GEOG 231: Muslim Geographies. Identities and Politics

Monday and Wednesday, 11:00-12:15pm

Professor Anna Mansson McGinty
Department of Geography and Women’s and Gender Studies Program

Office: Bolton Hall 478
Email: mansson@uwm.edu
Office hours: Mondays 1:00-3:00pm or by appointment
Office phone: (414) 229-2650

Course description and objectives

This geography course investigates diverse Muslim geographies and Islam, the second largest of the world’s religions and the fastest growing in the United States and in Europe, as a complex and ever-changing religious system. It begins by looking at the origin and main features of the religion, introducing the students to prophet Muhammad and the religious scripture of Qur’an, as well as the historical context in which Islam developed. The course explores the diversity of Muslim cultures in different geographical, social, and political contexts and the various understandings of the religion that emerge in these. We will read about Muslim lives and politics in places such as Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Europe, and North America. We will also discuss the revolutions of the “Arab Spring,” as well as Islamic institutions and movements such as the global network Al Jazeera, liberal Islam, Sufism, Islamic feminism, and Islamic fundamentalism. Students will look at how Islam is lived, focusing on everyday practices and prevailing ideologies. This implies the study of socio-cultural factors within various Muslim contexts and how they reflect certain collective actions and societal developments. Rather than approaching Islam as a static social phenomenon, emphasis is given to social and cultural change and diversity.

In addition, the course familiarizes the students to the discourse of “Orientalism” and how their own perceptions of Islam and Muslims may be colored by it. We will look at how media in the West has portrayed Islam and events in the “Muslim world.” When the students learn about Muslims in Europe and the U.S. by the end of the class, they will be exposed to the problematic misrepresentations of the “clash of civilizations” thesis and the “us vs. them” rhetoric.

Course Objectives

This course satisfies the GER requirements in Social Sciences and UWM System Shared Learning Goals, and it will enable you to:

1. Recognize and analyze cultural, political, social, and economic factors that shape Muslim lives and geographies in different parts of the world in past and present times;
2. Identify how the development of Islam and Muslim identities are partly shaped by processes such as globalization, immigration, nationalism, religious revivalism, social inequalities and poverty at different scales;
3. Recognize Islam as a complex and changing religious system—to analyze how people engage in different kinds of interpretations and understandings of the Islamic faith in different contexts;

4. Identify the discourse of Orientalism to recognize and analyze colonial and present day representations of Islam and Muslims to offer explanations to social and political issues pertaining to Islamophobia and anti-Muslim rhetoric and sentiments;

5. Further understanding and knowledge and cultural awareness of the Islamic faith and Muslims, a religious group who have oftentimes been vilified, stigmatized and discriminated against.

Course grading and requirements

Attendance and participation 20%
Since class participation is a required component of your grade, it goes without saying that attendance is very important. I will take attendance each time we meet, and your attendance will count toward your participation grade. More than three absences will result in lowered final grade. That is, if you miss more than three classes, your attendance grade will be downgraded by one point/missed class (for example from A to A-, from A- to B+, from B+ to B etc.). Each student should bring at least one question or problem-based discussion point related to the readings to each class.

Two in-class essays 10%
A couple of unannounced response assignments will be handed out during the semester, which will cover readings due that day and/or previous lectures. There will be NO make-up quizzes.

Two in-class film reviews 10%
You will write two analytical reviews of two documentaries shown in class. In your reviews you should relate your discussion to appropriate class discussions and readings. There will be NO make-up film reviews.

Midterm Exam 30%
The midterm exam is on March 1 and will cover readings and lecture notes and discussions from the first day of classes to February 27th.

Final Exam 30%
The final exam is on May 15th 10-12pm and will cover readings and lectures from the entire semester. The final exam includes two larger essay questions.

Course policies

Only medical or legal emergencies and university sponsored activities are legitimate absences, all of which need written documentation.

Academic Misconduct

Make sure you properly cite all sources used in a written assignment. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be prosecuted in accordance with university policies and procedures as set out in UWS Chapter 14 and UWM Faculty Document #1686. The standard penalty for plagiarism in this course will be a failing grade in the course and a written report to be placed in your file.

Disability Information

If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. If you have not already done so, you should also contact the Student Accessibility Center at 414-229-6287.

Accommodation for Religious Observances

Students will be allowed to complete examinations or other requirements that are missed because of a religious observance.

For further information on university policies, see last page of syllabus.

