

The College of the Humanities: Religion

RELI 2310A: Islam

Professor A. Geissinger
Office Hours: Wednesdays 11-1,
or by appointment

Office: 2A41 Paterson Hall
Office Phone: (613) 520-2600, ext. 3108

Course Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:35 am-2:25 pm (Loeb C264)

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 the critical methods 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:

- First in-class test—20%
- Second in-class test—20%
- Primary source reading responses—20%
- Final exam—40%

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.

Required Course Readings

- Alexander Knysh, *Islam in Historical Perspective* (Prentice-Hall, 2011). The book is available through Haven Books (43 Seneca Street, Ottawa, www.havenbooks.ca).
- The links to all of the other readings are available on the course website.

COURSE POLICIES

Tests and the Exam

Please note that there will be no opportunity to make up for the in-class tests. If you must miss one (or both), you must choose whether to add its/their 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 test(s), 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 Primary Source Reading Responses

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- **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 anything like this before**, you are strongly urged to contact the Student Academic Success Centre: <http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/writing-resources/>
- **Reading responses are due** in hard copy, at the beginning of class, on the dates specified in the syllabus. Late submissions 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 reading responses 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.
- **Reading responses 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**, and do a computer/disk back-up as well. Please submit the original for marking, not a photocopy.
- More detailed instructions 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

May 7: Introduction to the course; the world before Islam; pre-Islamic Arabia

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 1

May 9: Muhammad in Mecca and Medina

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 2; The Qur'an, Suras 96, 112, 99, 100, 88, 89, 91, 20, 36, 47, 60, 57
(link on course website)

Week 2

May 14: The first four caliphs; the conquests; the *fitna* wars; the Umayyad dynasty

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 3 and 4

May 16: The Qur'an and the Hadith

***First primary source reading response due**

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 5 and 6; The Qur'an, Sura 5; *Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith* (link on course website)

Week 3

May 21: The Kharijis and the Party of 'Ali

***First in-class quiz**

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 7

May 23: The 'Abbasid dynasty; the translation movement; Muslim theological debates

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 8 and 10; Abu Hanifa's *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar* (link on course website)

Week 4

May 28: Key beliefs and practices

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

May 30: Introducing Islamic law

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 9

Week 5

June 4: The Zaydis and Ithna-Ash'ari Shi'is

***Second in-class quiz**

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 11

June 6: Ascetic movements; Sufism

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 13; Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*: "Malek ibn Dinar" (pp. 11-18), "Habib al-'Ajami" (pp. 19-28), "Rabe'a al-'Adawiya" (pp. 29-47) (link on course website)

Week 6

June 11: Classical Sufi orders; medieval knowledge transmission; the 'ulama

***Second primary source reading response due**

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 14 and 16; al-Ghazali, *Confessions, or Deliverance from Error* (link on course website)

June 13: "Islam" and "the West" through a historical lens; Muslim responses to modernity

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 20 and 22

Week 7

June 18: Some key trends in contemporary Muslim thought

Readings: Knysh, Chapters 23, 24 and 25.

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 **EARLY SUMMER** courses is **JUNE 18, 2013**. The last day to withdraw from **FULL SUMMER and LATE SUMMER** courses is **AUGUST 15, 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/

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 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)

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 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library