



REL 3363: Islam
Department of Philosophy
University of Central Florida
COURSE SYLLABUS

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Please email me with questions rather than posting them in the forum!

Course Overview:

In this course we will consider the Islamic tradition from theological, historical, and cultural perspectives. We will look at the historical development of Islam and its relationship to the other Abrahamic traditions, the life of Muhammad and early Muslim communities and debates concerning his heirs, basic beliefs and religious practices in Islam, the roles of the Qur'an, Hadith, and jurists, Sufism, Islamic culture and family life, and some general considerations of Islam and the modern world. Our primary area of focus will be the discussion of Islam as a religious and cultural tradition and we will have minimal discussions regarding issues associated with radical or fundamentalist Islam.

Course Objectives:

- i. Students will discover and identify major components of the Islamic tradition.
- ii. Students will actively engage in dialogue by critically discussing and evaluating important components of Islam.
- iii. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of and critical thinking about philosophical and religious concepts.
- iv. Students will be able to identify theoretical and critical principles in philosophical and religious thinking from historical and cultural contexts.
- v. Students will have a greater awareness of issues of religious and philosophical importance that are displayed in popular cinema and culture.

Required Texts and Materials: *An Introduction to Islam*, 4th edition, ed. Denny ISBN: 9780138144777
Additional readings posted online in Canvas.

Basis for Final Grade: After the introduction, most weeks we will have reading assignments and then alternate between assigned discussion posts in the forum or quizzes. On selected weeks throughout the semester we will view films and have a paper assignment. We will not have discussions or quizzes during the weeks with paper assignments.

Discussion Posts (10 points each): You will respond to the discussion topic assigned in the Course Module section in Webcourses. Discussion posts should be at least 300 words, interacting with the

assigned texts and properly cited using APA format. After you make your initial post (**7 points and due on Thursdays of that week**), you should respond to the posts of at least two of your classmates, raising substantive questions or challenging their assertions (**3 points and due by Sunday of that week of discussion**). Your responses must go beyond “nice post” or “good work.” Ask probing questions of your classmate to help further the discussion. NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED AFTER FORUM CLOSING ON SUNDAY EVENINGS. Late initial posts will be deducted by .5 pts per day late up until Sunday.

Quizzes (10 points each): On weeks that we do not have discussion posts or paper assignments we will have quizzes (found in Quiz section in Webcourses). These quizzes will be timed (15 minutes) and are due on Sunday evenings at 11:59 pm EST after the week the reading material is assigned. NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED AFTER QUIZ CLOSING ON SUNDAY EVENINGS.

Paper Assignments (30 points each): We will have three paper assignments following films and/or readings. More information on the assignments will be posted in Modules closer to the due dates. Papers will be deducted by 5 points per day late for up to 3 days. No papers will be accepted more than 3 days past the due date.

Final Exam (30 points): We will have one cumulative exam at the end of the semester to be completed on Webcourses.

Syllabus Quiz (5 points): The Registrar’s office needs to document student activity the first week of class in order for financial aid to be disbursed on time. Please review the syllabus and complete the brief syllabus quiz in order to satisfy this requirement no later than Friday, January 13 (!) at 5:00 pm. If you complete the quiz after this time you will still receive your financial aid but it may be late. Even if you are not receiving financial aid you should complete this quiz in order to receive credit for the 5 points.

Grade Summary

Discussion Posts = 60 points

Paper Assignments = 90 points

Quizzes = 50 points

Final Exam= 30 points

Syllabus Quiz = 5 points

TOTAL = 235 points possible

Grading Scale (%)

94-100 A 90-93.5 A- 87-89.5 B+ 84-86.5 B 80-83.5 B- 77-79.5 C+ 74-76.5 C 70-73.5 C- 67-69.5 D+ 64-66.5 D 60-63.5 D- 0 – 59.5 F

Grade Dissemination: You can access your scores at any time using the Grade Book function of Webcourses. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades.

Course Policies:

Late Work Policy:

THIS IS A FAST-PACED, SELF-DIRECTED ONLINE COURSE. EACH WEEK YOU HAVE A WINDOW OF TIME WITHIN WHICH YOU CAN COMPLETE YOUR WORK SO PLEASE PLAN ACCORDINGLY. LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED OUTSIDE OF THE POLICIES EXCEPT FOR DOCUMENTED EMERGENCY SITUATIONS DESCRIBED BELOW.

This class operates in Eastern Time Zone (US & Canada) and assignments are due by 11:59 pm of the date specified in the course schedule. Late posts in the forum (initial posts ONLY) will be deducted by .5 pts per day late.

In the Modules section you will find information for each week's assignments and the specific questions you are to answer for the discussion posts. **You must make your initial post answering these questions by the end of day on Thursdays** (on the weeks we have discussions) **The discussion forum closes at the end of the day on Sunday** and no additional posts will be accepted.

Please print out the syllabus and take note of the assignments and due dates. Please note that work schedules, personal computer or internet issues, or simply forgetting an assignment are not acceptable reasons to request make-up work. In order to be fair to everyone, I must maintain these due dates. Please plan accordingly.

If you have an exceptional circumstance that prevents you from posting to the forum or completing your quiz/paper on time, then please notify me as soon as possible and I will determine extensions on a case-by-case basis. This is for rare, unavoidable emergency situations only and I will need documentation to verify the reason.

Grades of "Incomplete": The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

Email: Since this is a Webcourse, email will be our primary form of communication. In most circumstances, you can expect a response from me immediately, but please allow 24 hours for a response. If something arises and I will be away from email, I will let you know in advance. **If you have any questions about the assignments or course, please send me an email rather than posting questions to me in the discussion forum or in the Announcements section.**

Movie screening: Most of the movies are accessible online through the Webcourse. If a movie is not able to be streamed online (due to licensing issues), then I will notify you in advance and it will be your responsibility to obtain the movie through Netflix, Redbox, Amazon, etc.

Course Access: The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Accessibility Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407)

823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

****Professionalism Policy and special note regarding the purposes of this class****: I look forward to lively and engaged discussions in the forum, although please keep your posts respectful and appropriate for the classroom environment at all times. Please note that this course assumes no religious affiliation. You are free to share your personal experiences as you wish and as is appropriate for the discussions, ***but please note that your personal experiences are not a substitute for the assigned academic readings and assignments.*** We will be approaching the tradition of Islam from an objective, academic perspective. We are not here to promote or denigrate the religion, but to understand its formation from historical, cultural, and theological perspectives. I will be asking probing questions in order to consider its formation and the philosophical and cultural implications of the tradition as it is lived, but respect is to be maintained for all traditions and viewpoints at all times.

Academic Conduct Policy: Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. ALL WORK IN THIS CLASS MUST BE YOUR OWN. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook <http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/> for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor's discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University. In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission.

Please see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for information on APA citation format.

University Writing Center: The University Writing Center (UWC) is a free resource for UCF undergraduates and graduates. At the UWC, a trained writing consultant will work individually with you on anything you're writing (in or out of class), at any point in the writing process from brainstorming to editing. Appointments are recommended, but not required. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the UWC website at <http://www.uwc.ucf.edu>, stop by MOD 608, or call 407.823.2197.

The dates and assignments listed in the syllabus are tentative and can be changed at the discretion of the professor.