

**The College of the Humanities: Religion  
RELI 2310A: Islam**

Professor A. Geissinger

Office: 2A41 Paterson Hall

Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 am,  
or by appointment

Office Phone: (613) 520-2600, ext. 3108

**Course Lectures:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:35 am-12:55 pm (182 University Centre)

**Course Description**

This course is a survey of the history and development of the Islamic religious tradition. It traces Islam from its historical roots down to the present, with an emphasis on the formative and classical periods. The aim is to introduce students to key concepts, beliefs, and practices of Islam, within a historical framework, and to provide them with more general frameworks for understanding Muslim history.

**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 Islam will be studied using critical methods which are employed in the academic discipline of Religious Studies.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- give a general outline of the history of Islam which includes major personalities, developments and themes, and shows awareness of their various social contexts
- describe key Muslim beliefs and practices, taking into account the diversity of Muslim interpretations past and present
- locate inter-Muslim debates about Islam within particular historical contexts

**Course Evaluation**

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

- In-class pop quizzes—20%
- Mid-term exam—30%
- Written assignment—15%
- Final exam—35%

**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.

**The in-class pop quizzes** are based on the readings and lecture materials, and they mark both regular class attendance and reading preparation. Therefore, no make-up tests or other substitutions for them will be permitted.

## Required Course Readings

- Alexander Knysh, *Islam in Historical Perspective* (Prentice-Hall, 2011).
- Michael Muhammad Knight, *Blue-Eyed Devil: A Road Odyssey Through Islamic America* (Soft Skull Press, any edition).
- The books are available through Haven Books (43 Seneca Street, Ottawa, [www.havenbooks.ca](http://www.havenbooks.ca)). The links to all of the other readings are available through WebCT.

## COURSE POLICIES

### Exams

Please note that there will be no make-up examination for the mid-term. If you must miss the mid-term, you must choose whether to add its value to your final exam mark, or to your written assignment mark. 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.

In order to pass this course, you must pass the final exam. This stipulation stands regardless of the quality of your work during the rest of the term.

### The Written Assignment

- **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.
- **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/>
- **Assignments are due** in hard copy, at the beginning of class, on the date specified in the syllabus. 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** through 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 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 photocopy.
- More detailed instructions for the assignment will be provided in class.

### 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.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1**

Sept. 6: Introduction to the course

### **Week 2**

Sept. 11: The world before Islam; pre-Islamic Arabia

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 1

Sept. 13: Muhammad in Mecca

Readings: Knysh, pp. 18-23; The Qur'an, Suras 96, 112, 99, 81, 82, 83, 85, 102, 107 (WebCT)

### **Week 3**

Sept. 18: The *hijra*; Muhammad in Medina

Reading: Knysh, pp. 24-34; The Qur'an, Suras 1, 57, 61, 62, 64, 65, 13, 22 (WebCT)

Sept. 20: After Muhammad; the first four caliphs; the conquests

Readings: Bulliet, "Conversion Stories in Early Islam" (WebCT); Knysh, Chapter 3

### **Week 4**

Sept. 25: The *fitna* wars; the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 4; "Walking Tour of the Haram al-Sharif" (WebCT)

Sept. 27: The Qur'an

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 5; The Qur'an, suras 55, 91, 36,

### **Week 5**

Oct. 2: Hadith and *sunna*

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 6; *Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith* (WebCT)

Oct. 4: Basic beliefs and practices

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 17; Hadith #2 in *Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith* (WebCT)

## **Week 6**

Oct. 9: The Kharijis and the Party of 'Ali; the establishment of the 'Abbasid dynasty

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 7 and 8

Oct. 11: The Zaydis and the Ithna Ash'ari Shi'is

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 11; Schubel, "Karbala as Sacred Space Among North American Shi'a" (WebCT)

## **Week 7**

Oct. 16     **\*Mid-term exam** (in class)

Oct. 18: The Isma'ilis

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 12

## **Week 8**

Oct. 23: Introducing Islamic law

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 9; *Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*, numbers: 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, 20, 27, 30 and 33; *Al-Muwatta' of Imam Malik*, chapters 5 (Jumu'a) and 25 (Game)(WebCT)

Oct. 25: Introducing Muslim theological debates

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 10; Imam Abu Hanifa, *Fiqh al-Akbar* (WebCT)

## **Week 9**

Oct. 30: Ascetic movements; pietism

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 13; *Forty Hadith Qudsi* (WebCT)

Nov. 1: Sufism and Sufi orders

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 14; "Al-Ghazali on Jihad al-nafs" (WebCT)

## **Week 10**

Nov. 6: Knowledge transmission; the 'ulama, madrasas, Sufi lodges, mosques

Reading: Knysh, Chapters 16 and 18

Nov. 8: "Islam" and "the West" through a historical lens

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 20; *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 1-29.

## **Week 11**

Nov. 13: The "Gunpowder Empires"; modernity; colonialism

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 21; *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 30-58.

Nov. 15: Muslim modernism and Muslim reformism

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 22; *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 58-87.

## **Week 12**

Nov. 20: "Political Islam"

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 23; *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 88-114

Nov. 22: Muslim liberalism

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 24; *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 117-151.

## **Week 13**

Nov. 27: Globalized jihadism

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 25; *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 152-184.

Nov. 29: Future directions? \* **Written assignment due (in class)**

Reading: *Blue-Eyed Devil*, 184-214.

## 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. 3, 2012**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 10, 2013**.

### 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/](http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/)

### Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

### 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)

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|---|-------------------------------|
| 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 Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937    | 501 Uni-Centre                |
| Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125 | 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library |
| Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125  | 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor Library |