

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

Professor A. Geissinger
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 pm,
or by appointment

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Course Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:35 am-12:55 pm (342 Tory Building)

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 taking into account the diversity of Muslim interpretations past and present, as well as to locate intra-Muslim debates about Islam within particular historical contexts.

NOTE: The purpose of this course is not to 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, students should be able to:

- sketch the main outline of Islamic history from the time of Muhammad to the present
- describe the main elements of Islamic thought and practice, and how these have developed over time
- demonstrate an awareness of the great variety of expressions of Islam past and present
- discuss religion in a nuanced way as a historical, cultural and social phenomenon

Required Course Readings

- Alexander Knysh, *Islam in Historical Perspective* (Routledge, 2017), 2nd ed.
This book is available through Haven Books (43 Seneca Street, Ottawa, www.havenbooks.ca). **Be sure to get the second edition only.**
- All other assigned readings are available through cuLearn.

Course Evaluation

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

- In-class written responses—25%
- Written assignment (5 pages)—20%

- Midterm exam—25%
- 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*. Some course materials will only be discussed in class. It is expected that all students will attend class regularly, having already done the readings.

The in-class responses

The written responses deal with topics drawn from or directly related to the assigned readings. As one of the functions of these responses is to mark class preparation (meaning, whether you are doing the readings) as well as attendance, no make-up tests or other substitutions for them will be permitted under any circumstances.

The written assignment

Instructions for the written assignment will be discussed in class and posted on cuLearn. It is due in hard copy at the beginning of class on the date specified in the syllabus.

Assignments that do not follow the directions given (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.

Exams

Exams are based on both the course readings and the materials discussed in class. Please note that there will be no make-up examination for the midterm exam. If you must miss the midterm, you must choose whether to add its value to your written assignment or to your final exam 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 write—and pass—the final exam. This stipulation stands regardless of the quality of your work during the term.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity

“The integrity of a student’s academic work is critical to enabling student success. Students who violate the principles of academic integrity undermine the quality of their education and the value of a Carleton University degree.” (<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>)

All assignments are to be written in your own words, and you must acknowledge any idea or quotation that you take from another author by properly citing it, as well as by using quotation marks where appropriate. It is every student’s responsibility to know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, which includes how to properly cite sources.

Laptops and other electronic devices

In order to help maintain a respectful environment that is conducive to learning, laptops and other electronic devices are only to be used in class for matters directly related to the course.

Please note that no audio or video recording of lectures with any electronic device is allowed.

Extensions and late assignments

The written assignment is due in hard copy on the dates specified in the syllabus, at the beginning of class. Late papers will be penalized by the deduction of 5 marks per day or partial day (including weekends), unless an extension has been arranged before the due date. Retroactive extensions will only be granted personal and family emergencies (documentation must be provided).

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.

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. 7: Introduction to the course; studying Islam in the discipline of Religious Studies

Week 2

Sept. 12: The Near East before Islam; pre-Islamic Arabia

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 1

Sept. 14: Muhammad in Mecca; the *hijra*; Muhammad in Medina

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 2; The Qur'an, suras 112, 101, 107, 49 [link on cuLearn].

Week 3

Sept. 19: After Muhammad; the first four caliphs; the conquests

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 3

Sept. 21: The *fitna* wars; the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 4; "A Virtual Walking Tour: Al-Haram Al-Sharif" [link on cuLearn]

Week 4

Sept. 26: The Qur'an

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 5; Suras 1, 13, 31, 56, 57, 65, 71, 78, 91, 96, and 114 [link on cuLearn]

Sept. 28: Khariji and Shi'i movements

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 7

Week 5

Oct. 3: The 'Abbasid dynasty

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 8

Oct. 5: Hadith and *sunna*

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 6; "Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadith" [link on cuLearn]

Week 6

Oct. 10: Introducing Islamic law; legal schools

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 9; Fatwas [link on cuLearn]

Oct. 12: Muslim ritual practices

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 16

Week 7

Oct. 17: Introducing Muslim theology

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 10

Oct. 19 ***Midterm exam (in class)**

Week 8

Oct. 24 and 26—Fall Break (no classes)

Week 9

Oct. 31—Twelver Shi'ism and Zaydi Shi'ism

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 11; "Forty hadith on azadari" [link on cuLearn]

Nov. 2—Ismaili Shi'ism

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 12

Week 10

Nov. 8: Muslim ascetic and mystical movements

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 13; Arberry, *Muslim Saints and Mystics*, pp. 119-134 (Abu Yazid al-Bestami) [link on cuLearn]

Nov. 10: Transmission of knowledge and religious authority

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 15

Week 11

Nov. 14: “Islam” and “the West”

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 19

Nov. 16: The gunpowder empires

Readings: Knysh, Chapter 20; “The Suleymaniye Mosque: Virtual Walking Tour” [link on cuLearn]

Week 12

Nov. 21: Class cancelled (conference); use the time to work on the assignment

Nov. 23: Empires and reformers

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 21

Week 13

Nov. 28: “Political Islam”

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 22

Nov. 30: Major trends in contemporary Muslim religious thought

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 23.

Week 14

Dec. 5: Globalized jihadism

Reading: Knysh, Chapter 24

Dec. 7: Course conclusion and review ***assignments due** (in class)



University Regulations for 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.

Academic Integrity at Carleton

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found on <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/#AIatCU>.

Academic Accommodation Policy

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to the instructor 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. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to the instructor 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. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

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).

Grading System at Carleton University

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System Chart](#)

Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Statement on Class Conduct

The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and

preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

Deferred Term Work

In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

Deferred Exams

Students who do not write/attend a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply to write a deferred examination.

1. be made in writing to the Registrar's Office **no later than three working days after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination;** and
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and in cases of illness by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [forms and fees page](#).

The granting of a deferral also requires that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course according to the evaluation scheme established in the Course Outline, excluding the final examination for which deferral privileges are requested. Reasons for denial of a deferral may include, among other conditions, a failure to (i) achieve a minimum score in the course before the final examination; (ii) attend a minimum number of classes; (iii) successfully complete a specific task (e.g. term paper, critical report, group project, computer or other assignment); (iv) complete laboratory work; (v) successfully complete one or more midterms; or (vi) meet other reasonable conditions of successful performance.

More information can be found [in the calendar](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to: [Registrar's Office](#)

Withdrawal From Courses

Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA.

NEW FALL 2017: WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term. Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Dates can be found here: <http://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>

Department Contact Information

College of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

Drop box for RELI Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

Registrar's Office 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

Student Resources on Campus

[CUKnowHow Website](#)