



REL 236
ISLAM
Fall 2018

Instructor: Richard Newton, PhD

Class Meetings: Manly Hall 207, T/R 2:00-3:15pm

Office Hours: M-R, 1-2pm and By Appointment

Office Location: Manly Hall 204

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Prerequisites: n/a

Course Description and Credit Hours:

An introduction to the traditions of Islam, including their history, texts, intellectual debates, and contemporary practices. **HU INB**

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to do the following:

- (1) Recognize the complexities of *Qur'an* interpretation.
- (2) Distinguish Sunni and Shi'a varieties of Islam.
- (3) Critique simplistic understandings of *Shari'a*.
- (4) Discern the diversity within Islam.

Course Objectives

For Muslims, the Arabic term, *Islam*, broadly connotes peace and submission, an expression of the struggle (*jihad*) to rest in God's (Allah) peace. This class will explore the sights, sounds, and social sensations that have emerged over the religion's 1400-year history that we might examine what unites and divides the estimated 1.6 billion followers who closely identify with Islam today.

Required Texts:

Hughes, Aaron W. 2013. *Muslim Identities: An Introduction to Islam*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Additional Required Course Materials:

Each student will need a College Rule Composition Book (i.e. 9.75 in x 7.5 in bound notebook). These are available at the Supe Store and other school supply retailers. This is the raw material out of which you will be creating your “interactive notebook,” a guided course learning journal that you will be using regularly. (I also have extra available for students needing assistance acquiring one).

We will also be making use of Blackboard as our main learning hub outside of class time, so make sure that you’re in the habit of checking it daily. Pro Tip: You can set Blackboard to email or text you all updates.

Outline of Topics:

Below you’ll find a course calendar. Each box notes the content for the day and the materials you need to prepare prior to class. So you will see the assigned reading and the title of the interactive notebook assignment (designated “IN”). These correspond to a page on Blackboard that details how to accomplish them. In class, you will complete the interactive notebook assignment listed at the top of the square. On Blackboard, the modules are divided by weeks for your convenience.

Unit Focus	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1 <i>Orientation</i>		8/23 Syllabus Day & “What about ...?” *Please bring an accessible and amendable copy of the syllabus with you to class.
Week 2 <i>Religious Studies and the Academic Study of Islam</i>	8/28 Studying Islam in Culture McCuthcheon n.d., “What is the Academic Study of Religion?” IN: “An Introduction to the Study of Religion” -Watch video: “An Introduction to the World Religions: Islam”	8/30 The Academic Study of Islam

	<p>**Be sure to have completed your profile page on Blackboard by the beginning of class.</p>	<p>Hughes 2013, 1-13.</p> <p>IN: -"The Stakes of Studying Islam"</p> <p>-Review the Get to the Point Introduction (video and worksheet)</p> <p>-Watch video: "Maya Cares about Religion, ep.1."</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p><i>Setting the Stage: Pre-Islamic Arabia</i></p>	<p>9/4</p> <p>The Age of Ignorance?</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 17-31.</p> <p>IN: "The Way it Was?"</p>	<p>9/6</p> <p>True Origin v. False Starts</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 32-37.</p> <p>IN: "The Way it Wasn't?"</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p><i>The Making of the Last Prophet</i></p>	<p>9/11</p> <p>Muhammad: An Interactive Timeline</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 41-55.</p> <p>IN: Austere Yet Auspicious</p>	<p>9/13</p> <p>The Seal of the Prophet</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 55-63.</p> <p>IN: Canon Fodder</p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p><i>The Quran: The Base Narrative</i></p>	<p>9/18</p> <p>Interpreting a Scripture</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 67-85.</p> <p>IN: In Comparison</p>	<p>9/20</p> <p>Explaining a Scripture</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 86-90.</p> <p>IN: Elseworlds</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p><i>Exam: Origins</i></p>	<p>9/25</p> <p>Review Session</p>	<p>9/27</p> <p>Discuss Exam I TBD/ Class Catchup</p>

	<p>*Completed Interactive Notebooks Due at the beginning of class.</p> <p>**Exam opens on Blackboard after class and is due by Wed. 9/26 at 11:59pm.</p>	
<p>Week 7</p> <p><i>Islam Beyond the Arabian Peninsula: A Historical Overview</i></p>	<p>10/2</p> <p><i>Rashidun: A Cooperative Timeline</i></p> <p>Hughes 2013, 95-106.</p> <p>IN: Rightly Guided Caliphs</p>	<p>10/4</p> <p>To the Edges of the Earth</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 106-113.</p> <p>IN:Medieval Times</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p><i>Early Sectarianism and the Formation of Shi'ism</i></p>	<p>10/9</p> <p>Shi'at Ali</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 115-128.</p> <p>IN: Ali's Party</p>	<p>10/11</p> <p>The Imams</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 128-131.</p> <p>IN: A Family Affair</p>
<p>Week 9</p> <p><i>Legal Developments and the Rise of Sunni Islam</i></p>	<p>10/16</p> <p>The Ulama</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 133-142.</p> <p>IN: Judgement Calls</p>	<p>10/18</p> <p>Anatomy of a Fatwa</p> <p>Hughes 2013, 142-151.</p> <p>IN: Schools of Thought</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p><i>Sufism</i></p>	<p>10/23</p> <p>Asceticism and Mysticism as Social Critique</p>	<p>10/25</p> <p>No Class (Mid-semester Break)</p>

