perspectives of contemporary Muslims as they navigate modern religious and cultural terrain. (*Global Perspective*)
- Deploy this analysis in order to better engage with both the contemporary Islamic world and the Muslim communities within the United States (*Global Engagement*).

¹ This is a Discipline-Specific Global Learning (GL) course that counts toward your graduation requirement.

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REQUIRED TEXTS

- Afsaruddin, A. (Ed.). (2015). *Contemporary Issues in Islam*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Bayoumi, M. (2009). *How does it feel to be a problem?: Being young and Arab in America*. Penguin Books: New York.
- Kugle, S. S.-H. (2013). *Living Out Islam: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Muslims*. New York: NYU Press.
- Mattu, A., & Maznavi, N. (Eds.). (2014). *Salaam, Love: American Muslim Men, Love, Sex, and Intimacy*. Beacon Press.
- Maznavi, N., & Mattu, A. (Eds.). (2012). *Love, InshAllah: The Secret Love Lives of American Muslim Women*. Berkeley: Soft Skull Press.
- McAuliffe, J. D. (Ed.). (2015). *The Norton Anthology of World Religions: Islam*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Nasr, S. N., Dagli, C. K., Dakake, M. M., Lumbard, J. E., & Ruston, M. (Eds.). (2015). *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary*. New York: HarperOne.

GRADING

Class attendance and participation:	20%
Midterm:	25%
Site visits	20%
Final paper	35%

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (20% OF FINAL GRADE)

Since this is a hybrid course, each student will endeavor to attend all class sessions on time and participate actively in class discussions. Students are expected to do all readings assigned in the syllabus. Handout readings will be available on Canvas. Every student will also serve at least once as a *class discussant*, singly or in a pair depending on class size: class discussants will prepare notes on the assigned readings ahead of time and raise key points, discussion topics, important background issues, and questions *in order to facilitate class discussion*. Discussants are not expected or required to lecture but rather should prepare to complement the work of the professor through analysis and questions prepared on the topic of the day's lecture in advanced coordination with the professor.

MIDTERM (25% OF FINAL GRADE)

One midterm examination will consist of all material presented hitherto.

SITE VISITS (20% OF FINAL GRADE)

There will be scheduled site visits to mosques and Muslim community centers. These visits are class trips which every student is expected to participate in. If you need exemptions to miss classes before or after the visit, please email the professor well in advance so he can coordinate with the other professors.

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FINAL PAPER (35% OF FINAL GRADE)

Due by midnight on the assigned day of the final examination via Blackboard.

- Consultation with the professor 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, different perspectives on the American Muslim experience after 9/11, debates on women's and minority rights after the Arab Spring, etc.
- Proposals (1-2 pages of narrative, plus preliminary bibliography using standard bibliographic style) are due no later than the date of the midterm. 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 Blackboard. *Please note that, due to the late due date, no extensions will be permitted and no late papers accepted.*

GRADING CRITERIA

All student work will be assigned numerical grades, corresponding to the following letter grades, according to the criteria below. Final grades will be calculated according to the percentages outlined above and converted to final letter grades for the course.

95-100 A	"As" are awarded for excellent to exceptional work, free of technical and stylistic errors, showing a sustained thought and engagement with the material on an appropriate but impressive academic level.
90-94 A-	
87-89 B+	"Bs" are awarded for good to very good work, with some occasional errors, but nonetheless clearly indicating a good grasp of the material and assigned task.
83-86 B	
80-82 B-	
77-79 C+	"Cs" are awarded for average to above average work, meeting minimal standards but marked with errors, and exposing gaps in student performance and/or fulfillment of the assignment.
70-76 C	
60-69 D	"Ds" are awarded for barely passing to below average work, usually riddled with errors and seriously deficient in fulfilling the assignment.
Below 59 F	"Fs" are awarded for unacceptable work.

COURSE REGULATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Readings must be completed by the date for which they are assigned. Careful preparation of readings is essential for success in this course! As this is a seminar-style class, students will be expected to actively participate in class discussions of the readings. In the interest of fairness, deadlines are firm and will not be extended except in case of emergencies. Late assignments without authorized extensions may be penalized **five percentage points** for each *day* late, or part thereof, up to a maximum of 30 points. *Keep disk and paper* copies of all written work

Standards for citation and referencing must be adhered to. I recommend MLA style (see

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<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/Documentation.html> and follow the link to MLA style), but any standard format is acceptable as long as you are consistent. Students may use abbreviated parenthetical references for assigned course texts, *i.e.*, (Girard, p. 90) but must provide full bibliographic information for all other sources used for written work. Internet sources are generally *unacceptable* as references, but if you do use them, citations must include full url details and date accessed. All written assignments must be typed, formatted in 10-12 point standard fonts, double-spaced, with one-inch margins.

