

**University of Florida  
Department of Religion**

**REL 2362: Introduction to Islam**

**Spring 2014**

Section 0038

Section 0049

Section 0050

Instructor: Dr. Terje Ostebo

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Teaching Assistant: Prea Persaud

Office: 17 Anderson Hall

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11-1 pm

**Meeting & Location:**

All sections: Monday / Wednesday per. 6 – Florida Gym 270

Section 0038: Friday per. 3 – MAT 107

Section 0049: Friday per. 5 – FLI 101

Section 0050: Friday per. 6 – AND 21

**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.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Tot %	94-100	88-93	82-87	76-81	71-75	66-70	61-65	56-60	51-55	46-50	40-45	<40

### 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):*

Greaves, R. (2005) *Aspects of Islam*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

*The Holy Qur'an* (translated by Abdallah Yusuf Ali)

Kreinath, J. (2012) *The Anthropology of Islam Reader*. New York: Routledge.

McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. (2013) *An Introduction to Islam in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

*Articles/Chapters (on course-reserve):*

Adis Duderija (2010) "Progressive Muslims—Defining and Delineating Identities and Ways of Being a Muslim," in *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 127-136.

Muscatti, S. A. (2003) "Reconstructing 'Evil': A Critical Assessment of Post-September 11 Political Discourse", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 23 (2).

Safi, O. (2008) "Introduction: The Times are A-Changin – A Muslim Quest for Justice, Gender Equality, and Pluralism." In Omid Safi, *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*. Oxford: Oneworld. pp. 1-29

## Class Calendar and Reading Schedule

*Note: This document is subject to change, students are responsible for all changes announced in class.*

### **Week 1 (1/6-10): Introduction & Images of Islam**

Required readings: Kreinath 2012 (pp 309-343); Muscatti 2003

Additional readings: Gilsean 2000 (pp 9-26)

### **Week 2 (1/13-17): The Birth of a Religion**

Required readings: McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 31-50)

Additional readings: Lapidus 2002 (pp 18-31); Guillame 1997

### **Week 3 (1/20-24): Islam in History**

Required readings: McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 13-29);

Additional readings: Lapidus 2002 (pp 31-111+248-298); Madelung 1997

### **Week 4 (1/27-31): Islamic Beliefs**

Required readings: McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 31-80); Greaves 2005 (pp 34-52)

## Wednesday 1/29 – First Quiz

### **Week 5 (2/3-7): The Scriptures of Islam**

Required readings: McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 31-50); Greaves 2005 (pp 142-164)

Additional readings: Gade 2010; Brown 2010

### **Week 6 (2/10-14) Visit to a mosque**

Film: The Mosque in America 2001

### **Week 7 (2/17-21) Islam in the West**

McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 157-170)

### **Week 8 (2/24-28) Women and Islam**

Required readings: Greaves 2005 (pp 217-240); Kreinath 2012 (pp 121-141)  
Additional readings: Eickelman/Piscatori 1996 (pp 80-108)

Monday 2/24 – Midterm exam

**Week 9 (3/3-7) Spring Break**

**Week 10 (3/10-14) Sufism: Aspects of Islamic Mysticism**

Required readings: Greaves 2005 (pp 118-142)

Additional readings: Ernst 1997 (pp 1-146); Abun-Nasr 2007 (pp 26-55); Baldick 2000

**Week 11 (3/17-21) Islam, Purity, and Reform**

Required readings: Greaves 2005 (pp 190-216);

Tuesday 3/19 – Second Quiz

**Week 12 (3/24-28) Islamic and Politics I**

Required readings: McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 81-108); Greaves 2005 (pp 190-216)

Additional readings: Eickelman/Piscatori 1996; Meijer 2009

**Week 13 (3/31-4/4) Islam and Politics II**

Required readings: McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 111-156);

Additional readings: Eickelman/Piscatori 1996; Meijer 2009

**Week 14 (4/7-11) Islam and Violence**

Required readings: Greaves 2005 (pp 165-189); McCloud, A.M, Hibbard, S.W, Saud, L. 2013 (pp 285-308)

**Week 15 (4/14-18) Progressive Muslims**

Required readings: Safi 2008 (pp 1-29); Duderija 2010

**Week 16 (4/21-23) Conclusions**

Thursday 5/1, 3:00-5:00pm, FLG 270 – Final Exam

Additional Reading List (not on reserve)

Abun-Nasr J. M (2007) *Muslim Communities of Grace. The Sufi Brotherhoods in Islamic Religious Life*. London: Hurst.

Baldick, J. (2000) *Mystical Islam. An introduction to Sufism*. London: Tauris.

Brown, J. C. A. (2010) *Hadith: Muhammed's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. Oxford: Oneworld.

Eickelman, D. & Piscatori, J. (1996) *Muslim Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Ernst, C. W (1997) *Sufism: An Essential Introduction to the Philosophy and Practice of the Mystical Tradition of Islam*. Boston: Shambhala.

Gade, A. (2010) *The Qur'an: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oneworld

Gilsenan, M. (2000) *Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Middle East*. London: Tauris.

Guillaume, A. (1997) *The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ishāq's Sīrat rasūl Allāh*. Karachi: Oxford University Press

Lapidus, I. (2002) *A History of Islamic Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Madelung, W. (1997) *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate*.  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meijer, R. (2009) *Towards a Political Islam*. The Hague: Netherlands Institute of  
International Relations 'Clingendael'.