

American Islam
FYS REL 197

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Office hours: TR 9:00-10:00, 1:00-2:00; or by appointment

Fall 2009
TR 10:00-11:30
JSC 375

Description

This course explores the history of Islam in America, starting with the waves of emigration from Muslim societies and continuing on to the life of Muslims in post-9/11 America. The course will provide a brief overview of mainstream Islamic teachings and practices. But the main focus will be on 1.) the ethnic and religious variety of Muslims who have made America their home, 2.) the challenges of living a Muslim life in America, 3.) the way Islam is being reinvented in America's open political, social and religious environment, and 4.) the emergence and transformation of America's only domestic/indigenous/homemade form of Islam—Black Muslims..

Class Expectations

As a seminar, this course will approach its subject material primarily through discussion. This means that each student is responsible for the upkeep and the success of the class. **For each class meeting, students must read the assigned materials, reflect upon them, and identify a minimum of three ideas/quotes/questions that they believe we should discuss.** Everyone in the class is a discussant, including myself. If it seems that students are falling into patterns of silence, I will call on individuals to reinvigorate the discussion. And given the expectation cited above, individuals will always have something to say!! What we are aiming for is informed discussion (that is, discussion based on the readings and reflection), not talking for the sake of talking. I will distinguish between quality and quantity when I calculate the participation grade. **Note: A significant portion of your grade depends on participation. Failure to participate will result in a lowered final grade.** If you have questions about your participation grade, don't hesitate to contact me.

Grading

Essays	45%
Midterm Exam	20%
Research Proposal	20%
Participation	<u>15%*</u>
Total	100%

*Because your participation is so essential for the seminar style learning, any unexcused absences, especially on the day(s) you are presenting, will negatively impact your grade. I can overlook two "cuts," only on days when you are a discussant, but after that each absence will potentially deduct two percentage points from your overall grade.

Academic Integrity Policy

I will observe DePauw's policy on academic integrity (i.e., cheating and plagiarism), as outlined in the Student Handbook. We will review this issue before the first paper is due, but I encourage you to read the policy yourself.

Required Reading

Elias, Jamal J. *Islam* (Prentice Hall)
Knight, Michael Muhammad. *The Taqwacores* (Soft Skull)
Lincoln, C. Eric. *The Black Muslims in America* (Eerdmans)
Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (Ballantine)

Moodle reserves

Schedule of Classes and Daily Assignments

8/27 Introduction

An American Islam?

9/1 Muslim Punk
Knight, 5-136

9/3 Muslim Punk
Knight, 137-254

9/8 Writing Center (ARC, 115 Asbury)/ROW Library
Lipson, chapters 3 & 4
** Essay assignment due

Overview of the Islamic Tradition

9/10 Muhammad, Texts and Context
Elias, 7-44

9/15 Law, Sufism, and Practice
Elias, 45-109

Muslims in America

9/17 Immigrants and Natives
"Islam Comes to America" Moodle
"Islam in the African American Community" Moodle

9/22 Raising Muslim Youth
Parents' Manual, v-vii, 3-61 Moodle

- 9/24 Raising Muslim Youth
Parents' Manual, 62-152 Moodle
- 9/29 Muslim Families and Tradition
"Family and Religion among Muslim Immigrants and Their Descendants" Moodle
"North America and the Adaptation of the Muslim Tradition" Moodle
- 10/1 In-Class Peer Editing
- 10/6 Leading the Muslim Community
"Muslim Leadership and the Shaping of the Umma" Moodle
"Imams for a New Generation" Moodle
- ** Essay assignment due
- 10/8 Muslim Women
"Two-Way Acculturation: Muslim Women in America Between Individual Choice and
Community Affiliation" Moodle
"Women in the Changing Mosque" Moodle
- 10/13 Progressive Views on Muslim Women
"Progressive Muslims and Islamic Jurisprudence" Moodle
"Sexuality, Diversity, and Ethics in the Agenda of Progressive Muslims" Moodle
- 10/15 Midterm
- 10/20, Fall Break
22

Black Muslims

- 10/27 Autobiography as Socio-Cultural Commentary
Malcolm X, ix-xv, 3-242
- 10/29 Autobiography as Socio-Cultural Commentary
Malcolm X, 243-527
- 11/3 Sociological Analysis
Lincoln, xi-xxiii, 1-93
- 11/5 Sociological Analysis
Lincoln, 94-176
- 11/10 Sociological Analysis
Lincoln, 177-276

- 11/12 In-Class Peer Editing
- 11/17 Review of PEW Survey
Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream
<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/483/muslim-americans>
- ** Essay assignment due
- 11/19 Louay Safi, Ph.D.
Director of Communications and Leadership Development
Islamic Society of North America
- 11/24 Study Day
- 11/25 Thanksgiving Recess
- 12/1 Presentations
- 12/3 Presentations
- 12/8 Presentations
- 12/10 Wrap-up
- 12/17 1:00-4:00pm
** Research papers due