

Fall 2018  
 Stony Brook University  
 Department of Asian and Asian American Studies  
 College of Arts and Sciences  
**AAS/RLS 280 Islam**  
 MW 5:30-6:50 Humanities 3017

This course satisfies DEC category J; SBC category GLO, HUM

Course Instructor: William Chittick

Section: 01

Office Hours: MW 4-5, Humanities 1120

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#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to the main features of the Islamic revelation as contained in the Koran and its impact on the major spiritual, intellectual, legal, and social teachings and institutions of the Islamic world. The course concludes with an examination of Islam in the modern world.

Topics are approached thematically, following the scheme set down in the table of contents of *The Vision of Islam*. Lectures are designed to provide background and clarify issues that come up in the reading. Students are expected to study the book carefully, attend class regularly, and ask questions. Forty percent of the grade will be based on quizzes about the Hadith of Gabriel and its implications for understanding the religion.

#### COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The course aims to help students gain the ability to think critically about human beliefs and practices while recognizing both the universality of religion throughout history and the contextual specificity of Islam. Additional goals include sufficient familiarity with research methods to read secondary literature on Islamic topics and to locate the discussions in their general and specific contexts; the ability to write essays on themes in Religious Studies; the ability to speak with some familiarity about the teachings and practices of Islam; an awareness of the importance and legitimacy of the different perspectives present within the Islamic tradition; an appreciation of the commonalities and differences among religions generally.

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

##### Attendance and Make Up Policy

Attendance is required, but no record will be kept. No excuses will be accepted for missed quizzes and exams except those sanctioned by university policy. Quizzes will not be announced beforehand (with the exception of the first) and cannot be made up. Failure to take the quiz will result in a zero for the quiz; an F is not a zero.

##### Description and schedule of Required Readings and/or Assignments.

The only required reading is Murata and Chittick, *The Vision of Islam*. Since you have no other reading

assignment, you are expected to read the book carefully and to show what you have learned in the quizzes and exams. With the exception of the first quiz, all questions will be essay format. A good essay will show mastery of the details as well as a grasp of the place of the discussion within the Islamic tradition as a whole. For the first quiz you must memorize the Hadith of Gabriel; this will give you an overall picture of the tradition

#### GRADING

Grades will be calculated on this basis: **Quizzes 40%. Midterm 30%. Final 30%**

Quizzes will be graded with letters, exams with numbers. Conversion table is as follows:

A+ = 96-100 (receiving a final A+ is impossible, both practically and theoretically)

A = 90-95, A- = 85-89,

B+ = 80-84, B = 75-79, B- = 70-74

C+, 65-69, C = 60-64, C- = 55-59

D+, 50-54. D = 45-49

#### MEETING SCHEDULE

Aug. 27-29: The historical context; the Hadith of Gabriel

Reading: *Vision*, Preface & Introduction

Sept. 5: *Islâm*: the Five Pillars

*Vision*, Intro. to Part I, Chapter One (pp. 3-27)

Sept. 10: *Islâm* in history: the Shariah, jurisprudence

*Vision*, Chapter Two

**Quiz - Memorization of the Hadith of Gabriel**

Sept. 12-24: *Îmân*: *Tawhîd*

*Vision*, pp. 45-84

Sept. 26-Oct. 1: Angels

*Vision*, pp. 84-104

Oct. 3-10: The measuring out

*Vision*, pp. 104-31

Oct. 15-17: Prophecy

*Vision*, Chapter Four, pp. 132-64

Oct. 22: Islamic views of other religions

*Vision*, Chapter Four, pp. 164-92

**Oct. 24: Midterm Examination**

Oct. 29-31: The Return, the soul's posthumous trajectory

*Vision*, Chapter Five, pp. 193-235

Nov. 5-7: *Îmân* in history: The intellectual schools

*Vision*, Chapter Six

Nov. 12-19: *Ihsân*: The Koranic roots

*Vision*, Chapter 7

Nov. 26-29: *Ihsân* in history

*Vision*, Chapter 8

Dec. 3-5: The Islamic view of history

*Vision*, Chapters 9-10

Dec. 10: Review

## **Dec. 17: Final Examination (5:30-8:00 PM, in the classroom)**

### CLASS PROTOCOL

No electronic devices during class.

### SUGGESTED READING

Abou El-Fadl, Khaled. *The Great Theft: Wrestling Islam from the Extremists* (2005)

Denny, Frederick. *An Introduction to Islam* (2005)

Lings, Martin. *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (1983)

### BASIC REFERENCE BOOKS

Nasr, S.H. et al. *The Study Quran* (2015)

*The Encyclopedia of Islam*

*The Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*

### ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

<http://www.uga.edu/islam>. The best of countless websites, including links to everything you need to study the Koran, the Hadith, Islamic history, etc.

<http://tanzil.net>. The text of the Koran, plus recitations, plus many English translations.

### **DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS) STATEMENT:**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information go to the following website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ehs/fire/disabilities> ]

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT:**

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

### **CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT:**

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures.