THEO 3715 Classic Islamic Texts*
Fordham University
Department of Theology
Summer Session 1 2018

Instructor: Professor Kathryn Kueny
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Class Time and Location: TWR 6-9pm
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Office Hours: MR 4:45-5:45 pm, or by appt.

*course fulfills core “Sacred Texts and Traditions” & “Global Studies” requirements

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will analyze some of the major religious texts, beliefs, ideas, and practices of Islam. While “classical texts” such as the Qur’ān may outline some of the basic and fundamental contours of an “Islamic tradition,” we will also remember that a single text does not contain the totality of how a religion is lived, breathed, interpreted, and embraced by its adherents. Through an analysis of both the normative, foundational texts (primarily medieval) and the “living tradition,” students will look to appreciate the diversity and complexity of the many “Islams” that have existed and continue to thrive throughout time and space.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the term, students will have learned (a) to gain a deep appreciation of the global, theological, and historical complexity of Islamic traditions as understood through their “sacred texts”; (b) to develop critical skills in reading, writing, and analysis through the completion of course assignments and participation in class discussions; (c) to cultivate a critical and informed perspective on current events, including the media’s presentation of Islam.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Midterm (30%). The Midterm Exam will cover the first half of the course; it will be 75 minutes in length.
Final Examination (50%). In-class, cumulative final examination that will be 120 minutes in length.
Attendance and Participation (10%). Show up to class, be engaged, and contribute to discussions.
Short Analysis for the materials on 6.20 (10%).

GRADING SCALE (a rough scale— instructor's discretion may apply): 97-100pts = A+; 94-96pts = A; 90-93pts = A-; 87-89pts = B+; 84-86pts = B; 80-83pts = B-; 77-79pts = C+; 74-76pts = C; 70-73pts = C-; 60-69pts = D; below 59pts = F

ATTENDANCE
1. Absences for illnesses may be excused ONLY if I receive a note from the dean documenting extenuating circumstances. Religious holidays not on the Fordham calendar and University-sponsored events are excused. If you will be missing a class for these reasons, let me know; you will need to make up the work in advance.
2. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to figure out what you have missed.

WHAT I EXPECT OF YOU
1. Come to class, and come to class prepared to discuss the material under review. Do your assigned readings in advance, and “query” your texts so that you come to class with questions or thoughts.
2. No phones allowed. Computers or ipads may be used for the sole purpose of having access to the readings during class discussions. Do not disturb your classmates with in-class shopping, facebook perusal, email, or news reading. Please educate yourself about the hidden distractions of electronic usage (see "Students who use digital devices in class perform worse in exams").

3. Be respectful of others; “do to others as you would have them do to you.” Recognize that your fellow classmates are coming to class with different beliefs, life experiences, concerns, hopes and values. Try to learn something about them.

4. Put in your best effort on every assignment, including the daily readings, which should be read in advance of the class they are due.

5. Ask me questions if there are aspects of the readings or the course that you do not understand. You can ask questions during class, via email, after class, or during my office hours. If there is some aspect of the course you are uncomfortable with, come and talk to me. Do not remain silent.

6. Do not feel constrained by the syllabus. If there is a term or concept you do not understand, or would like more background on a topic that I have not provided, or would like to explore a topic in more depth, do not hesitate to do a bit of research and exploration on your own. I can also give you some suggestions for good sources to read for further information, if you need recommendations.

7. If you miss a class, get the notes from a fellow student, catch up on the readings, go over posted outlines on Blackboard, and THEN come see me if you have questions.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF ME

1. I’ll respond to all questions or queries you may have about the course as well as current events relating to Islamic texts. I will be available during my office hours. If you email me, I will get back to you within a 24-hour period.

2. I’ll switch up teaching methods throughout the summer to keep everyone engaged. I will lecture on most days; however, I also like to encourage classroom discussions. You are “graded” for participation only insofar that you come to class regularly, seem engaged, and occasionally have something to contribute. Evidence of your daily interaction with the course material will only help you. If you do not like to speak in class, come see me for alternative venues. In addition to the lectures and discussions, we might engage in small-group work, watch videos/short documentaries, or read articles from news websites or papers.

3. I’ll stick to the syllabus as much as possible, however, the syllabus is only a loose version of what we want to be getting to this semester. Our discussions may, at times, lead us into uncharted territory, as may current events. Adjustments to calendar and reading assignments may be made at the instructor’s discretion.

