THEO 3715 Classic Islamic Texts
Summer Session I 2019

LL 521 6pm-9pm
Instructor: Prof. Kueny, LL 924E
Office Hours: W 4:45-5:45, and by appointment
Ext.: x7143
Email: kueny@fordham.edu

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’an 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 (20%). Do the readings! Show up to class, be engaged, and contribute to discussions.

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. Electronics 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, Twitter, memes, 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, especially 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 during the week; 48 hours on the weekend.

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. 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

1. **Policy on Plagiarism:** Please read carefully the Fordham policy regarding plagiarism, which can be found on the Fordham website (click on hyperlink) The Academic Integrity Statement follows: As a student of Fordham University, I recognize that I am part of a community dedicated to the disciplined and rigorous pursuit of knowledge and communication of truth. I therefore commit myself to the University Code of Conduct and upholding the highest standards of academic integrity. Any work that I claim to be my own will be my own; I will give appropriate credit where credit is due; I will be fair and honest.
in all of my interactions with members of the Fordham community.

2. **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 the object 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).

3. **Chosen Name:** Some members of the Fordham community are known by a name that is different from their legal name. Students who wish to be identified by a chosen name can contact the instructor via email and request their chosen name and pronoun be used.

4. **Mental Health:** We all experience emotional distress and personal difficulties as a normal part of life. As your instructor, I am not qualified to serve as your counselor. However, Fordham’s office for Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) provides free and confidential mental health services that are not connected to your academic record in any way. If you are experiencing mental health distress, we strongly encourage you to take advantage of CPS’ services. For more information about CPS, please visit their website at [www.fordham.edu/counseling](http://www.fordham.edu/counseling). To make an appointment, please call 718-817-3725 (RH) or 212-636-6225 (LC).

5. **Email Policy:** You are expected to check your email regularly, and we will do the same. Response time to an email during the week should be within 24 hours, and 48 hours on weekends. Please be advised that I do NOT discuss grades via email; if you have an issue with your grades, you will need to come and see me during my office hours.

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

7. **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 Clergy Act that occur within our University community, such as theft, hate crimes, assault, illegal weapons, etc.

**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**

*Tuesday 5.28*

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

*Wednesday 5.29*

1. Founding Discourses: The Qur‘ān and its Major Themes

   **Readings:** Qur‘ān: Read Sūra 1; Click on Sūra 1 (play at least 3 recitations for Sūrat al-fatīha); Click on the following and skim the link: Qur‘ānic Calligraphy; Watch the short video link: Calligraphy; Read the articles by Mattson, “How to Read the Qur‘ān” (blackboard); Nelson, “The Sound of the Divine” in “Popular Expressions of Religion” (also on blackboard). Read the link: Islamic Calligraphy Controversy: Be prepared to discuss the following questions in-class: Why do you think the teacher wanted the students to experience the process of writing out the shahada? What would be comparable exercises for students to engage in when learning about other world religions? What do you think of the parents’ responses to the assignment?

   (**Break*****)

2. The Qur‘ān: God and Monotheism

   **Readings:** Read Sūras 2:116; 6:101; 17:111; 23:91; 43:82; 112; Read Fazlur Rahman, “God” (blackboard)

*Thursday 5.30*

1. The Qur‘ān: Creation of the Cosmos and Human Beings; Adam, [Eve] and Satan


   (**Break*****)

2. The Qur‘ān: Creation Stories: Adam, Eve, and the Serpent in the Tafsīr (Qur‘ānic Commentary)

   **Readings:** Ṭabarî & Kisā‘i, “Medieval Exegesis” (blackboard); Ṭabarî, “The Place on Earth” (blackboard)

**Week Two**
*Tuesday 6.4*

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); Thomassen, “Islamic Hell” (blackboard); Qur’ān: Sūras 52; 55; 56; 76; 78

*Wednesday 6.5*

1. The Qur’ān on Community Life: Beliefs and Practices (The Five Pillars in Detail)
   
   **Readings:** Qur’ān, Sūras 2:144-145; 2:196-205; 2:182-186; 2:260-274; 76:25-26; 112:1-4; Click on the two links: Ramadan Economy; Ramadan; Read Bowen, “Abu Ilya and Zakat” in “Popular Expressions of Religion” (on blackboard); Jansen, “An American Woman on the Hajj” in “Popular Expressions of Religion” (on blackboard)
   
