

Carleton University
COLLEGE OF THE HUMANITIES
RELIGION PROGRAM: RELI 3843-A
Topics in Islam: Muslim Historical Memory and the Present
Fridays, 8:35-11:25 am (Winter 2010)

Professor A. Geissinger
2A57 Paterson Hall
Office Hours: Mondays 11:00-1:00 pm, or by appointment

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

Course Description

In this course, we will examine a number of individuals and categories of people, mainly from early Muslim history, which loom large in Muslim historical memory. Going beyond simple biography, this course situates particular figures and groups within their historical and social contexts, and examines how their stories have been variously told, retold, and reinterpreted at different points in time including the present. The role of such memories in Muslim constructions of community will be examined. This course is intended for students who already have a basic familiarity with the Islamic religious tradition, including its basic beliefs, practices and historical development (preferably, because they have already taken RELI2310). Students who do not have this academic background are expected to do extra readings in order to acquire it.

Note: This course requires a fairly heavy reading load. It is assumed that students will come to class each week having read the material, and prepared to actively and critically engage with it.

Course Evaluation

Your final mark in this course will be determined by the following:

- Regular attendance and informed participation—15%
- Midterm exam—25%
- Research essay outline—5%
- Research essay—20%
- Final exam—35%

Required Course Readings

- Asma Afsaruddin, *The First Muslims: History and Memory* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2008).
- All other course readings are available through WebCT. Please bring them with you (either in printed form, or on your laptop) to class each week.

Class and Reading Schedule

Week 1: Jan. 8

Lecture topics: Introduction to the course; critical approaches to reading texts

Week 2: Jan. 15

Lecture topics: Muhammad's career; diverse and diverging Muslim memories of Muhammad; sources for early Muslim history

Readings: Afsaruddin, pp. 1-16; Maghen, "The Merry Men of Medina," pp. 277-340.

Week 3: Jan. 22

Lecture topics: the question of succession; Abu Bakr and 'Ali; 'Umar

Readings: Afsaruddin, pp. 19-46; al-Bukhari, "Book of the Virtues of the Companions," nos. 3449-3491, 3498-3511, 3670-3672 and 3692; Lazarus-Yafeh, "'Umar b. al-Khattab—Paul of Islam?" pp. 1-16.

Week 4: Jan. 29 * **essay outline due (in class)**

Lecture topics: 'Uthman and 'Ali; the legacy of the rule of the "rightly-guided caliphs"; the founding of the Umayyad dynasty

Readings: Afsaruddin, pp. 47-58; al-Bukhari, "Book of the Virtues of the Companions," nos. 3492-3497 and 3553-3555.

Week 5: Feb. 5

Lecture topics: the Companions as a group; the Ahl al-Bayt and the Shi'i imams

Readings: Afsaruddin, pp. 59-75; al-Bukhari, "Book of the Virtues of the Companions," nos. 3512-3552 and 3565-3603; Momen, "The lives of the imams," pp. 23-45

Week 6: Feb. 12 * **Midterm exam**

Week 7: winter break

Week 8: Feb. 26

Lecture topic: diverse images and varying portrayals of female Companions

Readings: al-Bukhari, "Book of the Virtues of the Companions," nos. 3513, 3556-3564, 3604-3620, 3622-3623, 3681-3683, 3695, 3714; Ibn Sa'd, pp. 9-24, 43-71, 157-159, 162-163; Spellberg, "Nizam al-Mulk's Manipulation of Tradition," pp. 111-117.

Week 9: March 5

Lecture topics: the Successors (and their successors)

Reading: Afsaruddin, pp. 76-147.

Week 10: March 12

Lecture topics: Shi'i commemorations of the imams; Muhammad as a cosmic figure; Sufi saints (*awliya'*)

Readings: Pinault, "Shia Lamentation Rituals and Reinterpretation of the Doctrine of Intercession," pp. 285-305; Brinner, "Prophet and Saint: The Two Exemplars of Islam," pp. 36-51.

Week 11: March 19

Lecture topics: Salafist and modernist constructions of the "pious forbearers"; Companions and cultural identity

Readings: Afsaruddin, pp. 148-182; Ibn Sa'd, 270-273, 295; Elsadda, "Discourses on Women's Biographies and Cultural Identity," pp. 37-64.

Week 12: March 26 * **essay due (in class)**

Course conclusion and review

Reading: Afsaruddin, pp. 183-199.

Exams

The mid-term and final exams will be made up of short-answer (i.e. define and explain the significance of...), essay questions, and questions which require you to carry out a critical analysis of a text.

The development of the ability to critically analyze primary source texts is an integral part of this course, and students will be expected to demonstrate this skill on exams, as well as in the essay assignment.

The essay

- **Topic:** Select your topic from the list provided in class, and narrow it down.
- **The essay outline** (5%, due on Jan. 29 in class) must include: a working title, a paragraph describing the topic and how you intend to approach it, as well as a list of at least seven sources. These seven sources may not include encyclopedia articles. Encyclopedias should be used as introductory starting points only.
- **Essay format:** 10 pages (including footnotes, plus title page and bibliography; double-spaced, 1-inch margins, twelve-point type).
- **Thesis statement:** your essay must begin with a clear thesis statement, and proceed to defend it by presenting evidence, which you have obtained through academic research.
- Bear in mind that **this is a historical research paper**, which requires you to engage with the material in a critical and analytical way. Your personal beliefs (or lack thereof) are

not relevant to this assignment, and should not be referenced. Ensure that you provide historical evidence for whatever arguments you make.

- **Use the Chicago documentary-note style** for citing sources in your paper:
<http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/chicago.html#docnote>
Essays which do not have footnotes and a bibliography will not be accepted.
- 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.

Essays are due in hard copy, at the beginning of class, on March 26. Late papers will be penalized by the deduction of 2% per 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/>

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 range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of “F” for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

GRADING SYSTEM

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

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

F	Failure. No academic credit
WDN	Withdrawn from the course
ABS	Absent from the final examination
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 November 16, 2009. The last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 12, 2010.

REQUESTS FOR 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 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. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Religious obligation: 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. For more details visit the Equity Services website: http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are 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 I receive 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 the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term. For more details visit the PMC website: http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad_accom.html

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Classics and 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	500 Unicentre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632	4 th floor Library
Learning Commons 520-1125	4 th floor Library