

**University of Florida
Department of Religion**

REL 2362: Introduction to Islam

Spring 2016

Section 0014
Section 002H
Section 0038

Instructor: Dr. Terje Ostebo
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Office Hours: Wednesday 3:00-5:00 pm

Meeting & Location:

All sections: Monday / Wednesday per. 6 – FLG 220
Section 0014: Friday per. 4 – RNK 210
Section 002H: Friday per. 6 – WEIM 1076
Section 0038: Friday per. 7 – MAT 103

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 5 unannounced quizzes during the semester. These will be short and not difficult, and are intended to test whether you have done the readings and prepared for class (15 % together).
- Mid-term (30 %) and Final exam (45 %) are based on course reading, class discussion, and lectures.

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

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

Books:

Denny F. M. (2006) *An Introduction to Islam*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.

Esposito, J. (2011) *Islam the Straight Path*. Oxford University Press, 4th Edition.

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

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

Articles/Chapters (on Canvas):

Haykel, B. (2009) "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action" in Roel Meijer (ed) *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*. London: Hurst, 33-57.

Knott, K., Poole, E., Taira, T. (2013) *Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular Sacred*. Surrey: Ashgate, chapter 4

Soares, B. (2004) "Muslim Saints in the Age of Neoliberalism" in Brad Weis (ed) *Producing African Futures: Ritual and Reproduction in a Neoliberal Age*. Leiden: Brill, 79-105

Class Calendar and Reading Schedule

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

Week 1 (1/5-8): Introduction

Week 2 (1/11-15): Images of Islam

Required readings: Greaves (2005) pp 12-33; Knott et.al (2013)

Week 3 (1/19-22; Monday holiday): Islam in History

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 1-19, 36-44

Week 4 (1/25-29): Islam in History

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 44-84

Week 5 (2/1-5): Islamic Beliefs/Practice

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34, 85-124

Week 6 (2/8-12): Islamic Beliefs/Practice

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34, 85-124

Week 7 (2/15-19) Visit to a mosque

Required readings: *The American Mosque* 2011; Greaves (2005) pp 34-52

Week 8 (2/22-26) The Scriptures of Islam

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34; Denny (2006) pp 128-163

Week 9 (2/29-3/6) Spring Break

Week 10 (3/7-11) The Scriptures of Islam

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34; Denny (2006) pp 128-163

Wednesday 3/9 – Midterm Exam

Week 11 (3/14-18) Women and Islam

Required readings: Greaves (2005) pp 217-240; Film: TBA

Week 12 (3/21-25) Sufism: Aspects of Islamic Mysticism

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 124-140; Greaves (2005) pp 118-142; Soares pp 79-105

Week 13 (3/28-4/1) Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 141-152, 221-226; Haykel (2009) pp 33-57

Week 14 (4/4-8) Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 152-221

Week 14 (4/11-15) *Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements*

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 235-249; Greaves (2005) pp 165-189

Week 15 (4/18-20) *Conclusions*

Final Exam: April 27, 12:30-2:30pm (FLG 220)