Instructor: Dr. Wendy DeSouza  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3pm or by appointment  
Office: MND 2026  
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Lecture—2 hours, 30 minutes per week; in-class midterm, final and term paper. 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 Readings:
AND  
2) Sac CT On-line Weekly Readings  

Grading:
Five In-class Activities: each 2% for a total of 10%  
In-class Midterm: 30%  
In-class Final (Second paper, 4-5 pages): 30%  
Final Paper Project: 30%  

Final grades are as follows:  
A = 90-100  
B = 80-89  
C = 70-79  
D = 60-69  

Structure of the course:
- All work must be completed in order to pass the course. 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.  
- While regular attendance will help you do well on graded assignments, keep in mind that lectures are only supplements to the readings. In other words, your regular attendance and thorough reading of materials prior to each class will ensure your success. In-class graded activities cannot be made up.  
- If you are absent and need to know what you missed, I prefer that you come see me after class, in my office hours or set up an appointment. (No e-mails please.) Any questions regarding assignments should be addressed during or after lectures or during my office hours. 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 pursued with the utmost seriousness. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the university and will result in a zero on the assignment in question—which will make it unlikely to receive a passing grade. It is far better to see me in my office hours for another arrangement or for additional support rather than put your reputation and grades in jeopardy!  
- If for any reason you are having trouble with the material I will work with you outside of class to address your concerns and/or difficulties. Let’s use this opportunity to improve things for the better.
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

**Week 1: The Life of the Prophet**
1/24- Introduction to the Study of Islam
1/26- Life of the Prophet
Esposito: pp. 1-35

**Week 2: Sacred Sources, Arab Conquests and the Abbasids**
1/31- Understanding the Qur’an and the Hadith, (Film: *The Message*)
2/2- Spreading the Message: Arab Conquests and the Abbasids
Esposito: pp. 36-73

**Week 3: Shi‘ism, Artistic Expressions**
2/7- Shi‘ism
2/9- Artistic Expressions in Muslim Societies

**Week 4: Premodern Islamic Empires**
2/14- Safavids, Ottomans and Mughals
2/16- Philosophical Traditions

**Week 5: Islamic Societies and European Hegemony**
2/21- The European tradition of studying Islam
2/23- The modern world economy and imperialism

**Week 6: Modern Religious and Secular Reform Movements**
2/28- Constitutionalism, Religious Reform
3/2- The Woman’s Question
Esposito: pp. 141-184

**Week 7: Palestine, Colonialism and the Muslim Community**
3/7- Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
3/9- The Formation of the State of Israel and the Palestinian Diaspora

**Week 8: Midterm and Muslim Women in Perspective**
3/14- Midterm (in class)
3/16- Guest Speaker

**Week 9: Spring Break, No Class**

**Week 10: Representations of Sexuality**
3/28- Exoticizing Muslim Sexuality, Film: *The Sheik*
3/30- Muslim Intellectuals in Europe and Cross-Cultural Observations

**Week 11: Contemporary Politics and Religion**
4/4- The Islamic Revolution in Iran
4/6- Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the Taliban
Esposito: pp. 187-247

**Week 12: Shari‘a and Human Rights**
4/11- An Introduction to Islamic Law
4/13- Debate Activity

**Week 13: Living Islam: Contemporary Beliefs and Practices**
4/18- Muslim in America, Guest Speaker (CAIR)
4/20- Sufism in Poetry and Literature
Esposito: pp. 73-84, 124-139
Week 14: Focus on Dialogue
4/25- Ikeda-Tehranian Project, Small Group Discussions
4/27- Presentations
Esposito: pp. 250-294

Week 15: Faith, Morality and Ethics
5/2- Islamic Cosmology, Papers Due
5/4- Field Trip to SALAM Center
Esposito: pp. 85-124

Week 16: Contemporary Critiques
5/9- Orientalism (Film)
5/11- Final Exam

Finals Week: May 14-20, Final Exam TBD