   (****Break****)

2. The Hajj
   
   **Readings:** Watch the two videos: Life Inside Chinas Total Surveillance State; Chinas Secret Interment Camps

*Thursday, 6.6*

1. The Qur’ān: Communal Norms: Husbands and Wives; Sons and Daughters
   
   **Readings:** Qur’ān: Sūra 4:1-34; Kuemy, “Do Muslim Men Still Beat Their Wives?” (on blackboard); Click on the two weblinks by Hagerty: “Some Muslims in the US Quietly Engage in Polygamy” and “Philly’s Black Muslims Increasingly Turn to Polygamy”; Click on the link by Labi, “Married for a Minute”; Click on the link by Mahmood, “I do . . . for now”
   
   (****Break****)

2. The Qur’ān: Communal Norms: 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; Click on the link: A Muslim and a Hindu Thought They could be a Couple; Click on the link: God Please Help Her Indian Parents Agonize Over Radicalization of Their Children; Click on the link: 5 Facts about Religion in India

**Week Three**

*Tuesday 6.11*

1. Muslim Community Life: The Prophet Muḥammad and his Wives
Readings: Qur’ān, Sūra 33:28-73; Ali, “The Prophet Muhammad, his beloved Aishah, and modern Muslim sensibilities” (blackboard); Donner: “The Historical Context” (blackboard)

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

*Wednesday 6.12

1. Midterm Examination

2. Film & Relaxation

*Thursday 6.13

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); Click the link: The Human in the Quran

2. Islamic Jurisprudence: Sharī‘a

Readings: Hattox, “Wine, Coffee, and Holy Law” (blackboard); “The Great American Shari‘a Scare” (blackboard)

*Tuesday 6.18

1. Shi‘ism

Readings: Sharif, “Sacred Narratives Linking Iraqi Shiite Women” (blackboard); Qur’an: 33:33; 37:130; 42:23; In-class film

*Wednesday 6.19

1. Philosophy

Readings: Ghazālī: “From The Incoherence of the Philosophers: Discussion 17” (blackboard)

2. Theology and Ethics

Readings: Musallam, “Conception Theory” (blackboard); Deurasch: “Is Birth Control Permissible by Islamic Law (Sharī‘ah)” (also on blackboard); Sura 23:12-14; 39:6; 53:45-46

*Thursday 6.20

1. Colonialism/Nationalism: Agents of Social and Intellectual Change

Readings: Qāsim Amin, excerpts from “Tahrīr al-mar‘a” (The Liberation of Women) (blackboard)

2. Conservative Counterarguments

Readings: Shehadeh, “Women in the Discourse of
Week Five
*Tuesday 6.25
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 Ontology of Resistance
   (****Break****)
2. American Islam: The Immigrant Experience
   Readings: In-Class Film: “The Mosque in Morgantown”; Click on the link and read: I am a Woman, a Muslim, and an Immigrant, And I voted for Trump; In-Class discussion of film

*Wednesday 6.26
1. Islamophobia
   Readings: Abu Lughod: “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” (Blackboard); Click on the link: Good Muslim Bad Muslim
   “Good Muslim Bad Muslim”; Click on the link: Interview with Saba Mahmood
   (****Break****)
2. Future Considerations: In-class Film (“The Light in Her Eyes”)

*Thursday 6.27
In-Class Final Examination

HAPPY SUMMER HAPPY SUMMER
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Bibliographic Information for Required Readings
Books for Purchase

Blackboard readings, web links, miscellany
Rumi, Jalaladdin. “We are as the Flute,” from the *Mathnawi* I, 599-607.
Shehadeh, Lamia Rustum. “Women in the Discourse of Sayyid Quth,” in *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 22, Number 3 (Summer 2000), 45-55. (blackboard)
Smith, Jane I. and Yvonne Haddad. “Women in the Afterlife: The Islamic View as Seen from Qur’an

(Blackboard)


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