4. I’ll grade assignments promptly and offer you extensive feedback on your work. I am happy to discuss grades with you, but only face-to-face. No electronic grade inquiries.

5. I’ll begin and end class on time.

6. I’ll treat you with respect.

Please read the following statements carefully:

UNIVERSITY’S POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Please note that sanctions will be imposed on students who violate academic integrity. According to “The Arts and Sciences Policy on Academic Integrity,” violations of academic integrity “include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating on exams, false authorship, and destruction of library materials needed for a course.” Academic integrity applies to papers, quizzes and exams.

DISABILITY STATEMENT: Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of this course, you may
be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill - O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Room 207, x6282).

MANDATORY REPORTING STATEMENT (Clery Act): Under the provisions of the Clery Act, faculty members are mandated reporters. This means that I am required to contact and provide information to Public Safety, or to the Dean of Students, or to the Title IX Coordinator if I learn a student is a victim or survivor of certain crimes or have been sexually harassed, discriminated against, sexually assaulted, stalked, had violence occur in a domestic violence or intimate partner relationship, or any other crime of a sexual nature or a violation of the University's sexual misconduct policy, including misconduct committed by a faculty member. Once reported, the University will promptly seek to properly support any student, and make efforts to stop the discrimination, prevent it from recurring, and remedy its effects. There are three confidential places on campus where you can seek support and it will not be "reported": Psychological & Counseling Services, the Student Health Center, and Campus Ministries. The Student CARE brochure can also provide you with off-campus resources for support (including Safe Horizons and the Crime Victims Treatment Center). I am also required to report other serious crimes covered by the Clery Act that occur within our University community, such as theft, hate crimes, assault, illegal weapons, etc.

VETERAN SUPPORT
If you are a military veteran and need support, the following contact information may be of assistance:
<Yvette.Branson@va.gov> [Yvette Branson, PhD; VITAL Initiative Coordinator (Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership) VA New York Harbor 646.772.6087]

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS (*Please note that each 3-hour class session will be divided into two parts, with a 15-20 minute break in between).

Week One

**T 5.29**
1. Course Introduction
   (*Break*)
2. The pre-Islamic context: Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Pagans (lecture only)

**W 5.30**
1. Founding Discourses: The Qur’ān and its Major Themes
   Readings: Qur’ān: Read Sūra 1; Click on Sura 1 (play at least 3 recitations for Sūrat al-fāṭiḥa);
   Click on the following and skim the link: Qur’ānic Calligraphy; Watch the short video link: Calligraphy;
   Read the articles by Ingrid Mattson, “How to Read the Qur’ān” (blackboard); Kristina Nelson, “The Sound of the Divine” in “Popular Expressions of Religion” (also on blackboard).
   Read and be prepared to discuss the link in class: Islamic Calligraphy Controversy: What do you think the teacher hoped to accomplish by having students write out the shahada? How might Muslim students view such an assignment? What might be a better way to convey information about the “word” in Islam to public school students? What do you think of the parents’ responses to the assignment? (*Break*)
2. The Qur’ān: God and Monotheism
R 5.31 1. The Qur’ān: Creation of the Cosmos and Human Beings; Adam, [Eve] and Satan
Readings: Qur’ān: (creation of world): Sūras 7:54; 10:3; 41:9-12; 4:1-4; (creation of humans):
2:20-40
(*Break*)
2. The Qur’ān: Creation Stories: Adam, Eve, and the Serpent in the Tafsīr (Qur’ānic Commentary)
Readings: Ṭabarī & Kisā’ī, “Medieval Exegesis” (blackboard); Tabarī, “The Place on Earth”

Week Two
T 6.5
1. The Qur’ānic Prophets and their Revelations: Abraham, Moses, Mary, Jesus, and the Ahl al-kitāb
(*Break*)
2. Qur’ānic Visions of the End Times and Afterlife
Readings: Read Smith and Haddad, “Women in the Afterlife” (blackboard); Lange, “The Discovery of Paradise in Islam” (blackboard); Qur’ān: Sūras 52; 55; 56; 76; 78

W 6.6
1. The Qur’ān on Community Life: Beliefs and Practices (The Five Pillars in Detail)
2. The Hajj
Readings: In-Class Film, “The Chinese Hajj”

