

UCSB RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT

ISLAMIC STUDIES



Students in the Islamic Studies concentration work on a wide range of historical periods from the advent of Islam to the present in a variety of cultural regions, especially the Middle East, South Asia, and North America. The study of Islam in its different formations and settings and of Muslims in their historical, social, and cultural diversity is encouraged by the faculty, together with inquiry into Islam's interactions with other religions and non-Muslim peoples. Students are expected to become familiar with various approaches used in the field, including philological textual studies, social and political history, comparative research, gender studies, and ethnographic fieldwork.

The doctoral program in Islamic studies at UCSB expects students to develop expertise in the following areas:

- The foundational texts of Islam (Qur'an, hadith) and the major genres of Islamic literature (such as, tafsir, fiqh, kalam, falsafa, Sufi texts, balagha)
- Islam's formations in historical, social, political, and cultural contexts, including modern ones.
- The theoretical and methodological tools needed to conduct original, independent research in an area of specialty within the fields of Islamic studies.

The specific area of specialization of each student will be a natural result of the evolution of the student's research interests in the program. However, a statement of research interests must be included in the student's application essay, indicating the applicant's engagement with current literature in the study of Islam.



UCSB

Graduate Program

All programs emphasize a cross-cultural comparative study of religions and use interdisciplinary approaches as appropriate to religious studies, incorporating such disciplines as history, political science, anthropology, sociology, comparative literature, and philosophy.

Admissions

Applicants are admitted on a competitive basis; our admission policy is based on intellectual potential and promise, academic records, and programmatic fit.

Major Areas of Study

- Buddhist Studies
- Christian Traditions
- East Asian Religions
- Islamic Studies
- Mediterranean & West Asian Religions
- Native American Religions
- Philosophy of Religion
- Religion and Culture
- Religion in America
- Soc., Psyc., & Anth. of Religion
- South Asian Religions

I. LINGUISTIC AND THEORETICAL TOOLS

To achieve the goals of the program, students are expected upon graduation to:

- 1) have acquired advanced proficiency in at least one of the languages that were employed in the production of significant Islamic literature in the premodern world, such as Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu, and have acquired intermediate proficiency in a second language from this group or another language, in consultation with her/his Islamic Studies advisor. Arabic (beginning to advanced), Persian (beginning and intermediate), Hindi (beginning), and Punjabi (beginning and intermediate) are consistently offered at UCSB, while advanced courses and other languages may be studied in summer intensive programs available at other universities and institutions. Students are particularly encouraged to take advantage of language programs abroad, such as the Center for Arabic Studies Abroad in Cairo.
- 2) have learned about the theoretical tools used in research in the academic study of religion by completion of the Religious Study department's 200-series of seminars and at least one additional theory and method seminar in Islamic studies, such as the Proseminar in Islamic Studies (RS 215), or a comparable course.
- 3) completed an appropriate course in Middle Eastern literature and Middle Eastern history.



II. FIELD/ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

All students are encouraged to have experience in archival or field research, typically for one year before graduation from the program. The location of this research is to be determined in consultation with their faculty advisors.

III. ISLAMIC STUDIES TRACKS

Track I: Classical Islamic Texts and Traditions (Emphasis on Primary Sources)

Islamic studies Track 1 students are expected to take graduate-level courses in at least two of the following three subjects:

- 1) Foundational Texts (such as Qur'an, hadith, tafsir)
- 2) Historical Texts (such as al-sira al-nabawiyya, tabaqat literature)
- 3) Traditional Islamic Sciences (such as balagha, adab, kalam, fiqh, fatwa literature)

Track II: Islamic Modernities and Practices

Islamic studies Track 2 students are expected to take graduate-level courses in at least two of the following three types of courses

- 1) Foundational Texts from primary sources (such as Qur'an, hadith, tafsir, sira)
- 2) Islamic History and Law from primary sources
- 3) Modern Islamic Thought, Movements, and Practices

IV. SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE PROGRAM

The successful graduate will have conducted original research using the above linguistic, methodological, and theoretical tools and will have contributed to the field through her or his doctoral dissertation. Students must be aware that general requirements applicable to all graduate students in the department applies to them as they apply to students of other fields of Religious Studies.

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CORE FACULTY:

Janet Afary: Modern Iran; religion, politics, and culture in modern Middle East; and gender and sexuality in the Middle East.

Ahmad A. Ahmad: Islamic intellectual history, specifically Islamic legal history and theory, the relationship between theory and practice in Islamic law, adjudication, the laws of war, apostasy, and privacy.

Juan E. Campo: the comparative study of the cultural formations of Islam in the Middle East and South Asia, Muslim & non-Muslim relations, sacred space and pilgrimage, political Islam in the contexts of modernity, and religion and the culinary cultures of the Middle East, politics of contemporary Middle East

Racha El Omari: Islamic intellectual history and historiography in the classical period, with a particular emphasis on the role and interaction of theology in the formation of and interaction with the Islamic intellectual traditions, including philosophy, grammar, hadith literature, and belles letters.

Kathleen Moore: comparative study of Muslim minority communities in western democracies (e.g., Britain and the United States); law and society; legal pluralism; legal issues facing Muslims in non-Muslim societies (including shari'a as well as constitutional, civil and criminal law); gender studies; and policy studies related to globalization, race and religion (concentrating on immigration, citizenship, anti-discrimination and counter-terrorism).

Adam Sabra (History): the Middle East, especially Egypt, in the medieval and early modern periods, with particular interest in the social and cultural history of Cairo.

Affiliated Faculty: See faculty listings and links at www.cmes.ucsb.edu/faculty.html

Afary:

- RS 8: Islam, Gender, and Modernity
- RS 111: Women's Literature and Politics in the Muslim Middle East
- RS 181A: Shi'ism, Politics, and Culture in Modern Iran
- RS 181B: Political Islam and the Response of Cinema
- RS 217: Religion, Gender, and Sexuality in the Middle East

Ahmad:

- RS 2: Islam & the West 700-1850
- RS 6: Islam and Modernity
- RS 119A: Introduction to Islamic Law
- RS119B: The Qur'an and its Interpretations
- RS 119C: Jihad and Just War in Islam
- RS 119D: Islam and Women
- RS 119E: Islam and Government
- RS 283: Islamic Political Philosophy
- RS 287: Apostasy and Heresy in Islam
- RS 292A: Fatawa Literature
- RS 292Th: Readings in Tafsir and Hadith

Campo:

- RS 1: Introduction to the Study of Religion
- RS 140A: Islamic Traditions
- RS 140B: Religion, Politics & Society in the Persian Gulf Region
- RS 140C: Islamic Mysticism and Religious Thought

Campo (cont):

- RS 140D: Islam in South Asia
- RS 140F: Modern Islamic Movements
- RS 185: Food, Religion & Culture in the Middle East
- RS 209A: Islam in South Asia
- RS 215: Proseminar in Islamic Studies
- RS 283: Islamic Modernities

El Omari:

- RS 149: Introduction to Islamic Theology
- RS 190IC: The Individual in Islamic Civilization
- RS 288: Classical Arabic Seminar—Classical Ash'arite Theology
Biographical dictionaries
Literature on the Qur'an

Moore:

- LAWSO 194 MDL: Muslim Diasporas and the Law
- RS 140E : Islam in America