

ISLAMIC TRADITIONS

WINTER 2012*



Time: T/R 3:30-4-45
 Contact: atemel@gmail.com
 Office & Office Hours: HSSB 3086 R 1:00-3:00

Place: North Hall 1109
 Final Paper: March 22, 2012

Course Description

This course is designed to provide an introduction to major Islamic traditions from formative period to present time. As the title implies, the course will cover formation and development of textual (Tafsir-Hadith-Sira), theological (Kalam), legal (Sharia), spiritual (Sufism) and political traditions beginning with the life of Muhammad and his revelation until colonial and post-colonial periods by exploring different stages and transformations of, as well as challenges against these traditions. Primary attention will be given to the formative and classical periods; however, post-classical period, especially the influence of secularization on Islamic traditions and Muslim responses to Modernity will be covered, as well.

Required Texts

Shepard, William. *Introducing Islam*
 Sells, Michael. *Approaching the Quran*
 Readings posted on GauchoSpace

Recommended Texts

The Qur'an (translated by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem).
Nawawi's forty hadiths. Available [online](#).
 Campo, Juan. *Encyclopedia of Islam*.
 Brill's [Encyclopaedia of the Qur'ān](#) and Brill's [Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second and Third Editions](#)
 (Available among the online databases of the library)
 Internet Islamic History Sourcebook (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/islam/islamsbook.asp#>)

** This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Requirements

Presence and Participation	20%	Two Short Essays (700-1000 words)	20%
Observing a Muslim Group Prayer	5%	Presentations	10%
Weekly Definitions	10%	In-class exam on Terms-Definitions	10%
At-home online quizzes on GS	5%	Final Paper (2000 words, Due March 22)	20%

Presence and Participation 20%: I cannot emphasize enough how attendance is important for this class. If you really want to learn something about Islam and Islamic traditions, you have to regularly attend classes. Missing only one class will not only take you behind, it will also cause a huge cost for your grade. Assume a B- for two unexcused absence, even if the other requirements are met perfectly. You are expected to actively participate the discussions in class and online on GauchoSpace as well. I cannot know whether you make the readings unless you express your ideas about the readings. In class and online participations will be taken into account together.

Two Critical Thinking Essays 20%: You must write two critical essays 700-1000 words long due for final session of the third and seventh week. Guidelines for essays will be provided in class.

Observing a Muslim Group Prayer 5%: You must attend a Muslim group prayer and write 1-2 page reflection paper in order to fulfill this requirement. Taking the schedule of class into consideration, the best option would be Friday prayers in town.

Presentations 10%: A group of four people will make brief presentations of four suras each week. Presenters are supposed to prepare their presentations based on but not limited to Sells's book by using the recommended texts, especially online databases. You must examine at least a few terms within the recommended texts and mention them in your presentation. The group members can study together, but each presenter will make an individual presentation for about 5-8 minutes. The other task of presenters is to lead online discussions on GauchoSpace on topics either from previous week or next week. Four presenters should open and lead discussions about different topics on GauchoSpace one week before their presentations until the Thursday they present. Both performances on the presentations and online discussion will be taken into account for grade.

Weekly Definitions 10% – In-class exam on Terms 10%: Everyone should define a term that we will cover in class on GauchoSpace each week beginning with the second week and ending in the ninth week. So, at the end of the quarter everyone must have written 8 definitions. A definition could be only one sentence, but must include the key elements for the term. You are free to use any kind of sources, but do NOT copy a text word-by-word. Make sure you understand well and paraphrase your sources in order to remember later. Definitions are due on Sundays at 10pm. Based on these definitions a short in-class exam will be taken on 15 March 2012.

At-home online quizzes on GS 5%: You are required to take tentative online quizzes. Even though these quizzes are meant to help learning process rather than testing what you have learnt, they will constitute 5% of your final grade. You will be able to retake the quizzes up to three times. I will grade your performance based on the time you will spend and the results.

Final Paper 20%: You must write a 2000-words-long final paper that comprehensively examines related topics we will have covered throughout the ten weeks. In your paper, you should demonstrate what you have learnt in this class and express your original ideas on top of that. The detailed guidelines will be provided in the seventh week.

Electronic Devices

Cellphones are to be **off** or **silent** and put away. If you text, email, or chat online while in class, you will be marked absent without prior notice. Laptops are useful inventions that make our life much easier, but not in class, so leave your laptop at home and try to use a less noisy and an old fashion tool: a pen.

On Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Plagiarism is to present the ideas and writings of other people as your own. The papers you submit in this course should be your own work and should reflect your own ideas that you articulated throughout the course. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Dean of Students' Office.

Office Hours

You are always welcome and encouraged to see me at any time during my office hours, and I am also available by appointment. But you never need to make an appointment to come to office hours. They will be regular. Please consider my office hours as an open door for you to discuss things related to the class, other classes, academics in general, the meaning of life, or pretty much anything. I sincerely welcome your visits.