	Hughes 2013, 154-177 IN: Around the Way	
Week 11 <i>Exam: Identity Formations</i>	10/30 Review Session *Completed Interactive Notebooks Due at the beginning of class. **Exam opens on Blackboard after class and is due by Wed. 10/17 at 11:59pm.	11/1 Discuss Exam II TBD/Class Catchup/Look ahead toward Final Project
Week 12 <i>Constituting Identities: Beliefs and Schools</i>	11/6 Philosophies of Submission Hughes 2013, 183-191. IN: Think About It.	11/8 Metaphysics Hughes 2013, 191-201. Islam Empire of Faith 3 IN: Sounds Legit
Week 13 <i>The Performance of Muslim Identities</i> <i>Presentation Preparation</i>	11/13 <i>Arkan</i> Hughes 2013, 203-220. IN: Pillars on the Way *Sign up for Group Project Due by the beginning of class.	11/15 Library and Annotated Bibliography Workday IN: Preparing an Annotated Bibliography *You should be doing an intelligent first read of Hughes 2013, 225-300. This should be completed by 11/20. We'll read these sections more closely later.

Week 14 <i>Presentation Work Week</i>	11/20 No Class Group Project Workday/Individual Research *Annotated Bibliography Dur by 11:59pm. Group and Individual	11/22 No Class (Holiday)
Week 15 <i>Modern Variations I</i>	11/27 Encounters with Modernity Hughes 2013, 225-250. IN: Free Writing or Free Notes	11/29 Constructing Muslim Women Hughes 2013, 254-273. IN: Free writing or Free Notes
Week 16 <i>Modern Variations II</i> No new grades this week	12/4 Islam Post September 11 Hughes 2013, 274-293. IN: Free Writing or Free Notes **Completed Interactive Notebooks Due at the beginning of class.	12/6 Class Potluck and Final Project Conversation TBD
Final Exam	Thursday, December 13, 2018 8:00am – 10:30am MA 207	

Exams and Assignments

The level to which you've met our Student Learning Outcomes will be measured by the following assignments.

PARTICIPATION:

Learning is an active process that requires preparation, practice, and questions. While I will make informed and expert judgments on your level of participation, near each exam you will briefly spell out how you participated in the life of our class. Your honest self-assessment can only influence me to raise this facet of your grade. It will also provide me with insights on how I can help you meet your academic goals.

During class time, I expect you to be on task. Devices are only allowed if they are helping you do the assigned tasks. If I see that you are off-task, I will insist that you put away the device so that you can stay engaged. If you continue to disrupt my instruction or another classmate's ability to learn, you will lose 1/3 of your participation points (i.e. 5% of your grade) for each encounter.

INTERACTIVE NOTEBOOK:

Notetaking is not simply recording information, but also training your mind to process it so that you can retrieve and use it as needed. The interactive notebook will help you become your best tutor. They should be brought to each class and will be graded at random throughout the semester for completion. Note that I reserve the right to determine whether an attempted entry constitutes sufficient effort so as to count as "completed."

EXAM I AND II:

Exams are your opportunity to demonstrate your handle of the course material. They will be taken via Blackboard within a designated window. The questions will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, matching, and an essay. The exams are not cumulative. Should you take seriously the interactive notebook assignment and class participation, you will be ready to perform well on the exam. The exams correspond to Parts 1 & 2 in Hughes (2013). They are closed and timed exams. You may not use any resources (i.e. handouts, cellphones, books, notes, online resources). Nothing should be open on your computer beside the exam on Blackboard. In accordance with The Capstone Creed, I am trusting that you take this exam with integrity. ProTip: Be sure to take the exam on computer (not a mobile device) with a stable internet connection and all requisite plugins installed.

RECITATION:

By the end of the semester, you will be responsible for having memorized the first chapter of the Quran, *Surah al-Fatiha*, "The Opening" in Arabic and English. In the case that you have memorized this surah prior to this course, I request that you inform me so that we might agree on another surah for you to memorize. The exercise is designed for you to get a sense of how the Quran is deployed in Muslim identity politics.

GROUP ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FINAL PROJECT:

At the end of the semester, students will work cooperatively to produce a web-ready media project articulating their scholarly understanding of Islam and a specific issue broadly related to the topics covered in Parts 3 & 4 in Hughes (2013). Possible project formats include (but are not

limited to the following) podcasts, a blog roundtable, vlogs, computer program or app, a pop-up museum exhibit or installation. (A slide show will not satisfy this requirement). The sky is the limit, but you will need to coordinate with me in advance if you are proposing a project that has a group element or requires resources that you don't have. See this project as an opportunity for you to pursue a matter of interest and to communicate your findings in a publicly appealing way.

To help you, you will work in groups to create a cooperative annotated bibliography with works that you will consult in the execution of your projects. The groups will be divided based upon the chapter that best corresponds with your interests. Each student will be in charge of finding (that is, locating and creating an annotated bibliographic entry) for the following types of works:

- A Scholarly Monography
- A Peer-Reviewed Journal Article
- A Scholarly Encyclopedia Entry
- A Popular Source of Your Choosing (which will serve as your data point)

During the final exam period, we will have a class showcase and conversation with a scholar of religion about your work on Muslim identities.

GENEROSITY POINTS (aka extra credit)

Throughout the semester, I may show generosity to those attending select Religious Studies Student Association or Department of Religious Studies events. Any extra credit points received may be designated toward your participation and interactive notebook grades. In the case that you have completed all of these completion-based tasks at the A or A+ range, I will apply your points toward an exam, the group annotated bibliography, or the final project.

The Department of Religious Studies has a very active social media presence. Should you produce knowledge of publishable quality related to “Studying Religion in Culture,” you may receive extra credit toward any assignment. You must receive my approval should you want to take advantage of this opportunity. But if you have ideas or questions, let’s chat. Students have found this to be especially worthwhile in their college experience.

Assignment Type	Percentage
Participation	15%
Interactive Notebook	15%
Exam I	15%
Exam II	15%
Recitation	10%
Group Annotated Bibliography	15%
Final Project	15%

C. Grading Scale

- 59 > =F Unacceptable Performance
- 60-63 =D- Insufficient Performance
- 64-66 =D Needs Improvement

67-69	=D+	Adequate Performance
70-73	=C-	Acceptable Performance
74-76	=C	Satisfactory Performance
77-79	=C+	Promising Performance
80-83	=B-	Good Performance
84-86	=B	Commendable Performance
87-89	=B+	Great Performance
90-93	=A-	Advanced Performance
94-96	=A	Excellent Performance
97-100	=A+	Superior Performance

Classroom Policies

ATTENDANCE

This course is taught from the perspective that higher education is a professional endeavor. Just as there are ramifications for missing a job, there are ramifications for missing class.

You may miss 2 (two) classes without penalty. These are to help you account for those times when life just happens (family emergencies, serious illness, etc.). Any absence thereafter may discount you from all extra-credit opportunities—including generosity points. The student learning outcomes for this course presume active class attendance, so personal expectations regarding grades should be revised in light of absences.

MISSED EXAMS AND COURSEWORK

Anytime you miss class, you should take the following steps (in this order): (1) meet with a classmate to copy any notes, (2) schedule an appointment to get clarity on the notes, missed lesson, and any handouts, (3) study the material and come back ready to actively participate in class.

You are still responsible for submitting assignments by their deadlines. Late work and exams are only accepted in the most extreme circumstances—that is, matters of life and death, not pass or fail. Be aware that for me to justify this decision, I will likely require external documentation of the matter in consultation with campus administrative offices and reserve the right to make any deductions. I implore you to be proactive and keep me posted within in 24 hours of the issue or as soon as circumstances feasibly allow. Tardiness here will leave me less equipped to be gracious.

I do not permit incompletes except in the most extreme circumstances. Should you find yourself considering an incomplete or dropping the class, come see me first to discuss your profess. I can only work with you if you are doing your part to work with me and with the class.

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATION

Office hours are an opportunity for you to get one-on-one assistance with the course. I invite you to come prepared with questions and to take advantage of the opportunity. I don't worry about students who come to office hours. I worry about those who never do. As I'm often on campus, please feel free to drop by if you see my office door open. Otherwise come by during my appointed office times or make an appointment. Do not be afraid to ask for help learning something you don't know well. That's precisely what we're here to do.

Online communication is a wonderful convenience, but it can give a false impression of engagement. Please note that I will generally respond to emails within 36 hours of receipt during the work week. I may not see emails during the weekend or otherwise noted occasions, so please be patient. Similarly, my communications with you will happen primarily during the week.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE POLICIES

Notification of Changes

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via Blackboard and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

Statement on Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official [Code of Academic Conduct](#) provided in the Online Catalog.

Statement On Disability Accommodations

Contact the [Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#) as detailed in the Online Catalog.

Severe Weather Protocol

Please see the latest [Severe Weather Guidelines](#) in the Online Catalog.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the [UAct website](#).

Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent

from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at [Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines](#).

UAct Statement

The [UAct website](#) provides an overview of The University's expectations regarding respect and civility.