Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different. Please refer to your instructor’s syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.
NELC 3501 Introduction to Islam

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course provides an introduction to the field of Islamic Studies and surveys the central beliefs, institutions, and practices of Islam from a historical perspective and in light of the methodological approaches of religious studies. The course focuses, in particular, on the historical development of Islam's scripture and sacred traditions, the development of its major schools of thought and institutions, Muslim spirituality and practice, and the place of Islam in the modern global world.

INSTRUCTOR:
office:
office hours:
email:

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING
Texts for Purchase (available at the campus bookstore):

Required

Recommended

Readings, Assignments, and Class Participation
Please consult this syllabus frequently throughout the quarter. It will serve as your guide for the readings and assignments necessary for you to participate in and benefit from class time to maximum extent possible. As the semester progresses, I will continue to update the content of the syllabus when needs dictate, particularly the class schedule.

Readings
Much of the basic work you will be doing outside of class will focus on your readings. For most days, there are two types of readings present on the syllabus: primary source readings and
supplemental readings. It is particularly important in this class to focus on the primary source readings—when you come to class at the beginning of the week, I expect that you will have read and taken notes for in-class discussion and questions on these assigned texts. Before each session, you must email to anthony.288@osu.edu at least 3 questions about the primary source reading assignment.

Assignments
The bulk of your grade for this course will be evaluated based on four components: 1) a mid-term exam, 2) a final exam, 3) a textual-analysis papers/presentation, and 4) a term paper written in response to prompts based off class lectures and readings or an instructor-approved paper topic.

Your textual-analysis paper is designed to teach you how to analyze primary sources readings in translation, and the assignment consists of two components. The first is the completion of the Textual Analysis Handout due the day of your in-class presentation and handed in to me. The second is a 15-20 minute, in-class presentation that will lead the class discussion of the source and its historical significance.

Your final essay will be assigned from a prompt and will be due during the second half of the semester. This essay will ask you to carefully adjudicate a historiographical debate and will serve as your attempt to express your own ideas in a medium-length essay (5 to 7 pages in length, 1.5 spaced, standard font such as Times New Roman or Garamond) on an assigned topic. These topics will require you to draw extensively upon the assigned readings and the ideas discussed in class and will be scrutinized and evaluated on the basis of the criteria of academic writing. Essays should be handed in to me as a printed copy by 3:00pm Eastern Standard Time on the due date.

Developing and mastering the ability to write critically and to engage historical events and persons with critical acumen is a difficult, but worthwhile, task. Even if you never revisit the topic of this course again, the skills you acquire in writing and improving your essays will serve you well for the rest of your life. I therefore beseech you to take time to write your essays well. Further instructions on class paper assignments can be found on the assignment handouts and course Grading Rubric.

Class Participation
“80% of success is showing up.”
-Woody Allen

This class depends on you to function fully. If you do not participate in class discussions, do not present assigned articles, and fail to communicate to me any indication that you’ve read the texts (and such indications could be in the form of insightful observations or cantankerous bewilderment), then I will be compelled to give you a low-grade.

Grading Scheme
Map Assignment 5%
Attendance (Questions) 10%
Analysis Paper 20%
Mid-Term 20%
Term Paper 25%
Final Exam 20%

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/).

Disability policy
Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/.

FOR YOUR SAFETY, the OSU Student Safety/Escort Service is available after 7 p.m. by dialing 292-3322.
CLASS SCHEDULE

**Week 1**

**Preliminaries**

**Wed (Aug 26)**  Class Introduction: Why Islamic Studies?

**Fri (Aug 28)**  The Near East and the Arabian Peninsula before Islam

*Read:*
- Hillenbrand, 23-29.
- Donner, 1-38.

**Week 2**

**Mon (Aug 31)**  The Life of Muḥammad

*Read:*
- Hillenbrand, 29-57
- Donner, 39-89.

**Wed (Sept 2)**  The Conquests and the Caliphates

*Read:*
- Donner, 90-144

**Fri (Sept 4)**  Discussion (selections from the Sira Literature):

**Week 3**

**The Qur’an**

**Mon (Sept 7)**  NO CLASSES – LABOUR DAY

**Wed (Sept 9)**  Structure and Themes of the Qur’an

*Read:*
- Hillenbrand, 58-88.

**Fri (Sept 11)**  Discussion (Meccan and Medinan Suras)
- Suras 7, 14, 18, 90-97, 100-114 (Meccan)
- Suras 2 (Medinan)

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**Week 4**  
**FAITH & RITUAL**

Mon (Sept 14)  
*Discussion: The Performance of Faith, or: What is Ritual?*
- Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York 1997), 1-60

Wed (Sept 16)  
The Five Pillars (1): Shahadah, Salat, Zakat, Ramadan
*Read:*
- Hillenbrand, 89-114.

