

**REL 4936: Women and Islam (Gender and Sexuality in Islam)**  
**RLG 5365: Studies in Islam**  
**FALL 2022**

**Class Meeting Times:** Tuesday 5:10—6 PM & Thursday 5:10—7:05 PM

**Class Venue:** Anderson 0019

**Instructor:** Professor Ali Altaf Mian, Ph.D.

**E-mail:** [alimian@ufl.edu](mailto:alimian@ufl.edu)

**Office Phone:** 352-273-2940

**Office Location:** Anderson Hall 107-A

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 11:45 AM—12:45 PM

### **Course Synopsis**

This course surveys the key debates in Muslim gender and sexuality studies and is divided into three thematic cores: (1) Historical Foundations, (2) Feminist Methodologies and Debates in Queer Theory and (3) Contemporary Representations. The first set of readings will give students a solid grounding in the history of gender in Islam using Leila Ahmed's *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (Yale University Press, 1992). In the second part of the course, we will examine how the methodologies outlined by feminist scholars and queer theorists help us to think through some of the impasses of gender and sexuality in Muslim-majority contexts and in the Muslim diaspora in the modern West. The course's final section will turn to memoirs, films, and fiction to examine lived religion and situated practices in various contexts. This course is discussion-based and will enable students to conduct research and complete several writing projects.

### **Required Texts:**

- Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (Yale University Press, 2021 edition).
- Samra Habib, *We Have Always Been Here: A Queer Muslim Memoir*
- Tofik Dibi, *Djinn*
- Mohsin Zaidi, *A Dutiful Boy: A Memoir of Secrets, Lies, and Family Love*
- Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali, *Angry Queer Somali Boy: A Complicated Memoir*
- Sabina Khan, *The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali*

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Class attendance is expected, and will be taken at the beginning of each class session. You can miss three sessions without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will detract 25 points from your grade. Excused absences are consistent with university policies as listed in the undergraduate catalog (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) and require appropriate documentation. Class will begin and end on time. Five late arrivals (anything over 5 minutes) will be considered one absence.

### Assignments/Grade Breakdown:

Item:	Points:
Class Participation	200
Film Review	200
Three Essays (at 200 points each)	600

Detailed Guidelines for Each Assignment will be provided

### Grading Scale

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
940-1000	94-100	A	4.00
900-939	90.0-93.9	A-	3.67
867-899	86.7-89.9	B+	3.33
834-866	83.4-86.6	B	3.00
800-833	80.0-83.3	B-	2.67
767-799	76.7-79.9	C+	2.33
734-766	73.4-76.6	C	2.00
700-733	70.0-73.3	C-	1.67
667-699	66.7-69.9	D+	1.33
634-666	63.4-66.6	D	1.00
600-633	60.0-63.3	D-	0.67
0-599	0-59.9	E	0.00

More information on grades and grading policies can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

### Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all. The use of laptops or tables is only allowed for purpose of note-taking.

### Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings

#### Week 1: Introduction

**Thursday August 25**

Course Introduction

#### Week 2: Historical Foundations, part I

**Tuesday August 30**

Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

**Thursday September 1**

Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

#### Week 3: Historical Foundations, part II

**Tuesday September 6**

Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

**Thursday September 8**

Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

#### Week 4: Historical Foundations, part III

**Tuesday September 13**

Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

**Thursday September 15**

Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*

#### Week 5: Methodological Foundations, part I

**Tuesday September 20**

Ahmed Ragab, "One, Two, or Many Sexes: Sex Differentiation in Medieval Islamic Medical Thought."

**Thursday September 22**

Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Familial Undercurrents: Untold Stories of Love and Marriage in Modern Iran* (excerpt)

**Week 6: Methodological Foundations, part II**

**Tuesday September 27**

Katherine Ewing, "Embodied Metaphor: Playing with Gender in South Asian Sufism."

**Thursday September 29**

Claire Pamment, "Performing Piety in Pakistan's Transgender Rights Movement"

**Week 7: Methodological Foundations, part III**

**Tuesday October 4**

Ali Altaf Mian, "Genres of Desire: The Erotic in Deobandi Islam"

**Thursday October 6**

Ali Altaf Mian, "Displaced Ornaments: Naiza Khan's Critique of Sexual Difference in Muslim South Asia"

**Week 8: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday October 11**

Samra Habib, *We Have Always Been Here: A Queer Muslim Memoir*

**Thursday October 13**

Samra Habib, *We Have Always Been Here: A Queer Muslim Memoir*

**Week 9: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday October 18**

Samra Habib, *We Have Always Been Here: A Queer Muslim Memoir*

**Thursday October 20—NO CLASS (Dr. Mian is at a conference)**

**Week 10: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday October 25**

Tofik Dibi, *Djinn*

**Thursday October 27**

Tofik Dibi, *Djinn*

**Week 11: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday November 1**

Mohsin Zaidi, *A Dutiful Boy: A Memoir of Secrets, Lies, and Family Love*

**Thursday November 3**

Mohsin Zaidi, *A Dutiful Boy: A Memoir of Secrets, Lies, and Family Love*

**Week 12: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday November 8**

Mohsin Zaidi, *A Dutiful Boy: A Memoir of Secrets, Lies, and Family Love*

**Thursday November 10**

Mohsin Zaidi, *A Dutiful Boy: A Memoir of Secrets, Lies, and Family Love*

**Week 13: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday November 15**

Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali, *Angry Queer Somali Boy: A Complicated Memoir*

**Thursday November 17**

Mohamed Abdulkarim Ali, *Angry Queer Somali Boy: A Complicated Memoir*

**Week 14: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday November 22—NO CLASS (Dr. Mian is at a conference)**

**Thursday November 24—NO CLASS (Thanksgiving)**

**Week 15: Contemporary Representations**

**Tuesday November 29**

Sabina Khan, *The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali*

**Thursday December 1**

Sabina Khan, *The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali*