

The Life and Image of Muhammad

RELI 3340A (Fall 2011)

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:05-2:25 pm

Professor A. Geissinger

Office: Paterson Hall 2A41

Office hours: Thursdays 9-11 am, or by appointment

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Course Description

This course examines the life of Muhammad as it is presented in biographical and historical Muslim writings. Students will also be introduced to the critical methods used in contemporary academic scholarship to investigate and reconstruct Muhammad's life. Issues to be studied include: Muhammad's teachings, the relationship between Muhammad's life and the Quran, Muslim concepts of prophecy, Muhammad's religious significance for Muslims, and common Western European perceptions of Muhammad's life, past and present.

NOTE: The purpose of this course is not confessional—it will not attempt to persuade you to adopt or reject a particular religious viewpoint. **This course presupposes that students accept that Muhammad's life will be studied using critical methods which are employed in a modern research university when examining any historical figure.** All those taking this course are required to study historical-critical methods, as well as to critically examine a selection of the various ways that Muhammad has been presented historically—both by Muslims of different sectarian and theological persuasions, as well as by indifferent or hostile Others.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you should:

- Be familiar with traditional Muslim retellings of Muhammad's life
- Possess a basic grasp of the issues of concern in contemporary historical-critical attempts to reconstruct Muhammad's life
- Have an understanding of the historical development of Muhammad's theological significance for Muslims
- Have further refined your skills of critical reading, information retrieval and evaluation, and writing.

Course Textbooks

The following textbooks are required:

- 1 - Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His Life based on the Earliest Sources* (Inner Traditions, rev. ed., 2006).

2 - Ed. Jonathan Brockopp, *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

3 - *The Qur'an: A New Translation*, trans. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford University Press, 2008).

4 – Course pack of readings (CP)

- All of these items, including the course pack, can be purchased at Octopus Books (116 Third Ave., near the intersection of Third and Bank): <http://octopusbooks.org/>
- Please note that several additional required readings for this course are available online. The links are posted on WebCT.

Course Requirements

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

Regular attendance and informed participation—15%

Midterm exam—25%

Outline of essay and annotated bibliography—10%

Research essay—20%

Final Exam—30%

NOTE: Both the readings and the lectures are essential components of this course. The readings cannot substitute for the lectures—or *vice versa*. It is expected that all students will come to class regularly, having already done the readings.

Be aware that the readings for this course are heavy. Before signing up for this course, it is important to consider whether or not you will be able to make the time commitment required. The grade for attendance will be determined primarily by random pop quizzes, as well as by informed participation in class discussion. Any pop quizzes missed cannot be made up at a later date, or substituted for in any other way.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

Sept. 8—Introduction to the course

Week 2

Sept. 13—The nature of the sources; historical method

Readings: Peters, “The quest of the historical Muhammad” (WebCT)

Koren and Nevo, “Methodological approaches to Islamic studies,” 87-107 (CP)

Sept. 15—The world on the eve of Muhammad’s birth; pre-Islamic Arabia

Reading: Saleh, “The Arabian context of Muhammad’s life,” 21-38 (in Brockopp)

Week 3

Sept. 20—Muhammad's context

* **Paper title and outline due** (in class)

Readings: Lings, chapters 1-14 ('The house of God' through 'The rebuilding of the Ka'ba')
Quran chapters: 105, 106

Sept. 22—Muhammad's early life

Reading: Conrad, "Abraha and Muhammad: some observations apropos of chronology" (CP)

Week 4

Sept. 27—Muhammad's revelatory experiences

Readings: Lings, chapters 15-24 ('The first revelations' through 'Family divisions'); Quran chapters: 96, 73, 74, 93, 94, 108, 53

Sept. 29—Major themes of Muhammad's Meccan preaching

Readings: Quran chapters: 112, 102, 107, 109, 99, 100, 104, 111, 91, 92, 89, 76, 71, 28 and 14
Muranyi, "The first Muslims in Mecca: a social basis for a new religion?" (CP)

Week 5

Oct. 4—Muhammad in Mecca

Readings: Lings, chapters 25-33 ('The Hour' through 'After the Year of Sadness')
Quran chapters: 18, 19, 20, 91

Oct. 6—Muhammad and his Meccan audience

Readings: Quran chapter: 54; Rubin, "Muhammad's message in Mecca," pp. 39-60
(in Brockopp)

Week 6

Oct. 11—the migration (*hijra*) to Medina

Readings: Quran chapter: 6; Lings, chapters 34-38 ('Yathrib responsive' through 'The entry into Medina')

Oct. 13— ***Mid-term exam**

Week 7

Oct. 18—The Medina Agreement

Readings: Quran chapter: 60; "The so-called Constitution of Medina", 75-79 (Brockopp)

Oct. 20—Establishing a state in Yathrib/Medina

Readings: Lings, chapters, 39-45 ('Harmony and discord' through 'The captives')
Lecker, "Glimpses of Muhammad's Medinan decade," 61-82 (in Brockopp).

