University of Florida
Department of Religion

REL 2362: Introduction to Islam

Fall 2012
Section 2560
Section 4227
Section 4231

Instructor: Dr. Terje Ostebo
Office: 490 Grinter Hall
Phone: 352-392-2175
e-mail: ostebo@ufl.edu
Office Hours: Thursday 8:30-10:30 (NB: 106 Anderson Hall)

Teaching Assistant:

Meeting & Location:
All sections: Tuesday per. 5-6 – TUR 011
Section 2560: Friday per. 3 – MAT 119
Section 4227: Friday per. 5 – ROL 205
Section 4231: Friday per. 6 – TUR 2346

Course Description
Introduction to Islam provides an overview of basic Islamic beliefs and practices through examination of Islamic history, law and an array of theological orientations as articulated in the traditions of teachings of both Sunni and Shi’a Islam. It also examines Islamic practices in the contemporary period and thereby exposes students to reflect on the realities of religious everyday life and religious change. The course aims to give the students the ability to critically analyze the impacts of Islamic beliefs and values on social and cultural practices, and the formation of institutions, communities and identities. The course also aims to challenge students to grasp the complex relationship between the “great” and “little” traditions of a major world religion as well as the ambiguities of some key terms of Muslim religious thinking.

Course Objectives
By the end of this course you should have an:

- Overview over the history of Islam
- Understanding of the main tenets of Muslim beliefs and practice
- Understanding of main theological traditions and features of Islamic law
- Understanding of the variety found within Islam
- Understanding of the intersection of Islam with social, political, and cultural issues
- Understanding of the main currents within contemporary Islam
Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

The final grade will be determined by the total scored for:

- Attendance and participation (10 %). We will circulate an attendance sheet, which you should sign. Signing for others is considered Academic dishonesty.
- Quizzes: There will be 2 quizzes during the semester. These will not be difficult, but will be intended to test whether you have done the readings and prepared for class (10 % each).
- Mid-term (30 %) and Final exam (40 %) are based on course reading, class discussion, and lectures.

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Make-ups and Attendance:

Make-up exams and tests will only be allowed in unavoidable circumstances or for compelling reasons that can be convincingly documented. Similarly, absence(s) will detract points except unavoidable ones proven with satisfactory explanation/documentation.

Student Honor Code:

As a UF student, you have agreed to follow the university’s Honor Code, meaning you will not give or receive unauthorized assistance in completing assignments. Violations can result in failing an exam, paper or the course. For more information, see: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentrights.php. On all work submitted for credit by University of Florida students, the following pledge is implied, “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” Please note that acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or assignment that was written by someone else.
- Copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without proper citation and quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing or restating in your own words, text or ideas written by someone else without proper citation.

For more info, see http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html

Disabilities:

“If you are a student with a disability and would like to request disability-related accommodations, you are encouraged to contact me and the Disability Resource Center as early in the semester as possible. The Disability Resource Center is located in 001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). Their phone number is 392-8565.”

Literature

(Additional readings are found at the end of the syllabus)

Books (for purchase, also placed on course-reserve):
The Holy Qur’an (translated by Abdallah Yusuf Ali)

Articles/Chapters (on course-reserve):

Class Calendar and Reading Schedule
Note: This document is subject to change, students are responsible for all changes announced in class.

Week 1 (8/24): Introduction – course and syllabus

Week 2 (8/27-31): Introduction & Images of Islam
Required readings: Kreinath 2012 (pp 309-343)
Additional readings: Gilsenan 2000 (pp 9-26); Muscati 2003

Week 3 (9/3-7) The Birth of a Religion
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 3-72)
Additional readings: Lapidus 2002 (pp 18-31); Guillame 1997

Week 4 (9/10-14) Islam in History
Required readings: Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 72-96)
Additional readings: Lapidus 2002 (pp 31-111+248-298); Madelung 1997

Tuesday 9/11 – First Quiz

Week 5 (9/24) The Scriptures of Islam I: The Written Qur’an
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 128-148)
Additional readings: Gade 2010

Week 6 (9/24-28) The Scripture of Islam II: The Living Qur’an
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 149-163); Greaves 2005 (pp 142-164)
Additional readings: Brown 2010 (pp 1-122+150-183)

Week 7 (10/1-5) Performing Islam: The Five Pillars
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 97-127); Kreinath 2012 (pp 121-141)
Additional readings: Murata/Chittick 1994 (pp 8-20)

Week 8 (10/8-12) Performing Islam: The Five Pillars
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 97-127); Kreinath 2012 (pp 174-188)
Additional readings: Murata/Chittick 1994 (pp 8-20)

10/9 – Midterm exam

Week 9 (10/15-19) Performing Islam: The Five Pillars
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 97-127); Kreinath 2012 (pp 174-188)
Week 10 (10/22-26) Visit to mosque
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 289-293); The Mosque in America 2001

Week 11 (10/29-11/2) Sufism: Aspects of Islamic Mysticism
Required readings: Denny 2006 (pp 211-259); Greaves 2005 (pp 118-142)
Additional readings: Ernst 1997 (pp 1-146); Abun-Nasr 2007 (pp 26-55); Baldick 2000

Week 12 (11/5-9) American Muslims
Required readings: to be announced

11/6 – Second Quiz

Week 13 (11/12-16) Women and Islam
Required readings: Greaves 2005 (pp 217-240); Denny 2006 (pp 263-288)
Additional readings: Eickelman/Piscatori 1996 (pp 80-108)

Week 14 (11/19-23) Contemporary Islamic Thought I
Denny 2006 (pp 315-346); Greaves 2005 (pp 190-216);
Additional readings: Meijer 2009b; Muscati 2003

Week 15 (11/26-30) Contemporary Islamic Thought II
Safi 2008 (pp 1-29); Duderija 2010

Week 16 (12/3-5) Conclusions

12/13, 3-5pm – Final Exam

Additional Reading List (not on reserve)