Email Etiquette

For the purposes of this class, email should be treated as a formal means of communication. When replying or sending email, please write in proper English and do not use phonetic language, such as abbreviated words and symbols that are often used in text messages or instant messenger programs. Check your spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Always include a greeting and sign your name. Remember, this is a university class, and email, like formal writing, is an opportunity to demonstrate your competency to the instructor.

The Buddy System

Find a person to be your partner in the learning adventure of this course. If you miss class, you may ask that person to share notes and handouts with you. He might submit your assignment if you know that you will be absent from class. You may also have him give feedback on your papers. Keep your partner's information handy here:

Name:

Phone number:

Email address:

Tips for Succeeding in this Course

- Use a highlighter. Mark up your readings and take notes; they will come in handy when you write your essays, participate in class discussions, and prepare for your papers.
- Come to class consistently, prepared, and on time, and sit somewhere that will allow you to actively engage. Remember, 20% of your grade is participation! Missing classes will also put you at an automatic disadvantage in terms of familiarity with the material we cover.
- Raise your hand and speak up.
- Keep all your work organized in a folder or binder, so it is easily accessible throughout the quarter.
- Come to office hours. You are always free to stop by for any reason (formal or informal). The conferences are a different story and you will be expected to come prepared (specificities will be discussed in class), but otherwise, no pressure.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE COURSE TOPICS AND READINGS

INTRODUCTION

10 Jan Introductory remarks and an overview of the course.

12 Jan What is Islam?

○ Readings: Shepard: 1-11; The entry on “Islām” in EI2 online; Ernst: Islam and Modern Concept of Religion (GS)

17 Jan An outline of Islamic history

○ Reading: Donner 1-61 “Muhammad and the Caliphate” (GS)

19 Jan ○ Reading: Shepard 11-52, Part I “History of the Community”

CLASSICAL TRADITIONS

24 Jan The Qur’an and its Tafsir

○ Readings: Shepard 55-70; Sells 1-40.

26 Jan ○ Reading: Tafsir, Interpretation of the Quran: Selection from Tafsir literature (GS)

31 Jan Sunnah and Sirah: The Life of the Prophet and his exemplar

Sunna-Hadith

○ Readings: Shepard 71-83; Nawawi’s Forty Hadith [first ten] (GS); Selections from Hadith collections (Malik, Bukhari, Abu Dawud, Ibn Hajar; Ibn Babawayh; Kulayni)

02 Feb Sirah

○ Readings: Selection from Ibn Hisham (GS); Selection from Ibn Ishaq (GS); Selection from Martin Lings (GS)

07-09 Feb Rituals and Ceremonies

- Readings: Shepard 84-101; Cornell 63-106 “Fruits of the Tree of Knowledge” (GS); The entries on “‘Ibādāt” and “Ṣalāt” in EI2.

ESSAY DUE **◆ First Essay is Due, 07 February 2012**

14 Feb Shari‘a, Fiqh, Islamic law

- Readings: Shepard 124-138; Fatwas of al-Nawawi (GS); Hallaq 7-37 “Part I Tradition and Continuity” (GS)

16 Feb Uṣul al-fiqh-Islamic legal theory

- Readings: The entry on “uṣul al-fiqh” in EI2

21 Feb Theology-Kalam: Belief, Sects and Political Divisions

- Readings: Shepard 102-113; 139-144; Selections from Ibn Qutayba, Ghazali, Qadi Abd al-Jabbar, al-Nasafi, al-Taftazani and al-Nawbakhti [15 pages] (GS)

23 Feb Islamic Philosophy

- Readings: Shepard 144-147; 166-169 (Ibn Sina); Selection from al-Farabi (GS)

28 Feb Sufism

- Readings: Shepard 149-164; 169-175 (Ghazali-Ibn Taymiyya); Ghazali-Path to Sufism (GS); Selection from al-Rumi Poems-Stories (GS); Selection from al-Qushayri (GS)—Recommended: Sayyed Hussein Nasr-Sufi Tradition (GS)

ESSAY DUE **◆ Second Essay is Due, 28 February 2012**

1 Mar Natural Sciences, Literature and other arts

- Readings: Shepard 178-192; Selection from Muslim Heritage in our World-1001 Inventions (GS)

MODERN DEVELOPMENTS

- 6 Mar Western Imperialism and Muslim Responses: Modern Nation-States, Secularism, Law and Reform Movements in Muslim World
- Readings: Shepard 195-215; The entry on “Medjelle” in EI2; Voll 509-547 “Foundations of Renewal and Reform” (GS)
- 8 Mar ○ Readings: Shepard 216-268; Esposito 643-690 “Contemporary Islam” (GS)
- 13-15Mar Post-Colonial Era
- Readings: Shepard 269-284; Uthama b. Laden: *To The Americans* (GS); Khaled Abou el-Fadl-*Islam and Violence* (GS); Sherman Jackson-*Jihad and the Modern World* (GS)
- 22 Mar ❖ **FINAL PAPER DUE**