Fri (Sept 18)  
The Five Pillars (2): Hajj
*Read:*

**Week 5**  
**JURISPRUDENCE**

Mon (Sept 21)  
The Hadith Corpus
*Read:*

Wed (Sept 23)  
Shari‘ah and the Formation of Classical Fiqh
*Read:*
- Hillenbrand, 114-37

Fri (Sept 25)  
*Discussion:*

**Week 6**  
**DIVERSITY**

Mon (Sept 28)  
The Roots of Muslim Sectarianism

Wed (Sept 30)  
Shi‘ism in History
*Read:*
- Hillenbrand, 138-68.

Fri (Oct 2)  
*Discussion:*

NELC 3501

Week 7

ISLAMIC THOUGHT

Mon (Oct 5)  MID-TERM

Wed (Oct 7)  Early Theological Debates: Predestination and the Created Qur’an

Read:

• A. Knysh, “Islamic Scholarship under the ‘Abbasids: Theological Debate and Schools of Thought”

Fri (Oct 9)  Discussion:

• The Execution of Ghaylan al-Dimashqi, from S. Anthony, Crucifixion and Death as Spectacle: Umayyad Crucifixion in its Late Antique Context (New Haven, Conn., 2014), 76-82.

Week 8

Mon (Oct 12)  Islamic Political Thought until 1258

Read:

• Excerpts from Ibn Khaldūn’s al-Muqaddima, tr. F. Rosenthal

Wed (Oct 14)  Islamic Political Thought after 1258

Read:

• Excerpts from Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī’s Akhlāq-e Naṣirī, tr. G.M. Wickens

Fri (Oct 16)  NO CLASSES – AUTUMN BREAK

Week 9

Mon (Oct 19)  Philosophy and Hellenism

Read:
• A. Knysh, “Intellectual Struggles in Premodern Islam: Philosophy versus Theology”

Wed (Oct 21)  Transmission of Knowledge


Fri (Oct 23)  Discussion:


• Excerpts from Abū ʿUbayd al-Jūzjānī, Life of Ibn Sīnā, tr. W. E. Gohlmann

Week 10  SUFISM

Mon (Oct 26)  The Formation of Islamic Mysticism

Read:
• Hillenbrand, 189-218.

Wed (Oct 28)  Tariqahs and Literary Traditions

Read:
• A. Knysh, “Institutional and Social Aspects of Later Sufism”

Fri (Oct 30)  Discussion:
• Al-Ghazālī, Deliverance from Error [Nidal Marouf]

Week 11  THE EXPANSION OF ISLAM

Mon (Nov 2)  Class Canceled

Wed (Nov 4)  Islamic Expansion in the Pre-Modern Period

Read:
• Hillenbrand, 219-46

Fri (Nov 6)  Travelers and Merchants

Read:
• Adam J. Sliverstein, “The Medieval Islamic Worldview: Arabic Geography in Its Historical Context,” in Geography and
Week 12

Mon (Nov 9)  Discussion:
- Excerpts from Abū `Ubayd al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, The Book of Revenue, tr. A.K. Nyzee
- Excerpts from Abū Zayd al-Sīrāfi, Accounts of China and India, tr. Tim Mackintosh-Smith (New York 2014), 20-133. [Steven Turner]

WOMEN AND GENDER

Wed (Nov 11)  NO CLASSES – VETERAN’S DAY

Fri (Nov 13)  Gender in the Modern Study of Religion
Read:

Week 13

Mon (Nov 16)  Women in Islamic Societies
Read:
- Hillenbrand, 247-273
- Susan Spectorsky, Women in Classical Islamic Law: A Survey of the Sources (Leiden, 2010), ch. 1

Wed (Nov 18)  Discussion:
- Tabari on Adam and Eve in the Garden [Huyen Truong]
- Ghazālī on the ideal marriage, excerpts from Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn [Arleigh Martin]

Fri (Nov 20)  NO CLASS – CONFERENCE TRAVEL

Week 14  ISLAM TODAY & TOMORROW

Mon (Nov 23)  Islam and the Challenge of Modernity (TERM PAPER DUE)
Read:

- A. Knysh, “Renewal and Reform in Islam: The Emergence of Islamic Modernism and Reformism”
- Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Laws Should Change in Accordance with the Conditions of Nations and The Theology of Unity [Khaled Asad]

Wed (Nov 25)  
NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Fri (Nov 27)  
NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15

Mon (Nov 30)  
NO CLASS – CONFERENCE TRAVEL

Wed (Dec 2)  
NO CLASS – CONFERENCE TRAVEL

Fri (Dec 4)  
NO CLASS – CONFERENCE TRAVEL

Week 16

Mon (Dec 7)  
Genealogies of Political Islam

Read:

- Excerpts from Sayyid Abu l-‘Ala’ al-Mawdudi, The Islamic Law, tr. Khurshid Ahmad
- Excerpts from Sayyid Qutb, Signposts along the Road, tr. R.L. Euben [Tim Ervin]

Wed (Dec 9)  
Contemporary Islamic Thought: Major Themes

Read:


FINAL EXAM: Friday, 11 December, 12:00 – 1:45PM