Week 8

Oct. 25— Major themes of Medinan suras

* annotated bibliography due

Readings: Lings, chapters 46-61 ('Bani Qaynuqa' through 'Bani Qurayzah')

Quran chapters: 3, 4, 33, 61

Oct. 27— From arbiter to leader; internal dissent

Reading: Lecker, "Waqidi's account of the status of the Jews of Medina" 15-32 (CP)

Week 9

Nov. 1— The "hypocrites" and the "affair of the slander"

Readings: Lings, chapters 62-73 ('After the Siege' through 'Syria'); Bukhari, Book of tafsir CCXLIII, "Those who propagated the lie" (WebCT); Quran chapter: 24

Nov. 3— The fall of Mecca

Readings: Lings, chapters 74-78 ('A breach of the armistice' through 'After the victory')
Quran chapters: 63, 24, 48, 110.

Week 10

Nov. 8—Tabuk; the "farewell pilgrimage"; Muhammad's last days

Readings: Lings, chapters 79-85 ('Tabuk' through 'The succession and the burial');
Quran chapter: 9

Nov. 10— Muslim conceptions of prophethood

Readings: Wensinck, "Muhammad and the prophets," 319-43; Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous*, 50-82; Fierro, "Women as prophets in Islam," 183-98 (CP)

Week 11

Nov. 15—Muhammad as an exemplar; the notion of *sunna*

Readings: Gleave, "Personal piety," 103-122 (in Brockopp); Bukhari's Chapter on *Adab* (WebCT)

Nov. 17— The compilation of the Hadith; Muhammad as a legal authority

Readings: Lowry, "The Prophet as lawgiver and legal authority," 83-102 (in Brockopp);
Bukhari, "Book of asking for loans" (WebCT)

Week 12

Nov. 22— Muslim veneration of Muhammad

Readings: Katz, "The Prophet Muhammad in ritual," 139-157; Bashir, "Muhammad in Sufi eyes," pp. 201-225 (both in Brockopp)

Nov. 24—Medieval Muslim scholars and the "story of the cranes"

Readings: Quran chapter: 53; Ahmed, "Ibn Taymiyyah and the satanic verses," 67-124 (WebCT)

Week 13

Nov. 29—Common medieval and modern Western European perceptions of Muhammad

Readings:

Tolan, “European accounts of Muhammad’s life,” 226-250 (in Brockopp); “The Danish cartoons” (WebCT)

Dec. 1—Muslim artistic production about Muhammad * **Research paper due** (in class)

Reading: Hussain, “Images of Muhammad in literature, art and music,” 274-292 (in Brockopp)

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Expectations

These are my expectations for you this semester:

- Come to class on time
- Attend every class (if a medical problem or emergency results in you missing more than three classes, contact me)
- Do the readings well before coming to class
- Join in class discussion and listen respectfully to others
- Think, read and write critically, considering as many sides of any question as possible

Exams

The mid-term and final exams will be made up of short-answer (i.e. define and explain the significance of...) and essay questions.

Please note that **there will be no make-up examination for the midterm**. If you must miss the midterm, you must choose whether to add the 25% value of this exam to your final exam, or to your research paper. In order to qualify for either of these options, you must (1) provide adequate documentation which shows why you missed the midterm, and (2) fill out a form (available in my office) asking to have the normal grade distribution changed.

Note also that in order to pass this course, you must pass the final exam. This stipulation stands regardless of the quality of your work during the term.

The research essay

This assignment requires you to research and write an essay which deals directly with a topic related to the course materials.

The essay (approx. 15 pages) is a research paper. Standard documentation and bibliographical formats must be used. No internet sources whatsoever are acceptable. Paper topics must be approved by the professor before you proceed. Each student will submit the title of the paper, along with an outline, and an annotated bibliography by the deadlines outlined in the syllabus. Failure to meet these deadlines will result in your paper not being accepted.

More detailed instructions about the essay will be provided in class.

- Ensure that you know what **plagiarism** is, and how to avoid it. For details, see:
<http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity/>
If you are in any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, ask.
- **Assignments are due** in hard copy, at the beginning of class, on Dec. 1. Late papers will be penalized by the deduction of 2% per day or partial day (including weekends), unless an extension has been arranged before the due date. Retroactive extensions will be granted only according to the rules of the university—personal and family emergencies (documentation must be provided). **Extensions will not be granted because of exam or essay conflicts, jobs, busy schedules, etc.**
- **Late papers** can be submitted to me in my office, or put in the drop box at the Religion and Classics Department (a large locked wooden box on the wall outside 2A39 Paterson Hall). Do not put them under my (or anyone else's) door; the cleaning staff may pick them up and throw them out.
- **Papers that do not follow** the directions outlined above and given in class (in content, methodology, appearance, length) may be returned ungraded for resubmission. In such a case, late penalties will accrue from the due date, regardless of when the problem was discovered.
- Be sure to **keep a hard copy** of your paper, and do a computer/disk back-up as well. Please submit the original for marking, not a photo-copy.
- **If you have never written a paper like this** before, you are strongly urged to contact the Student Academic Success Centre:
<http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/writing-resources/>

Email communication

Please be aware that in order to ensure compliance with the federal privacy act known as FIPPA, Carleton communications policy states that faculty may only communicate with students through their Carleton Connect accounts.

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*" This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*"

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points

ABS Absent from final examination, equivalent to F

DEF Official deferral (see "Petitions to Defer")

FND Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 5, 2011**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 5, 2012**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Merton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov.11, 2011 for the Fall term and March 7, 2012 for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment.

If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please contact the Registrar's Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Merton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library