Islamic Civilization: The Formative Period ca. 500-1258
History - 280
Fall 2018
Monday and Wednesday 11:00 AM-12:15 PM
Location: HLT 190

Instructor: Dr. Arthur Zárate azarate@uwm.edu
Office: Holton 381
Office hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND REQUIREMENTS:

What is Islam? A religion? A culture? A civilization? How can we make sense of the many diverse expressions of Islamic culture and religious life that have existed historically and still speak meaningfully of a singular Islam? What is Islamic “history” and what are its sources? What are the different approaches to studying it? How have Muslim peoples historically impacted the cultures and societies of Europe? And given this impact, can and should we speak of “Islam” and the “West” as separate, distinct entities? Finally, on what basis can non-Muslims study and engage the Qur’an? In this course, we will consider these and other questions. Its primary objective is to introduce students to the broad contours of early Islamic history from approximately 500 to 1258 AD—the so-called “formative period,” during which much of what we take as “Islam” today was formed. We will explore the origins of the Muslim community, the career and life of the Prophet Muhammad, the foundation of caliphate and its gradual fragmentation, as well as the development of Islamic theology, philosophy, law and mysticism, otherwise known as Sufism. Our exploration will be based upon secondary sources, but will also consider Islamic primary source literature, including the Qur’an, theological and philosophical tracts, and Sufi narratives, and other types of primary sources, such as archeological and numismatic evidence.

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


OTHER READINGS:

The instructor will provide all other course readings as PDFs.

EXPECTATIONS:
In addition to attending class, I expect that each of you will dedicate at least **six to nine hours** per week closely reading your textbooks and taking notes. While you read, I expect you to follow and understand the authors’ arguments and narratives. In the classroom, I will mix lectures with frequent questions and discussions about these texts and other matters that may arise. You are expected to engage your fellow classmates in class discussion.

**GRADES:**

Course grades are based on the following formula: 30% course participation; 25% *The House of Wisdom* Study Guides; 25% in-class midterm exam; 25% in-class final exam.

**Grade scale**

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**EXAMS:**

There are two in-class exams; a midterm (10/24) and a final (12/20).

**HOUSE OF WISDOM STUDY GUIDES:**

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. All four must be completed and delivered to the instructor via email as a Word document before or on the last day of class (12/12). Late study guides will not be accepted.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Course participation will be assessed based upon attendance (10%), discussion in class (10%), the submission of weekly short response paragraphs (10%), and occasional quizzes. **ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY.** Each week the instructor will compose questions to facilitate student reading and in-class discussion on Canvas. Students are required to write an approximately 300-word paragraph responding to one question composed by the instructor weekly. Students must complete and submit their response paragraph by 11:59pm on each Sunday. **LATE POSTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Although students are required to
respond in writing only to one question, they are expected to come to class prepared to discuss ALL questions.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS: You may use a laptop or tablet in class, but ONLY for note taking. This is a zero-tolerance policy: any off-task computer use will result in the immediate forfeiture of the privilege of using a computer in class for the remainder of the semester. Please turn off and put away your phones before class.

DISABILITIES: If you have a verified disability, please contact me immediately to discuss accommodations. If you work with the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC), please bring your documents to me within the first two weeks of class.

ACADEMIC ADVISING IN HISTORY: All L&S students have to declare and complete an academic major to graduate. If you have earned in excess of 45 credits and have not yet declared a major, you are encouraged to do so. If you either are interested in declaring a major (or minor) in History or require academic advising in History, please visit the Department of History undergraduate program web page at https://uwm.edu/history/undergraduate/advising/ for information on how to proceed.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are not tolerated. For more information on plagiarism see, http://guides.library.uwm.edu/noplagiarism On academic misconduct see, https://uwm.edu/deanofstudents/conduct/conduct_procedures/academic-misconduct/

Please see the following links for information regarding:
Accommodations for religious observance: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm
Accommodations for military service: http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm
Incomplete policy: https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE GRADES.pdf
Discriminatory conduct policies: https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct Policy.pdf
Grade appeal procedures: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS:

Week 1: The U.S., the Middle East, and the Humanities

Wed. Sept 5: What are the humanities? Why are they important? Why study Islam? In other words, why are you here?

READINGS

Week 2: Orientalism and Orthodoxy

Mon. Sept. 10: What is Orientalism?

