

Islamic Civilization: The Formative Period ca. 500-1258

HIST-280

Fall 2017

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:30 PM-1:45 PM

Location: NWQ 6590

Instructor: Arthur Zárate azarate@uwm.edu

Office and Office hours:

Holton 381

Tue. 2:00-3:00pm, Thu. TBA & by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND REQUIREMENTS:

The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the broad contours of early Islamic history from approximately 500 to 1258 AD. Our course will cover the rise of the early Muslim community in Arabia through the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols. Our exploration will focus on the political, social, and cultural history of Islamic civilization during this period—a period during which many of the enduring aspects of Islamic civilization were formed. No previous experience in the study Islam or Islamic history is required. Our course readings will be comprised of both secondary and primary sources in translation, including, the Qur'an. We will also pay special attention to the impact of Islamic civilization upon the West.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available for order at the university book store):

Jonathan Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)

Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994)

Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010)

Hugh Kennedy, *When Baghdad Ruled the Muslim World: The Rise and Fall of Islam's Greatest Dynasty* (Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo Press, 2005)

Jonathan Lyons, *The House of Wisdom: How the Arabs Transformed Western Civilization* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009)

GRADES: Course grades will be based on the following formula: 20% participation; 20% assignments; 25% midterm; 35% final.

EXAMS: There will be two in-class exams; a midterm (10/19) and a final (TBA).

ASSINGMENTS: There are four study guides on the Lyons text that the instructor will distribute. Each study guide is comprised of a series of questions that students must answer. Study guides one and two must be completed and submitted to the instructor before the midterm (10/19). Study guides three and four must be completed and submitted to the instructor before the last day of class (12/14).

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Course participation will be assessed based upon attendance, discussion in class, and the submission of weekly short response paragraphs. Each week the instructor will compose questions to facilitate student reading and in class discussion. Questions will be distributed to students on the Friday before the week's readings. Students are required to write an approximately 250-word paragraph responding to one question composed by the instructor. Students must complete and submit their response paragraph by 11:59pm on Monday. Although students are required to respond in writing only to one question, they are expected to come to class prepared to discuss ALL questions. Submission instructions for short response paragraphs will be announced in class.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS:

Week Dates Readings [listed by week]

- | | |
|-----|---|
| I | TUE. 9/5 Introductions and Late Antiquity and Pre-Islamic Arabia

THU. 9/7

READINGS: Donner xi-39 |
| II | TUE. 9/12 The Early Muslim Community

THU. 9/14

READINGS: Donner 39-89; Berkey, 61-69 |
| III | TUE. 9/19 Succession to the Prophet Muhammad and the Expansion of the Muslim Community

THU. 9/21

READINGS: Donner, 90-144; Berkey, 70-75 |
| IV | TUE. 9/26 Sources of Islam: The Qur'an and the Sunna

THU. 9/28

READINGS Bulliet 13-36; Carl W. Ernst <i>How to Read the Qur'an: A New Guide With Selected Translations</i> (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011) 26-58, (All Ernst readings will be distributed electronically as PDF files by the instructor. Please note that the text is also available online for UWM students at http://uwm.edu/libraries/) |
| V | TUE. 10/3 Reading the Qur'an as a Historical Document

THU. 10/5 |

READINGS: Ernst 76-92; 105-110; 138-171

VI TUE. 10/10 Civil War

THU. 10/12

READINGS: Donner 145-193

VII TUE. 10/17 Formation of an Islamic Identity and the Umayyad Dynasty

THU. 10/19 ****MIDTERM****

READINGS: Donner 194-224; Berkey 76-90

VIII TUE. 10/24 'Abbasid Revolution

THU. 10/26

READINGS: Bulliet 1-12; Kennedy, 1-50

IX TUE. 10/31 'Abbasid Golden Age

THU. 11/2

READINGS: Kennedy, 51-111

X TUE. 11/7 'Abbasid Politics

THU. 11/9

READINGS: Kennedy 200-242

XI TUE. 11/14 The Edges of Islam

THU. 11/16

READINGS: Berkey 113-123; Bulliet, 37-79

XII TUE. 11/21 The House of Wisdom

THU. 11/23 No class (Thanksgiving)

READINGS: Catch up on Lyons

XIII TUE. 11/28 Religious Authority in Islam

THU. 11/30

READINGS: Berkey, 124-140; Bulliet 81-127

XIV TUE. 12/5 Formation of the Sunni Tradition

THU. 12/7

READINGS: Berkey, 141-151, 179-202; Bulliet, 129-144

XV TUE. 12/12 Conclusions, Iranian Diaspora, Edges and Centers

THU. 12/14

READINGS: Berkey, 203-230; Bulliet, 145-183