

**The College of Humanities: Religion**  
**RELI 3340A: The Life and Image of Muhammad**

Professor A. Geissinger

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

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**Course Lectures:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:35-3:55 pm (219 Tory Bldg.)

**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:** 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 Evaluation**

Your final grade will be determined by the following:

- In-class pop quizzes and in-class group work—20%
- Mid-term exam—30%
- 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*. Some course materials will only be covered in class. 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. When signing up for this course, it is important to consider whether you will be able to make the time commitment required.

**Required Course Readings**

The following textbooks are required:

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

- Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (Inner Traditions, rev. Ed, 2006).
- *The Qur'an: A New Translation*, trans. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford University Press, any edition).
- These books are available through Haven Books (43 Seneca Street, Ottawa, [www.havenbooks.ca](http://www.havenbooks.ca)).
- All other required readings are available online. Links are posted on cuLearn.

## COURSE POLICIES

### **In-class pop quizzes and in-class group work**

The in-class pop quizzes ask questions drawn from the readings. In-class group work involves small-group discussion/analysis of an assigned reading (typically, of a primary source text), with findings reported to the class. The quizzes and group work are my way of marking class preparation and contribution to the class discussion, as well as attendance. Therefore, it is not possible to make up or substitute for either the quizzes or the group work.

### **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.

### **The Essay**

- **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. 9—Introduction to the course

Sept. 11—The nature of the sources; historical methods

Readings: Peters, “The quest of the historical Muhammad” (link on cuLearn)

### **Week 2**

Sept. 16—The world on the eve of Muhammad’s birth; pre-Islamic Arabia

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

Sept. 18—Traditional retellings of Muhammad’s early life

Reading: Lings, chapters 1-14 (“The house of God” through “The rebuilding of the Ka’ba”)

### **Week 3**

Sept. 23—History, context, and Muhammad’s early life

Readings: Qur’an chapters: 105, 106; Conrad, “Abraha and Muhammad: some observations apropos of chronology” (link on cuLearn)

Sept. 25—Muhammad’s revelatory experiences

Readings: Lings, chapters 15-24 (“The first revelations” through “Family divisions”); Qur’an chapters: 96, 73, 74, 93, 94, 108 and 53.

### **Week 4**

Sept. 30—Major themes of Muhammad’s Meccan preaching

Reading: Qur’an chapters: 112, 102, 107, 109, 99, 100, 104, 111, 91, 92, 89, 76, 71, 28 and 14.

Oct. 2—Muhammad in Mecca

Readings: Qur’an chapters: 18, 19, 20 and 91; Lings, chapters 25-33 (“The Hour” through “After the Year of Sadness”).

## **Week 5**

Oct. 7—Muhammad and his Meccan audience

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

Oct. 9 \* **mid-term exam (in class)**

## **Week 6**

Oct. 14—Thanksgiving (no class)

Oct. 16—The migration (*hijra*) to Medina

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

## **Week 7**

Oct. 21—The Medina Agreement

Readings: Qur'an chapter: 60; "The so-called Constitution of Medina," 75-79 (Brockopp).

Oct. 23—Establishing a community 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. 28—Fall Break (no class)

Oct. 30—Fall Break (no class)

## **Week 9**

Nov. 4—Community-building... and conflict

Readings: Qur'an chapters: 3, 4, 33 and 61; Lings, chapters 46-61 ("Bani Qaynuqa" through "Bani Qurayzah")

Nov. 6—From arbiter to leader; internal dissent

Reading: Lecker, "Waqidi's account of the status of the Jews in Medina," 15-32 (link on cuLearn).

## **Week 10**

Nov. 11—The "Hypocrites" and "the Affair of the Slander"

Readings: Lings, chapters 62-73 ("After the siege" through "Syria"); Qur'an chapters: 63, 24; Bukhari, Book of tafsir CCXLIII, "Those who propagated the lie" (link on cuLearn).

Nov. 13—The fall of Mecca

Readings: Lings, chapters 74-78 (“A breach of the armistice” through “After the victory”); Qur’an chapters: 110 and 48.

### **Week 11**

Nov. 18—Tabuk; the “Farewell Pilgrimage”; Muhammad’s last days

Readings: Qur’an chapter: 9; Lings, chapters 79-85 (“Tabuk” through “The succession and the burial”).

Nov. 20—Muhammad as an exemplar; the concept of *sunna*

Readings: Gleave, “Personal piety,” 103-122 (in Brockopp); Bukhari’s Chapter on *adab*” (link on cuLearn).

### **Week 12**

Nov. 25—Muhammad as a legal authority

Readings: Lowry, “The Prophet as lawgiver and legal authority,” 83-102 (in Brockopp); Bukhari, “Book of asking for loans” (link on cuLearn).

Nov. 27—Medieval debates about the scope of *‘isma*: the “Story of the Cranes”

Readings: Qur’an chapter: 53; Ahmed, “Ibn Taymiyya and the Satanic Verses,” 67-124 (link on cuLearn).

### **Week 13**

Dec. 2—Muslim veneration of Muhammad

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

Dec. 4 \* **Essay Due (in class)**

Common medieval and modern Western European perceptions of Muhammad

Reading: Tolan, “European accounts of Muhammad’s life,” 226-250 (in Brockopp).

### **Week 14**

Dec. 9 \* **Final exam (in class)**

## 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/](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)

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