Grades and Assessment

Your in-class assignments and responses to essay questions on exams will be graded on:

- the complexity, strength, originality, and clarity of your ideas;
- how well you substantiate your claims;
- the skills and interest with which you approach the issues you address;
- the general competence of your writing

Grade distribution

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(100-94%)</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>(90-93%)</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>(87-89%)</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>(84-86%)</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>(80-83%)</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>(74-76%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>(70-73%)</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(64-66%)</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>(60-63%)</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>(&lt;60%)</td>
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Books


Articles and book chapters (available on D2L)*


Hopkins, Peter. 2007. “Young Muslim Men’s Experiences of Local Landscapes after 11 September 2001.” In Geographies of Muslim Identities: Diaspora, Gender, and Belonging. Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate.


Class schedule

Islam in the eyes of the West, Orientalism, and Representations

Week 1 January 23 Introduction to the class

January 25 Following Muhammad, Introduction and Chapter 1

Week 2 January 30 Said, “Introduction” in Orientalism*

Documentary: Said on Orientalism
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>El-Guindi*, Ideological Roots to Ethnocentrism” Falah,* “The Visual Representation of Muslim/Arab Women in Daily Newspapers in the United States”</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Approaching Islam in Terms of Religion</td>
<td>Following Muhammad, Chapter 2 and 3</td>
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<td>Muhammad and the Qur’an</td>
<td>Documentary: Empire of Faith Part 1</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Women and Gender in Islam</td>
<td>Following Muhammad, pp. 142-51</td>
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<td>Islamic Feminism</td>
<td>Margot Badran, Islamic Feminism: What’s in a Name?* Mansson McGinty, Formation of alternative femininities*</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Spirituality - Sufism</td>
<td>Following Muhammad, Chapter 5, Schimmel* Documentary: The Sufi Soul by BBC, Channel 4</td>
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<td>Islamic Global Network</td>
<td>Article on Al Jazeera handed out in class. Documentary: Al Jazeera Voice of Arabia</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM</td>
<td>Preparing for midterm exam</td>
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<td>March 1</td>
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Islam in Different Parts of the World
Muslim Geographies

Indonesia: religious violence, liberal Islam, and gender politics

Week 7 March 6
Hefner, “Muslim Democrats and Islamist Violence in Post-Soeharto Indonesia”*
Rachel Rinaldo,* Envisioning the Nation*

March 8
Documentary: Struggle for the Soul of Islam: Inside Indonesia

Saudi-Arabia: Wahhabism and civil Islamists

Week 8 March 13
Esposito, Ch. 5 (pp. 191-195)*
Stephane Lacroix, Between Islamists and Liberals*

March 15
Documentary: TBA

Week 9 SPRING BREAK

Egypt: Islamism and re-veiling movement

Week 10 March 27
Esposito, pp. 158-175*

March 29
Documentary: Veiled Revolution

“Arab Spring” 2011 – mass demonstration and revolution

Week 11 April 3
The Arab Spring, Ch. 1*

April 5
The Arab Spring, Ch. 2*
Stephane Lacroix, Is Saudi-Arabia Immune?*

Muslims in the West

Islamophobia and Euro-Islam

Week 12 April 10
Peter Hopkins* (two articles!)
### Sweden and Denmark

**Week 13**  
**April 17**  
The controversy of the Danish cartoons of Muhammad (handout)

**Conversions to Islam**

**April 19**  
Parts of *Becoming Muslim*, Chapter 1, 4, 5

**Week 14**  
**April 24**  
Parts of *Becoming Muslim*, Chapter 6-9

### Islam in the United States

**April 26**  
Prologue and chapter 1 and 3 in MMS

**Week 15**  
**May 1**  
The younger generation Muslims in the U.S.  
Chapter 2, 4, and 5 in MMS,

**May 3**  
Chapter 6-8 in MMS

**Week 16**  
**May 8**  
Mansson McGinty, “Emotional geographies of veiling”*

**May 10**  
Review for final exam

**May 15**  
**10:00-12:00 FINAL EXAM**
Supplement to UWM FACULTY DOCUMENT NO. 1895, October 21, 1993 Revised March 16, 2006 Revised January 24, 2008

Syllabus Links
1. Students with disabilities. Notice to these students should appear prominently in the syllabus so that special accommodations are provided in a timely manner. http://www4.uwm.edu/sac/

2. Religious observances. Accommodations for absences due to religious observance should be noted. http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm

3. Students called to active military duty. Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty should be noted. Students: http://www4.uwm.edu/current_students/military_call_up.cfm Employees: http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S40.htm (Editorially Revised, 3/25/09)

4. Incompletes. A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE_GRADES.pdf

5. Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment). Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Policy.pdf

6. Academic misconduct. Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. http://www4.uwm.edu/osl/dean/conduct.cfm

7. Complaint procedures. Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discriminatory_Duc.pdf

8. Grade appeal procedures. A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School. http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm

9. Other The final exam requirement, the final exam date requirement, etc.
The university has asked departments to break down for students how much time they will spend working on various aspects of their classes.

