

**University of Florida  
Department of Religion**

**REL 2362: Introduction to Islam**

**Fall 2018**

Section 2560  
Section 4227  
Section 4231

Instructor: Dr. Terje Ostebo  
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Office Hours: Wednesday 8:30-10:30

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Office Hours: Thursday 12:00-2:00pm

**Meeting & Location:**

All sections: Monday / Wednesday per. 6 – MAT 0018  
Section 2560: Friday per. 4 – AND 0034  
Section 4227: Friday per. 6 – MAT 0107  
Section 4231: Friday per. 7 – MAT 0016

**Course Description**

Introduction to Islam provides an overview of basic Islamic beliefs and practices through examination of Islamic history, law, and an array of theological orientations as articulated in the traditions of teachings of both Sunni and Shi'a Islam. It also examines Islamic practices in the contemporary period and thereby encourages students to reflect on the realities of religious everyday life and religious change. The course aims to give the students the ability to critically analyze the impacts of Islamic beliefs and values on social and cultural practices, and the formation of institutions, communities and identities. The course also aims to challenge students to grasp the complex relationship between the "great" and "little" traditions of a major world religion as well as the ambiguities of some key terms of Muslim religious thinking.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course you should have an:

- Overview over the history of Islam
- Understanding of the main tenets of Muslim beliefs and practice
- Understanding of main theological traditions and features of Islamic law
- Understanding of the variety found within Islam
- Understanding of the intersection of Islam with social, political, and cultural issues
- Understanding of the main currents within contemporary Islam

## Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

The final grade will be determined by the total scored for:

- Attendance and participation (10 %). We will circulate an attendance sheet, which you should sign. Signing for others is considered Academic dishonesty.
- Quizzes: There will be 4 unannounced quizzes during the semester. These will be short and not difficult, and are intended to test whether you have done the readings and prepared for class (15 % together).
- Mid-term (30 %) and Final exam (45 %) are based on course reading, class discussion, and lectures.

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
Tot %	94-100	88-93	82-87	76-81	71-75	66-70	61-65	56-60	51-55	46-50	40-45	<40

## Make-ups and Attendance:

Make-up exams and tests will only be allowed in unavoidable circumstances or for compelling reasons that can be convincingly documented. Similarly, absence(s) will detract points except unavoidable ones proven with satisfactory explanation/documentation.

## Student Honor Code:

As a UF student, you have agreed to follow the university's Honor Code, meaning you will not give or receive unauthorized assistance in completing assignments. Violations can result in failing an exam, paper or the course. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentrights.php>. On all work submitted for credit by University of Florida students, the following pledge is implied, "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Please note that acts of plagiarism include:

- Turning in a paper or assignment that was written by someone else.
- Copying verbatim a sentence or paragraph of text from the work of another author without proper citation and quotation marks.
- Paraphrasing or restating in your own words, text or ideas written by someone else without proper citation.

For more info, see <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>

## Disabilities:

"If you are a student with a disability and would like to request disability-related accommodations, you are encouraged to contact me and the Disability Resource Center as early in the semester as possible. The Disability Resource Center is located in 001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). Their phone number is 392-8565."

## Literature

### *Books:*

Denny F. M. (2006) *An Introduction to Islam*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.

Esposito, J. (2011) *Islam the Straight Path*. Oxford University Press, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.

Greaves, R. (2005) *Aspects of Islam*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

*The Holy Qur'an* (translated by Abdallah Yusuf Ali)

### *Articles/Chapters (on Canvas):*

Haykel, B. (2009) "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action" in Roel Meijer (ed) *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*. London: Hurst, 33-57.

- Knott, K., Poole, E., Taira, T. (2013) *Media Portrayals of Religion and the Secular Sacred*. Surrey: Ashgate, chapter 4
- Robinson, G. (2017) "The Four Waves of Global Jihad, 1979-2017" in *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 70-88
- Wood, G. (2015) "What ISIS Really Wants" in *The Atlantic*:  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>

## Class Calendar and Reading Schedule

*Note: This document is subject to change, students are responsible for all changes announced in class.*

### **Week 1 (8/22-24): Introduction**

#### **Week 2 (8/27-31): Images of Islam**

Required readings: Greaves (2005) pp 12-33; Knott et.al (2013)

#### **Week 3 (9/3-7); Monday holiday): Islam in History**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 1-19, 36-44

#### **Week 4 (9/10-14): Islam in History**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 44-84

#### **Week 5 (9/17-21): Islamic Beliefs/Practice**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34, 85-124

#### **Week 6 (9/24-28) Islamic Beliefs/Practice**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34, 85-124

#### **Week 7 (10/1-5) Visit to a mosque**

Required readings: The American Mosque 2011; Greaves (2005) pp 34-52

#### **Week 8 (10/8-12) The Scriptures of Islam**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34; Denny (2006) pp 128-163

### Midterm Exam – Wednesday 10/10

#### **Week 9 (10/15-19) The Scriptures of Islam**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 19-34; Denny (2006) pp 128-163

#### **Week 10 (10/22-26) Women and Islam**

Required readings: Greaves (2005) pp 217-240; Film: TBA

#### **Week 11 (10/29-11/2; Friday Homecoming) Sufism: Aspects of Islamic Mysticism**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 124-140; Greaves (2005) pp 118-142

#### **Week 12 (11/5-9) Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 141-152, 221-226; Haykel (2009) pp 33-57

#### **Week 13 (11/12-16; Monday holiday) Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 152-221

#### **Week 14 (11/19-23; Thanksgiving) Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements**

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 152-221; Greaves (2005) pp 165-189

**Week 15 (11/26-30) *Islamic Contemporary Reform Movements***

Required readings: Esposito (2011) pp 235-249; Robinson (2017); Wood (2015)

**Week 16 (12/3-7) *Conclusions***

Final Exam: 12/13, 3-5pm (MAT 0018)