

## **Introduction to Islam**

HR-1902

3 Units

Starr King School for the Ministry – Graduate Theological Union  
Fall 2021

### **Instructor Information:**

M. S. Pourfarzaneh, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: By Appointment

### **Meeting Dates and Times:**

Wednesdays, 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 statements for guidelines on [academic conduct](#) and [plagiarism](#).

### Privacy

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

### Disability

If you have a disability 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 disabilities, in accordance with the SKSM/GTU policy on [disabilities](#).

## **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 one rough draft due during the semester preceding the final draft due date, which will provide you with an opportunity to receive feedback on your writing and research. We will also have one class session dedicated to understanding academic writing and research.

Weeks 11-14 are designed to be asynchronous, with film viewings during Weeks 11-12 and recorded course presentations during Weeks 13-14. You will be required to record and upload 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:**

All course readings will be available on Moodle, except for [\*Islam: The Straight Path\*](#) (ISBN 978-0190632151, \$43.74), [\*The Autobiography of Malcolm X\*](#) (ISBN 978-9990065169, \$5.59), and [\*A Border Passage: From Cairo to America--A Woman's Journey\*](#) (ISBN 978-0143121923, \$18.00).

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

**Course Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Readings and Assignments</b>
Week 1	Esposito 3-36; Esposito & Mogahed ix-28; Qur'an
Week 2	Esposito 37-67; Murata & Chittick xiv-xxxix; Qur'an
Week 3	Esposito 68-115; Murata & Chittick 3-44; Qur'an ***RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT TOPICS DUE***
Week 4	Esposito 116-161; Murata & Chittick 236-273; Qur'an
Week 5	Esposito 162-202; Murata & Chittick 321-335; Qur'an
Week 6	Diouf 1-48; X and Haley; Qur'an
Week 7	cooke & Lawrence 1-28; Alim 264-274; X and Haley; Qur'an
Week 8	<b>READING WEEK – NO CLASS</b>
Week 9	Bunt 1-54; X and Haley; Qur'an ***RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT DRAFT (~5-10 PAGES) DUE***
Week 10	Karim 1-24; X and Haley; Ahmed; Qur'an
Week 11	Karim 25-50; Ahmed; Qur'an ***FILM: <i>Islam: Empire of Faith</i> ***
Week 12	Esposito & Kalin xxi-17; Ahmed; Qur'an ***FILM: <i>Prince Among Slaves</i> ***
Week 13	Alsultany 1-46; Norton 1-11; Ahmed; Qur'an **RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**
Week 14	**RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT PRESENTATIONS**
Week 15	***FINAL PAPERS (15-20 PAGES) AND CRITICAL REFLECTIONS DUE***

### **Course Readings:**

Course readings will be selected from:

Ahmed, Leila. *A Border Passage: From Cairo to America – A Woman’s Journey*. New York: Penguin Books, 1999.

Ali, Abdullah Yusuf, trans. *The Meaning of the Holy Qur’an*. Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2004.

Alsultany, Evelyn. *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation after 9/11*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

Bunt, Gary. *iMuslims: Rewiring the House of Islam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.

cooke, miriam, and Bruce B. Lawrence, eds. *Muslim Networks: from Hajj to Hip Hop*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005.

Diouf, Sylviane A. *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*. New York: New York University Press, 1998.

Esposito, John L. *Islam: The Straight Path*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Esposito, John L., and Dalia Mogahed. *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*. New York: Gallup Press, 2007.

Esposito, John L., and Ibrahim Kalin, eds. *Islamophobia: The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Karim, Jamillah. *American Muslim Women: Negotiating Race, Class, and Gender within the Ummah*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.

Murata, Sachiko and William C. Chittick. *The Vision of Islam*. St. Paul: Paragon House, 1994.

Norton, Anne. *On the Muslim Question*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.

X, Malcolm and Alex Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1965.

### **Supplementary Readings:**

Ahmed, Leila. *A Quiet Revolution: The Veil’s Resurgence, from the Middle East to America*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.

Ahmed, Leila. *Women and Gender in Islam*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992.

- Ali, Wajahat, Eli Clifton, Matthew Duss, Lee Fang, Scott Keyes, and Faiz Shakir. "Fear, Inc.: The Roots of the Islamophobia Network in America." Center for American Progress, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/religion/report/2011/08/26/10165/fear-inc/> (accessed October 28, 2012).
- Armstrong, Karen. *Islam: A Short History*. New York: Modern Library, 2002.
- Armstrong, Karen. *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1992.
- Asad, Talal. "The Idea of An Anthropology of Islam." *Georgetown University Center for Contemporary Arab Studies Occasional Papers Series* March (1986): 1-22.
- Austin, Allan D. *African Muslims in Antebellum America: Transatlantic Stories and Spiritual Struggles*. New York: Routledge, 1997.
- Bakalian, Anny and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans Respond*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- Bukhari, Zahid H., Nyang, Sulayman N., Ahmad, Mumtaz, and John L. Esposito, eds. *Muslims' Place in the American Public Square: Hopes, Fears, and Aspirations*. Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, 2004.
- Chittick, William C. *Sufism: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: OneWorld, 2000.
- Curtis, Edward E. *Muslims in America: A Short History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Dannin, Robert. *Black Pilgrimage to Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz. *A History of Islam in America: From the New World to the New World Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Gomez, Michael A. *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Haddad, Yvonne Y. *Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Haddad, Yvonne Y., Farid Senzai, and Jane I. Smith, eds. *Educating the Muslims of America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck and Jane I. Smith, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of American Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

- Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck and John L. Esposito, eds. *Muslims on the Americanization Path?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Kumar, Deepa. *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2012.
- Marable, Manning. *Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention*. New York: Viking, 2011.
- Marable, Manning and Hishaam D. Aidi, eds. *Black Routes to Islam*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- McMcloud, Aminah Beverly. *African American Islam*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Metcalf, Barbara D. *Making Muslim Space in North America and Europe*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*. New York: HarperCollins, 2003.
- Runnymede Trust Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia. *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, edited by Robin Richardson. London: The Runnymede Trust, 1997.
- Safi, Omid, ed. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender, and Pluralism*. Oxford: OneWorld, 2003.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.
- Schimmel, Annemarie. *Islam: An Introduction*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992.
- Shryock, Andrew, ed. *Islamophobia/Islamophilia: Beyond the Politics of Enemy and Friend*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010.
- Taylor, Charles. *Modern Social Imaginaries*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004
- Turner, Richard B. *Islam in the African-American Experience*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.

#### 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](http://www.islamicfinder.org)

Islamic Networks Group: [www.ing.org](http://www.ing.org)

Islamic Society of North America: [www.isna.org](http://www.isna.org)

Islamophobia Research & Documentation Project: [crg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia](http://crg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia)

Qur'an Online Translations and Recitation: [quran.com](http://quran.com)

UC Berkeley Center for Race & Gender: [crg.berkeley.edu](http://crg.berkeley.edu)

Unity Productions Foundation: [www.upf.tv](http://www.upf.tv)

Zaytuna College: [www.zaytuna.edu](http://www.zaytuna.edu)