R. 6.7
1. The Qur’ān: Communal Norms: Husbands and Wives; Sons and Daughters
Readings: Qur’ān: Sūra 4:1-34; Sūra 2:221-237
Kueny, “Do Muslim Men Still Beat Their Wives?” (on blackboard); read the two weblinks by Hagerty, “Some Muslims in the US Quietly Engage in Polygamy” and Hagerty, “Philly’s Black Muslims Increasingly Turn to Polygamy”
Click on the link by Labi, “Married for a Minute”
2. Muslim Community Life: Marriage and Divorce
Readings: Excerpts from al-Ghazālī’s Book on the Etiquette of Marriage (blackboard); Click on the link, India Court Strikes Down Instant Divorce for Muslims
Week Three
T 6.12  Midterm Examination

W 6.13  1. Muslim Community Life: The Prophet Muḥammad
Readings: Qur’an, Sūra 33:28-73; Ali, “The Prophet Muhammad, his beloved Aishah, and modern Muslim sensibilities” (blackboard); Donner: “The Historical Context” (blackboard) (*Break*)
2. From Revelation to Caliphate
Readings: The Pact of Umar; Story of King Shahryar and His Brother (Alf layla wa layla); Sura 17; Jerusalem as Flashpoint

R 6.14  1. Islamic Jurisprudence: Sunna as expressed through Ḥadīth
Readings: Read the link "Kitāb al-zīna min al-sunan al-Nisā`ī" (just Chapters 1-39 [up to “Dislike for Women to Show their Jewelry and Gold”]); Hameesh, “Rulings concerning tattooing” (on blackboard) (*Break*)
2. Islamic Jurisprudence: Sharī`a
Readings: Hattox, “Wine, Coffee, and Holy Law” (blackboard); Link: Creeping Sharia Legislation

Week Four
T 6.19  1. Philosophy, Science and Ethics
Readings: Ghazālī: “From The Incoherence of the Philosophers: Discussion 17” (blackboard); Musallam, “Conception Theory” (blackboard); Deuraseh: “Is Birth Control Permissible by Islamic Law (Sharī`ah)” (also on blackboard)
2. Shi`ism
Readings: Sharif, “Sacred Narratives Linking Iraqi Shiite Women” (blackboard)

W 6.20  Sufism: Mystical Visions
Readings: Watch: “City of Djinns” (streaming video to be accessed through the Fordham Library Website).
Read: “What is Sufism,” by Saladdin Ahmed (blackboard); Click on Qawwali Music of the Sufis; Listen: Allah hoo; "Allah hoo"
Analysis Due: Did what you read and see and hear conflict with, confirm, or both, with what you know about the Qur’an and its interpretation in law and life? Why or why not? Choose one or two examples to discuss in 1-2 pages. Submit on Blackboard by 10pm.

R 6.21  1. Colonialism/Nationalism: Agents of Social and Intellectual Change
Readings: Qāsim Amīn, excerpts from “Tahrīr al-mar’a” (The Liberation of Women) (blackboard) (*Break*)
2. Conservative Counterarguments
Readings: Shehadeh, “Women in the Discourse of Sayyid Qutb” (more readings, next page) (blackboard) Sayyid Qutb’s America; Qutb, “Jihad in the cause of God” (read pp. 63-86); Qur’an, Suras 9 (entire); 5:54; 22:78; 60:1

Week Five
T 6.26
1. American Islam: Nation of Islam
Readings: Karim, “Through Sunni Women’s Eyes: Black Feminism and the Nation of Islam” (blackboard); Malcolm X, “Mecca” (blackboard); Towards a Black Muslim Ontology of Resistance
2. American Islam: The Immigrant Experience
Readings: In-Class Film: “The Mosque in Morgantown”; Read: I am a Woman, a Muslim, and an Immigrant. And I voted for Trump

W 6.27
1. Contemporary Debates: Islamophobia
Readings: In-class Film, “The Man Behind the Mosque”; "US Liberal Islamophobia" Why Donald Trump Needs Muslim Women
2. Discussion, Wrap-up, Review

R 6.28
Final Examination

Supplication for a successful study: “Oh Lord, open my heart for me and make my task easy for me, and loosen the knot from my tongue, so that they will understand my speech.”

REQUIRED TEXTS

BLACKBOARD READINGS, WEB LINKS, MISCELLANY
Deuraseh, Nurdeen. “Is Birth Control permissible by Islamic Law (sharī’a)?” In Arab Law Quarterly 18, no. 1 (2003); 90-97. (blackboard)


Shehadeh, Lamia Rustum. “Women in the Discourse of Sayyid Qutb,” in Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 22, Number 3 (Summer 2000), 45-55. (blackboard)


**You may also be asked to read news articles on relevant topics as they come up, to be distributed throughout the course.