Spelling, grammar, neatness, clarity, style, organization, etc. all *DO* count! Poor writing will affect your grade. Strive for clarity and use your computer's spell-check program wisely. Write and revise your essays *before* turning them in; do not ask to do so afterwards. Ask yourself, Is this clear? Am I communicating my thoughts well? Would a friend in another class understand what I am saying?

Plagiarism and any and all forms of academic dishonesty will *not* be tolerated. Plagiarism is stealing

someone else's words or original ideas. Plagiarism occurs in three forms:

- Written work that is entirely stolen from another source;

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- Using quotations from another source without properly citing them; and
- Paraphrasing from another source without proper citations

In all cases, to avoid plagiarism, students must properly cite the source material. Only commonly known facts and concepts, general material learned in the course of research and study, and students' original ideas do not require citation.

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to the standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions <http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2conductweb/2conductweb.html>.

Offenders will receive a grade of F for the plagiarized assignment, and possibly the course, and may be reported directly to the Office of Academic Affairs.

For useful guidelines, go to the **Plagiarism Prevention** section on the FIU Library's website: <http://libguides.fiu.edu/plagiarism>.

Attendance and punctuality in class are required. **One** unexcused absence after **ONE** will adversely affect your final grade, deducting up to 15 points from your class participation grade for each occurrence. Students with more than **three** absences will receive a **zero** for class participation.

EARLY ALERT

In an effort to help you succeed in your academic courses, FIU utilizes an Early Alert system. Instructors are now able to notify students and academic advisors if there are concerns about class performance. If an alert is submitted, your academic advisor will send you a message via your Student Dashboard (accessed via your MYFIU page) to discuss ways to improve your performance. Please respond to any communication you receive from your academic advisor about an early alert. Our goal with this program is to help you to be successful by identifying any issues as early on as possible and working to address them.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION AND NARRATIVES

11 January 2018: Course Introduction

WEEK 2: INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

18 January 2018: The development of the Islamic World (McAuliffe)

WEEK 3: The Living Quran

25 January 2018: Fundamentals of interpreting the Quran (Quran - Chapters 1, 2, & 36)

WEEK 4: THE AMERICAN-MUSLIM EXPERIENCE

1 February 2018: American-Muslims after 9/11 (Bayartmi)

WEEK 5: ISLAM AND MODERNITY

8 February 2018- The Making of Protestant Islam (Afsaruddin)
Extra credit if you bring a friend to the lecture.

WEEK 6: HOMOSEXUALITY

15 February 2018: LGBT Muslims (Kugle)

WEEK 7: LOVE AND MARRIAGE

22 February 2018: Navigating modern marriages and love (Mattu and Maznavi)

WEEK 8: MILITANT-EXTREMISM

1 March 2018: Understanding terrorism in the Muslim World

WEEK 9: MID-TERM EXAMINATION

8 MARCH 2018: **NO CLASS**- Complete midterm on Canvas, due on 14 March at midnight.

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WEEK 10: SPRING BREAK

15 March 2018: **NO CLASS**

WEEK 11: CONTEMPORARY PAKISTAN

22 March 2018: Contemporary Dalit Narrative in Tharparkar, Pakistan
Extra credit if you bring a friend to the lecture.

WEEK 12: LIBRARY RESEARCH SKILLS SEMINAR

29 March: Library Skills Seminar

WEEK 13: ISLAM AND HINDUISM IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

5 April 2018: Sangam Literature

http://www.projectmadurai.org/pm_etexts/pdf/pm0153.pdf

(Blackboard)

Paper Proposal Due at midnight

WEEK 14: SITE VISITS I & II

12 APRIL 2018: **SIKH TEMPLE** site visit will be at 12.30
16000 Stirling
Southwest Ranches, FL 33331

13 April 2018: **MOSQUE** site visit will be on Friday at 12.30
2000 NW 7th Court
Hollywood Beach, FL 33009

You are most welcome to bring family and friends with you for the site visit. If you need a ride, please be at my office at DM 359B by 11.15.

WEEK 15: COURSE REVIEW

20 April 2018: Overview of themes discussed throughout the course

WEEK 16: FINAL PAPER DUE

26 April 2018: **Final paper due online via Blackboard by midnight**