As the UW System assumes “that study leading to one semester credit represents an investment of time by the average student of not fewer than 48 hours” (UWS ACPS 4), a 3-credit course such as this one will require a minimum of 144 (3 x 48) hours of your time. You may find it necessary to spend additional time on a course; the numbers below only indicate that the course will not require any less of your time.

If this is a **traditional, or face-to-face** course, you will spend a minimum of
- **37.5** hours in the classroom
- **75** hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- **31.5** hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

If this is an **online** course, you will spend a minimum of
- **37.5** hours reviewing instructional materials prepared by your instructor and placed online
- **75** hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- **31.5** hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

If this is a **hybrid** course, you will spend a minimum of
- **18.75** hours in the classroom
- **18.75** hours reviewing instructional materials prepared by your instructor and placed online
- **75** hours preparing for class, which may include reading, note taking, completing minor exercises and assignments, and discussing course topics with classmates and the instructor in structured settings
- **31.5** hours preparing for and writing major papers and/or exams.

**Notes**
- The breakdown above is for a standard 15-week semester. In a 16-week semester, the numbers breakdown above changes as follows. Traditional: 40 hours in classroom, 80 for preparation, 24 for papers and exams; online: 40 hours of online instruction, 80 for preparation, 24 for papers and exams; hybrid: 20 hours in classroom, 20 for online instruction, 80 hours for preparation, 24 for papers and exams. Again, these are minimums.
- UWM Credit Hour Policy, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Faculty Document No. 2838, can be found at [https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/faculty/2838_Credit_Hour_Policy.pdf](https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/faculty/2838_Credit_Hour_Policy.pdf).
- UWS ACPS 4, the University Of Wisconsin System Policy On Academic Year Definition And Assorted Derivatives, can be found at [http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acps/acps4.pdf](http://www.uwsa.edu/acss/acps/acps4.pdf).
Using UW-Milwaukee Desire2Learn (D2L) course web sites

Materials for this course are available on a Desire2Learn (D2L) course web site. Students may see these materials there anytime using a standard web browser.

Recommended browsers: A complete and up-to-date list of recommended browsers and settings can always be found at: http://kb.wisc.edu/helpdesk/page.php?id=3210. Please contact the UWM Help Desk, as described at the bottom of this page, with any questions about these requirements.

To find and browse the D2L course web site:

2. On the D2L Landing page, choose the button labeled [UWM ePanther].
3. On the next page, type in your ePanther Username (your ePanther campus email, but without the “@uwm.edu”) and Password (the same password you use for PantherLink and PAWS). Then hit [Login].
   - You may bookmark the D2L.UWM.edu landing page, if you wish.
   - To prevent failed log-ins, please DO NOT BOOKMARK the UWM ePanther login page.
4. On the D2L MyHome screen, find the area called My Courses. You’ll see your active courses here, arranged by Semester, with the newest semester at the top.
5. Click any course title to see the Course Home page. Click [Content] in the navigation bar to begin exploring the site.
6. If you have any difficulty getting into the course web site, please close down your web browser completely and open it up again. Then try logging on again, using the instructions above. If you do not know your ePanther username or password, please get help as indicated below.
7. When you are finished looking around your D2L course sites, always click on [Logout]. This is especially important if you are in a computer lab. Otherwise, the next person who uses the machine will be using your D2L account!

What to do if you have problems with Desire2Learn (D2L)

If you have any difficulties with D2L, including problems with your login (e.g., you forgot your password, or if you just can’t get on), please contact the UWM Help Desk as follows:

- Report the problem via online web form at GetTechHelp.uwm.edu
- Call the UWM Help Desk at 414.229.4040 if you are in Metro Milwaukee 414.229.4319
- Go to Bolton 225 (this lab is not open all day or on weekends – call 414.229.4040 for specific hours)
- From outside the 414 or 262 area codes, but from within the USA, you may call the UWM Help Desk at 1.877.381.3459