In class film “Edward Said on Orientalism”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVC8EYd_Z_g


READINGS


Week 3: Foundations

Mon. Sept. 17: Late Antiquity and Pre-Islamic Arabia

Wed. Sept. 19: Map and Cultural Knowledge Quiz

READINGS

Secondary Sources: Hillenbrand, 17-29; Donner, xi-39; Berkey, 39-49

Primary Sources: F.E. Peters (here after Peters), A Reader on Classical Islam, 11-20, 22-24, 35-42

Week 4: Muhammad, the Believers, and the Question of Sources

Mon. Sept. 24: Revelation in Context and the Prophetic Career

Wed. Sept. 26: The Community of the Believers

READINGS

Secondary Sources: Donner, 39-89; Hillenbrand, 29-49; 52-57; Berkey, 57-69

Primary Sources: Peters, 43-55

Week 5: The Death of a Prophet and the Foundation of an Empire

Mon. Oct. 1 Succession to the Prophet

Wed. Oct. 3 Civil War and Conquests
READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Donner, 90-144; Berkey, 70-75

**Primary Sources:** “The Umma Document,” (Donner, Appendix A, 227-232); Qur’an 3:113-116, (Donner, 70); Qur’an 29:46, (Donner, 72); “Dam Inscription at al-Ta’if,” (Donner, 99); “Text of Thomas the Presbyter,” (Donner, 106); “Mosaic Floor From St. Menas Church,” (Donner, 108); “Two Early Coins of the Believers’ Regime,” (Donner, 113); “Treaty Text, Tiflis,” (Donner, 117)

**Week 6: al-Qur’an al-Karim (The Generous Qur’an)**

Mon. Oct 8: The Qur’an as a Historical Document

Wed. Oct 10: How to Read the Qur’an

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Hillenbrand, 58-88; Carl W. Ernst, *How to Read the Qur’an: A New Guide With Selected Translations;* 32-58; 76-79; 83-92; 105-110; 138-171

**Primary Sources:** Qur’an 74:29-31 (Ernst, 46-47); Qur’an 79:1-46 (Ernst, 79); Qur’an 60:1-13 (Ernst, 164-166)

**Week 7: The Caliphate**

Mon. Oct. 15

Wed. Oct. 22

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Donner, 145-224; Berkey, 76-90

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 117-121; 128-131

**Week 8: The Prophet’s Uncle and the ‘Abbasid Revolution**

Mon. Oct. 22

In-class film, “The Caliphate”

Wed. Oct. 24 **MIDTERM EXAM**
READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Berkey, 102-109; Hillenbrand, 89-113; Lyons 1-51; Ira Lapidus, *Islamic Societies to the Nineteenth Century: A Global History*, 91-109

Week 9: “People of the Tradition and the Community,” and “The Partisans of ‘Ali” (103)

Mon. Oct. 29
Wed. Oct. 21

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Hillenbrand, 114-128; 138-165; Berkey, 113-151

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 109-113; 122-128; 133-142

**Week 10: Slave Soldiers and Sultans**

Mon. Nov. 5 (VOTE TOMORROW!!)
Wed. Nov. 7

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Berkey, 179-222; Lapidus, 229-262; Lyons, 55-77

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 142-150

**Week 11: Islamic Thought and Theology**

Mon. Nov. 12
Wed. Nov. 14

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Hillenbrand, 169-183; Lyons, 55-99; Adamson, 1-29.

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 358-368

**Week 12: Science and Translation**

Mon. Nov. 19
Wed. Nov. 21 (NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING)
READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Lyons, 103-161; Adamson, 30-77

**Week 13: Philosophy and Ethics**

Mon. Nov. 26  
Wed. Nov. 28

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Lyons, 165-201; Adamson, 78-117

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 189-191; 203-207; 368-377; 405-408

**Week 14: Asceticism, Piety, and Sufism**

Mon. Dec 3  
Wed. Dec. 5

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Hillenbrand, 189-213; Berkey, 152-158

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 310-321; 325-334

**Week 15: Sufism and its Variations**

Mon. Dec. 10  
Wed. Dec. 12

READINGS

**Secondary Sources:** Berkey, 231-247

**Primary Sources:** Peters, 335-351; 382-388

Thurs. 12/20 **FINAL EXAM** (10am-12pm in HLT 190)