

**FALL 2012 TOPICS: ALTERNATIVE ISLAM 840:393:01 (crosslisted with 685:395:03)**

**Time and Place:** Tuesdays 2.15-5.15, Loree, Rm 115, Douglass Campus.

**Professor:** J. Mojaddedi **Office:** Loree, Room 104, Douglass Campus. jamojaddedi@hotmail.com

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 1.30-3.00, at my office, or by appointment.

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to explore systematically the diversity of religious thought among Muslims that is so often overlooked, and their religion's dynamic development from Islam's formative period until the present day. It aims to achieve this by focusing on approaches to Islam that compete with the "official" Islam of the Sunni religious scholars. To this end, after considering how juridico-theological scholars rose to dominance historically, the course treats in roughly chronological order the following major schools which offer an alternative vision of Islam: Sufis, Twelver Shi'is, Ismailis, Alawites, Alevis, Wahhabis, Salfis, the Ahmadiyya, the Nation of Islam, and Progressive Muslims. At the same time as highlighting the diversity of interpretation among Muslims, this course will help define what sets apart each particular tradition, including the majority Sunni tradition.

**Required Readings** The specific readings for individual lectures are available as pdfs in the E-companion Documents List, for you to download, print out, and bind, to serve as your own cost-effective course pack. There is no required textbook.

**e-companion:** Everyone needs to log in to the e-companion site for this course, at <https://ecollege.rutgers.edu>. If anybody has problems with accessing e-companion they should inform me as soon as possible, as it will be necessary to use this facility.

**Preparation, attendance and participation:** Everybody enrolled is expected to attend classes, having already read the assignment indicated, and to contribute to discussions. In each class I will call on members of the class randomly with questions about the readings. 5% of the final grade will depend on the responses given to these questions. Attendance and active and informed participation in discussions (aside from answering the questions on the readings) are also rewarded in the final grade (see below). Attendance of a class can only be established by indicating your presence at the beginning and remaining in the classroom for the full duration, unless prior agreement has been obtained from me.

**Absence:** Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. In cases where students must miss classes for longer than one week, they will always be directed to see a Dean of Students for assistance to help verify these circumstances.

An Excused Absence can only be obtained by producing a doctor's note with the office's contact details, or a note from your dean.

**Phones and Laptops:** During the classes, every effort must be made not to disturb classmates and cell phones must be both turned off and put out of sight. Any student using a cell phone in any way during class will lose a grade. Laptops are allowed *only for note-taking*, and any student using the

laptop for any other reason, such as surfing the web or going on Facebook, will lose a grade and will no longer be allowed to use it in class. Any student wishing to use a laptop in class ***must sit in the front row of the class***-- I will check up, and if I am dissatisfied with someone's use of the laptop, for any reason, they will no longer be permitted to use it.

**Papers:** each paper must be typed and submitted in hard copy (e-mailed papers will not be accepted). Each paper must have a cover page and bibliography, which should consist of publications actually used for the paper. Please beware that if you rely on web-sites indiscriminately, you run the risk of using inappropriate non-academic sources, and in consequence attaining poor grades. Read carefully the article on the e-Companion Webliography about using websites, for guidance.

Plagiarism will result in an immediate fail for the course. There is a link on the e-Companion Webliography to the Rutgers position regarding plagiarism and further relevant details. It is always essential to ask if uncertain about any of these issues, before handing in your paper.

Papers short of the minimum length will receive a grade lowered according to the number of words missing. Late papers without an official Excused Absence will be penalized by one percentile (1 out of the final 100) per 24 hours, or part of a 24 hour period (starting from the time the relevant hand-in class ends). Papers more than 7 days late will not be graded at all. It is the responsibility of the student handing in a paper late to make sure that it reaches me and to obtain confirmation of receipt on the day of its submission. Spelling and grammar will be taken into consideration in grading all papers, which should be typed double-spaced on letter size paper. The Writing Center at Rutgers offers help with writing papers.

**Special Needs:** Any student with special needs or health issues must inform me as soon as possible to make arrangements that will ensure a successful learning experience on this course.

**Final Grade Constituents:**

20% (attendance,)  
15% (participation)  
15% (Questions on the readings)  
20% (Paper One, 1,300-1,700 words),  
30% (take-home exam paper, 1,900-2,300 words)

**Grading System:** A=100-90, B+= 89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64–

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS (Tentative, dependant on class progress and interests)**

9/4 Introduction to Course: Defining Islam

Sources of Islam: The Qur'an and the Prophetic Heritage

9/11 The Historical Rise of the Sunni Ulama

Takim, *The Heirs of the Prophet*, 11-23  
Rippin, *Muslims*, 59-79  
Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, Vol. 1, pp. 410-43

#### 9/18 Sufi Mystics

Radtke, "al-Tirmidhi on Walaya," pp. 483-96  
Ernst, *Sufism*, pp. 58-80  
Rumi Poems from New Edition of *Classical Islam*

#### 9/25 Antinomian Mystics

Karamustafa, *God's Unruly Friends*, pp. 1-49  
Attar, *Divan*, pp. 59, 161, 171, 173  
Hafiz poems from New Edition of *Classical Islam*

#### 10/2 Twelver Shi'is (Paper One Title Proposal Deadline)\*\*\*

Takim, *The Heirs of the Prophet*, pp. 64-77  
Momen, *Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, pp. 11-22  
Kohlberg, "Evolution of the Shi'a," pp. 1-22

#### 10/9 Ismailis

Esmail and Nanji, in *Ismaili Contributions to Islamic Culture*, pp. 225-58  
Calder et. Al., *Classical Islam*, pp. 223-27  
Schimmel, *Make a shield of wisdom*, pp. 58-61, 94-96

#### 10/16 \*\*\*(PAPER ONE DUE BY START OF CLASS)\*\*\*; The Alawites of Syria

Friedman, *The Nusayri-Alawis*, pp. 72-94, 102-12, 130-42  
Bar-Asher and Kofsky, *The Nusayri-Alawi Religion*, pp. 99-106

#### 10/23 Alevis of Turkey

Dressler, "Alevis," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition  
Aringberg, "Alevis in Turkey – Alawites in Syria," *Alevi Identity*, pp. 151-65.  
Poems by Pir Sultan Abdal

10/30 Wahhabis

Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission*, pp. 7-39

Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, *Kitab al-Tawhid*, pp. 22-34, 60-80

11/06 Salafis

Readings T.B.A.

11/13 The Ahmadiyya (Take-home Exam Paper Title Proposal Deadline)\*\*\*

Friedmann, *Prophecy continuous*, pp. 1-34

Ahmad, *A Misconception Removed*

\*\*\*11/20 NO CLASS\*\*\*

11/27 The Nation of Islam

Curtis, *Islam in Black America*, pp. 45-105

Muhammad, *Message to the Black Man in America*, pp. 75-85, 293-305

12/4 "Progressive Muslims"

Safi, "Introduction," in Safi, *Progressive Muslims*. pp. 7-29

Ali, "Progressive Muslims and Islamic Jurisprudence," in Safi, *Progressive Muslims*, pp. 163-89

Fatwa on women leading men in prayers: <http://www.scholarofthehouse.org/onwolepr.html>

12/11 \*\*\*TAKE-HOME EXAM PAPER DUE BY START OF CLASS\*\*\*; Defining Islam Revisited

Karamustafa, "Islam: A Civilizational Project," in Safi, *Progressive Muslims*, pp. 98-110.