Introduction to Islam
HR-1902
3 Units
Starr King School for the Ministry

Instructor Information:

M. S. Pourfarzaneh, Ph.D.
spourfarzaneh@sksm.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment

Meeting Dates and Times:

Tuesdays, 2:10-5PM

Course Description:

This course will provide an introduction to the Islamic tradition in its religious, historical, and cultural contexts, paying particular attention to the diversity of expressions of Islam within each of these categories. The course will discuss the theological foundations of the tradition, the history of its development, and different expressions of its praxis that have evolved out of Muslim cultures and societies. It will also present contemporary issues related to Islam and Muslims in the United States, particularly in their representation throughout different types of media. Course format and evaluation: seminar, with final research paper/presentation on a specific topic or theme.

Learning Objectives:

During this course, students will:

• Learn about the Islamic tradition in its religious, historical, and cultural contexts
• Examine a diversity of Muslim religious expression and identities
• Be exposed to the contributions of African American, immigrant, white Caucasian, and other Muslims to American society
• Write a research paper or create a research project on a specific topic related to Islam and/or Muslims

Learning Outcomes:

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

• Speak conversantly about the religious beliefs, civilizational history, and diversity of religious practices in Islam and by Muslims
• Distinguish specific religious expression and practice from monolithic representation
• Engage in topics related to religion in the United States, African American Islam, immigrant identity formation, and conversion/reversion
• Apply their knowledge of religious diversity to the study of other traditions
Course Policies:

Academic Conduct and Plagiarism

Please refer to the SKSM/GTU policy statement for guidelines on academic conduct and plagiarism.

Privacy

Please refer to the SKSM/GTU policy statement for guidelines on privacy (FERPA).

Different Ability

If you have a different ability or requirement for special needs either inside or outside of the classroom, please make your needs clear both to the instructor and the SKSM/GTU center for different abilities, in accordance with the SKSM/GTU policy on different abilities.

Course Requirements:

You are expected to attend all classes and engage in class discussions, having prepared the reading materials for the week. Each week, we will look at contemporary and historical issues related to Islam and Muslims by referring to the readings along with media examples, followed by a short lecture on the week’s theme from the readings and a class discussion. It is important that you come to class having prepared the readings as we will be building on the themes of the assignments in our lectures and discussions. Excused absences must be cleared with the instructor.

This course is structured around the production of a 15-20 page research paper, and is intended to give you an opportunity to hone your academic research and writing skills while being exposed to the history and practices of Islam and Muslims. Towards this objective, there will be two rough drafts due during the semester preceding the final draft due date, which will provide you with opportunities to receive feedback on your writing and research. We will also have class sessions dedicated to understanding academic writing and research.

Week 14 is reserved for presentations. You will be required to give a 10-15 minute presentation on your research paper topic.

You will also be required to provide two critical reflection journals (1-2 pages each) on supplemental readings and/or other research or events relating to Islam and Muslims.

Due to the online nature of this course, you will also be required to set up a Moodle account to help coordinate research paper drafts, notes, announcements, and discussions outside of class.
The grading for this class will be based on the following areas:

- **Class participation and attendance – 25%**
- **Research Paper/Project Presentation – 25%**
- **Research Paper/Project – 30%**
- **Critical Reflection Journals – 20%**

**Required Texts:**


Please see the section on “Course Readings” for more information about required texts.

**Course Schedule:**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Esposito 3-36; Esposito &amp; Mogahed ix-28; Qur’an</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Esposito 37-67; Murata &amp; Chittick xiv-xxxix; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Esposito 68-115; Murata &amp; Chittick 3-44; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Esposito 116-161; Murata &amp; Chittick 236-273; Qur’an</td>
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<td><em><strong>RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS DUE</strong></em></td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Esposito 162-202; Murata &amp; Chittick 321-335; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Diouf 1-48; X and Haley; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>cooke &amp; Lawrence 1-28; Alim 264-274; X and Haley; Qur’an</td>
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<td><em><strong>RESEARCH PAPER FIRST DRAFT (~5 PAGES) DUE</strong></em></td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td><strong>READING WEEK – NO CLASS</strong></td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Bunt 1-54; X and Haley; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Karim 1-24; X and Haley; Ahmed; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Karim 25-50; Ahmed; Qur’an</td>
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<td><em><strong>RESEARCH PAPER SECOND DRAFT (~10 PAGES) DUE</strong></em></td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Esposito &amp; Kalin xxi-17; Ahmed; Qur’an</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td><strong>THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Alsultany 1-46; Norton 1-11; Ahmed; Qur’an</td>
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<td><strong>RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATIONS</strong></td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td><em><strong>FINAL PAPERS (15-20 PAGES) AND CRITICAL REFLECTIONS DUE</strong></em></td>
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**Course Readings:**

Course readings will be selected from:


**Supplementary Readings:**


**Online Sources**

Council on American-Islamic Relations: [www.cair.com](http://www.cair.com)

Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California: [www.iccnc.org](http://www.iccnc.org)
Islamic Finder (information about Islam): www.islamicfinder.org

Islamic Networks Group: www.ing.org

Islamic Society of North America: www.isna.org

Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project: erg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia

Qur’an Online Translations and Recitation: quran.com

UC Berkeley Center for Race & Gender: erg.berkeley.edu

Unity Productions Foundation: www.upf.tv

Zaytuna College: www.zaytuna.edu