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HRS 144: INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

GE Area C1 Department of Humanities and Religious Studies
Spring 2007, Tues: 5:30-8:20 PM

Catalog Description

Survey of the Islamic way of life: its beliefs, traditions and practices from Qur'anic origins and the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad. The historical development of Islamic law, religious sects, mysticism and the intellectual thought of the global Muslim community from medieval to contemporary times.

Section 1

The course also offers a general introduction to the history of Islam, Islamic texts, and important variations in worship and religious practice around the world. We will discuss the importance of Islam in the world today, and how interpretations of religion can have global import. Islam is a wide-ranging and varied spiritual tradition; we will learn how Muslims today and throughout history have interpreted Islamic texts and ideas in varied ways.

Books to Purchase:

Denny, Frederick Introduction to Islam
Renard, John Windows on the House of Islam
Fernea, Elizabeth Guests of the Sheikh
The Qur'an, trans. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem

Websites:

Qur'an Reference Website: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/quran/>
General Islamic Studies: www.uga.edu/islam

Course Requirements and Grading

15% three pop quizzes (attendance)

15% three short essays

35% first exam

35% second exam

- There will be three surprise **quizzes** on reading throughout the semester to monitor your attendance and your reading comprehension. If you complete readings on time and come to class, you should be fine.
- Three short **essays** on the readings are required as noted on syllabus. Essays should be 1-2 pages. The essays are short but should be your best writing and should show a careful consideration of topic assigned.
 - Late essays will lose one point for each day they are late (including weekends)
- The two **exams** will consist of identification, short answer, and essay questions; please note that the final exam is cumulative, though it will focus mostly on material from the second half of the semester.
 - Make-up exams or quizzes are NOT permitted.
- **Cheating and plagiarism** will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic F for the course.

Learning Goals: Students in HRS 144 will be able to:

- Describe important events in Islamic history and the development of Islamic thought
- Identify important concepts in the religious life and practice of Muslim peoples
- Compare how Muslims in varied cultural contexts have interpreted Islamic texts and ideas in different ways
- Explain the importance of understanding variations in Islam in the world today

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Date	Topic	Reading
Jan 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Course • Film: <i>Foundations</i> (Living Islam, vol 1) 	None
Feb 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of Islam in the West. • Pre-Islamic Arabia: People and Religions 	Denny: Ch 1, 2
Feb 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muhammad and the Revelations • The Early Muslim Community 	Denny: Ch 3 Qur'an: 96, 110-114 Renard: 119-130
Feb 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Qur'an • Interpretation of the Qur'an <p><u>Short essay due</u></p>	Denny: Ch 6 Qur'an: Surahs 1, 99-109 Renard: pp 28-57
Feb 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sunna and Hadith • Principles of Faith 	Denny, Ch 7 and Qur'an: Surahs 39, 64, 67, 69, 75, 81 Renard: pp 24-28
March 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Worship: The Five Pillars • Film: <i>Inside Mecca</i> 	Denny: Ch 5 Renard: pp 59-74
March 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread of Islam and the Growth of the Umma • Film: <i>The Challenge of the Past</i> 	Denny: Ch 4, 8
March 20	MIDTERM EXAM	
March 27	<i>Spring Break!</i>	Fernea, pp 1-135
April 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shari'a</i>: Islamic Law • Islamic law in the world today <p>East Africa Case Study</p>	Denny: Ch 9, 12 Renard, 132-135, 208-209
April 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufism <p><u>Short Essay due</u></p>	Denny: Ch 10, 11 Renard, pp 130-132; 149-155; 162-166
April 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplary Models • The Shi'i worldview 	Denny: Ch 13, pp 307-311 Fernea, 135-215
April 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and Gender • Film: <i>Paradise Lies at the Feet of the Mother</i> <p><u>Short Essay due</u></p>	Fernea, 216-end
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic Reform • Islamic Revival 	Denny: Ch 14
May 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politics and Political Movements • Film: <i>The Last Crusade</i> (Living Islam, vol 6) 	Denny: Ch 15, pp 340-350
May 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islam in the USA • Film: <i>Muslims in America</i> 	Denny: Ch 15, 350-362, Ch 16
May 22	FINAL EXAM	