Instructor: Wendy DeSouza  
Office Hours: TR 1:15-2:45pm or by appointment  
Office: MND 2026  
Office Phone: (916) 278-7329  
E-mail:  

Lecture—2 hours, 30 minutes; in-class midterm, 2 term papers. Prerequisites: None. 3 units.  

Course Description:  
This course will survey major historical, social and theological developments in the making of the Islamic faith. In the first half of the semester, students will learn the historical narrative of the Islamic tradition, noting changes over time in different contexts while drawing attention to interesting social, political and cultural changes within each time period. Major themes include the life of the Prophet Muhammad, the sacred sources in Islam (Qur’an and Hadith), Islamic law (shari’a), history of philosophy, sectarian debates, mysticism, sexuality and gender, and Islamic reform movements. The second half of the course explores Islam in a contemporary context, focusing on how Islam is practiced today.  

Required Textbooks:  
Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History*  
Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*, and *Persepolis 2* (Two volumes)  
Murata and Chittick, *Vision of Islam*  
Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*  

Grading:  
Two Unannounced Quizzes: each 5% for a total of 10%  
First paper (4-5 pages): 20%  
In-class Midterm: 30%  
Final (Second paper, 4-5 pages): 40%  

Weekly Schedule:  
SECTION ONE: ISLAM IN HISTORY  

**Week 1: The Life of the Prophet Muhammad**  
8/31- Introduction to the Study of Islam  
9/2- Life of the Prophet, (Film: *The Message*)  
Readings: Lapidus, Chapters 1, 2; Armstrong, pp. 3-40; Murata and Chittick, pp. xiv-27.  

**Week 2: Sacred Sources, Arab Conquests and the Abbasids**  
9/7- Understanding the Qur’an and the Hadith  
9/9- Spreading the Message: Arab Conquests and the Abbasids  
Readings: Reader (Cook, Waines); Lapidus, Chapters 3-5; Armstrong, pp. 41-52; Murata and Chittick, 28-34, 132-164, 184-192.
Week 3: Shiism, Artistic Expressions
9/14- Shiism
9/16- Artistic Expressions in Muslim Societies
Readings: Reader (Tabataba‘i, Sa’adi); Lapidus, Chapter 5,10, and pp. 94-98; Armstrong, pp. 41-64; Murata and Chittick, pp. 298-303.

Week 4: Premodern Islamic Empires
9/21- Safavids, Ottomans and Mughals
9/23- Philosophical Traditions
Readings: Reader (Egger); Lapidus, Chapters 12, 13, 14; Armstrong, 115-140.

Week 5: Islamic Societies and European Hegemony
9/28- The European tradition of studying Islam (Film: On Orientalism)
9/30- The modern world economy and imperialism
Readings: Reader (Said, Getz); Lapidus, pp. 453-488, Chapter 23.

Week 6: Modern Religious and Secular Reform Movements
10/5- Constitutionalism, Religious Reform
10/7- Class Cancelled
Readings: Reader (Donohue/Esposito); Lapidus, Chapters 22, 24, 27; Armstrong pp. 141-188.

Week 7: Palestine, Colonialism and the Muslim Community
10/12- Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
10/14- The Formation of the State of Israel and the Palestinian Diaspora
Readings: Reader (Cleveland, Herzl, Barghouti)

II. ISLAM IN A CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

Week 8: Midterm and Muslim Women in Perspective
10/19- Midterm (in class)
10/21- Guest Speaker
Readings: Reader (Wadud, Duran, Mernissi, Abdul-Ghafur)

Week 9: Representations of Sexuality
10/26- Exoticizing Muslim Sexuality, Film: The Sheik
10/28- Muslim Intellectuals in Europe and Cross-Cultural Observations
Readings: Reader (Leconte, Mitchell)

Week 10: Revolution and Religious Responses in Iran and Afghanistan
11/2- The Islamic Revolution in Iran
11/4- Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the Taliban
Readings: Reader (Khomeini, Cleveland, Persepolis I and II)

Week 11: Shari‘a and Human Rights
11/9- An Introduction to Islamic Law, First Paper Due (Persepolis)
11/11- Veteran’s Holiday, No Class
Readings: Reader (Ebadi, Weiss, Rippin, Peters)
**Week 12: Living Islam: Contemporary Beliefs and Practices**
11/16- Islam in America, Q and A with Guest Speaker (CAIR)
11/18- Sufism in Poetry and Literature
Readings: Reader (Ernst, pp. 164-182; Fadiman and Frager; Schimmel); Murata and Chittick, pp. 304-317 and Chapter 7; Armstrong, pp. 65-80.

**Week 13: Focus on Dialogue**
11/23- Ikeda-Tehranian Project, Small Group Discussions
11/25- Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class
Readings: Reader (Ikeda/Tehranian, Mazrui, Abou El Fadl)

**Week 14: Faith, Morality and Ethics**
11/30- Islamic Cosmology
12/2- Field Trip (TBD)
Readings: Reader (Renard); Murata and Chittick, pp. 193-235

**Week 15: Islam in America Post-9/11**
12/7- Islam in Post-9/11 America
12/9- Presentations, Second Paper Due (Ikeda/Tehranian)
Readings: Reader (Dirks, Barboza)

*Structure of the course:*

- All work must be completed in order to pass the course. Additionally, work should be handed in at the beginning of each class session. E-mail attachments of class work will not be accepted.

- Late papers and make-up exams will be allowed only with an acceptable excuse or prior arrangement (i.e. you contacted me ahead of time, a doctor’s note, etc.). Late assignments will receive a 10-point deduction per day. In the event of a late paper, you must submit a hardcopy to the HRS department and have it dated and stamped by a staff member.

- Class attendance and participation is essential to successful completion of the course. Lectures and class discussion are key components that will frame the readings and will ensure success on your exam and papers.

- Materials passed out in class will not be sent by e-mail, therefore, please see me in my office hours or by appointment if you miss class. If you have to leave class early or arrive late due to an appointment, let me know beforehand.

- Questions regarding midterms, finals, and papers should be addressed during office hours or after lectures. I also recommend exchanging contact information with a fellow student in the event you miss a lecture.

- Final papers are graded according to the best of your ability, and plagiarism will be addressed with the utmost seriousness.