Rutgers University  Dept. of Religion (732-932-9641)  Spring 2011
840:203:01 (685:233:01)  Islamic Scriptures

Instructor: Dr. James Pavlin  Office: Loree Bldg. 130/DC; email: jdpavlin@rci.rutgers.edu
Office Hours:  MW 1:30-2:00, or by appointment

Course Description: The purpose of the course is to introduce the student to the sacred texts of Islam. Muslims regard the Quran as the literal, revealed word of Allah but also consider the statements and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, collectively known as the Hadith or Sunnah, as part of a broader concept of revealed information. Each mode of revelation, Quran and Hadith, form the scriptural basis on which Muslims build their religious life and define the concepts of sacred and profane. The course will explore how revelation bridges the gap between the divine and human by examining Islamic scriptures in their historical, theological, legal and mystical contexts.

2) Sells, Michael. *Approaching the Qur’an: the early revelations*, 2nd ed.
3) Handouts: articles and notes to be given to the students in class or by email

Recommended Texts on Reserve at Alexander Library:
Abdel Haleem, Muhammad. *Understanding the Quran: Themes and Style.*
Ask, Karin and Marit Tjomslund. *Women and Islamization: Contemporary Dimensions of Discourse on Gender.*
Ayoub, Mahmoud. *The Qur’an and its Interpreters.*
Azami, Muhammad M. *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature.*
Ghazi, Muhammad. *Marriage and Divorce: Keep them in Kindness or Release them in Kindness.*
Jansen, J.J.G. *The Interpretation of the Koran in Modern Egypt.*
*Jihad in Medieval and Modern Islam.* Trans by Rudolph Peters.
Phipps, William E. *Muhammad and Jesus: A Comparison of the Prophets and Their Teachings.*
Rippin, Andrew. *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur’an.*
Seale, M.S. *Quran and Bible: Studies in Interpretation and Dialogue.*
Stowasser, Barbara. *Women in the Qur’an, Traditions, and Interpretation.*
Waines, David. *An Introduction to Islam.*

Reference works:
*Encyclopedia of the Qur’an.* ed. by Jane Damman McAuliffe. BP133 b.E53 2001
Course Requirements:
1) Attendance and Participation Policy: Students are expected to attend each class on time and contribute to class discussions. Attendance will be taken for each class. Not counting the first day’s class, students are permitted one unexcused absence. After that, any unexcused absences may result in a reduction of the student’s final grade based on my discretion. Students who encounter any extended problem with absences, for example, for medical, family emergency, or religious reasons, must inform me in writing (email acceptable) about the reason and duration of the absence. Decisions on excused absences will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The use of lap tops is permitted only for purposes related to the course. All cell phones, iPods, and any other such technology is strictly forbidden during class. Violation of this policy will result in your being requested to leave the class and receiving an unexcused absence.

2) Quizzes (30% of final grade): Short answer essay quizzes will occur on a regular basis to test the students’ grasp of ideas and concepts under discussion. The quizzes will be in class or take home. For the in class quizzes, students will have about fifteen minutes to write the answer. There will be no make-ups for the in class quizzes. Students who miss one-quarter or more of the quizzes will lose a corresponding percentage from the overall quiz grade.

3) Midterm Exam (30% of final grade): The exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false and fill in the blank questions. A study guide for the exam will be provided. Make-up exams are permitted for those having an excused absence. The make up exam must be completed within one week of the student’s return to class, depending on the arrangements made with the department secretary. This will be the only possibility for a make-up.

4) One Research Paper (40% of final grade): The paper must have a cover page, six to ten pages of text (averaging 250 words per page), and a bibliography. There must be a minimum of six academic sources, either published or from the internet. Other non-academic sources can be used. The topic for the paper must focus on a specific theme in the Quran and Hadith, e.g., the nature of God, creation, marriage, etc. Papers must conform to all academic standards. All papers must be handed in by the due date, late papers will not be accepted with out prior approval.

Grading Policy: All final grades will be calculated according to the Rutgers’ grading system. Letter grades and numerical grades on a scale of 100 to 65 will be converted to the point system as follows: 4.0 = A (100-90), 3.5 = B+ (89-85), 3.0 = B (84-80), 2.5 = C+ (79-75), 2.0 = C (74-70), 1.0 = D (69-65), 0.0 = F (64 and below). An incomplete (“T” grade) for this course will not be given unless the student consults with me about the reason for not completing the course work on time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/24, 26</td>
<td>Overview of the Quran: Abdel Haleem, Introduction, pp. ix-xxxvi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes for the Quran: first set of class notes, pp. 1-2, sent in an email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes for the Quran: second set of class notes, pp. 3-6, sent in an email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9, 14</td>
<td>The Hadith: handout- Frederick M. Denny, Chapter 7, “The Prophet’s Sunna as Preserved in the Hadith,” in <em>An Introduction to Islam</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes on the Hadith: third set of class notes, pp. 7-9, sent in an email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Notes on Pre-Islamic culture: fourth set of class notes, p. 10, sent in an email.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/9</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/14, 16</td>
<td><strong>Spring Break</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Notes on the “ruh”: fifth set of class notes, pp. 11-13, sent in an email.

4/11, 13  Creation and Humanity: sixth set of class notes, pp. 14-17, sent in an email.

4/18, 20  Man, Woman, Family: seventh set of class notes, pp. 18-20, sent in an email.

4/25, 27  Islamic Society and Relations with Non-Muslims: eighth set of class notes, pp. 21-22, sent in an email.

5/2  No class meeting. Research paper is due. It must be brought to the Department of Religion office Loree 140/DC by 4:00 pm.

There is no final exam for this class.