

Rutgers University Dept. of Religion (848-932-9641) Spring 2015
840:203:01 (685:233:01) Islamic Scriptures
MW (2:50-4:10) HH-A1/CAC

Instructor: Dr. James Pavlin **Office:** Loree Bldg. 130/DC; email: jdpavlin@rci.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: MW 6:30-7:00, or by appointment

Course Description: The purpose of the course is to introduce the student to the sacred texts of Islam. Muslims regard the Quran as the literal, revealed word of Allah but also consider the statements and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, collectively known as the Hadith or Sunnah, as part of a broader concept of revealed information. Each mode of revelation, Quran and Hadith, form the scriptural basis on which Muslims build their religious life and define the concepts of sacred and profane. The course will explore how revelation bridges the gap between the divine and human by examining Islamic scriptures in their historical, theological, legal and mystical contexts.

Required Texts: 1) Abdel Haleem, M.A.S. *The Qur'an: A New Translation*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0-19-953595-8
2) Articles and notes will be available to the students on Sakai:Resources:Required Readings.

Study and Research Resources: The classroom experience will be enhanced through the use of Rutgers's web based interactive technology called Sakai. All students are required to know how to use Sakai. Although this course is not designed to be an online or hybrid course, Sakai will be our main means of communication outside the classroom. Any student who has difficulties accessing computers or the internet, or has any issues that might hinder the use of Sakai, must speak to me about possible alternatives for the Sakai based course work. The site will contain announcements, assignments, tests and quizzes, recommended resources, chat room, discussion board, and gradebook (for estimated grade progress), among other things.

Recommended Texts on Reserve at Alexander Library:

Abdel Haleem, Muhammad. *Understanding the Quran: Themes and Style*.
Al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid. *The Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife*.
Ayoub, Mahmoud. *The Qur'an and its Interpreters*.
Azami, Muhammad M. *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature*.
Barlas, Asma. *"Believing women" in Islam: unreading patriarchal interpretations of the Quran*.
Jansen, J.J.G. *The Interpretation of the Koran in Modern Egypt*.
Jihad in Medieval and Modern Islam. Trans by Rudolph Peters.
Rahman, Fazlur. *Major Themes of the Quran*.
Rippin, Andrew. *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an*.
Sands, Kristin Zahra. *Sufi Commentaries on the Quran in Classical Islam*.
Seale, M.S. *Quran and Bible: Studies in Interpretation and Dialogue*.
Smith, Jane I. and Yvonne Y. Haddad. *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection*.
Stowasser, Barbara. *Women in the Qur'an, Traditions, and Interpretation*.

Reference and Research:

Encyclopaedia of Islam, 13 volumes plus supplements. DS37.E51

Encyclopedia of the Qur'an, 5 volumes. Ed. by Jane Damman McAuliffe. BP133 b.E53 2001

Journal of Qur'anic Studies, electronic resource through Rutgers library system

Course Requirements:

1) Attendance and Participation (10% of final grade): Students are expected to attend each class on time and contribute to class discussions. Students are also expected to participate in all classroom activities such as small group discussions or writing assignments. Attendance will be taken for each class. Any unexcused absences will result in a reduction of this part of the student's grade by ten points (on a scale of 100) per unexcused absence for the first 5 absences. For 6 or more absences, the student will lose all of the attendance portion of the grade plus another 10 points off the final grade. Students who encounter any extended problem with absences, for example, for medical, family emergency, or religious reasons, must inform me in writing (email acceptable) about the reason and duration of the absence. Decisions on excused absences will be made on a case-by-case basis. **Extended absences may require the student to do extra written assignments.**

Self-Reporting of Absences:

In accordance with University policy, if you expect to miss a class, 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. **Please note that this does not necessarily mean that you will get an excused absence. That is based on my discretion.**

Classroom Etiquette and Netiquette: The use of lap tops is permitted only for purposes related to the course. All cell phones, iPods, and any other hand held devices are strictly forbidden during class. Violation of this policy will result in your being requested to leave the class and receiving an unexcused absence.

2) Quizzes (30% of final grade): Four essay quizzes will occur on a regular basis to test the students' grasp of ideas and concepts under discussion. The four quizzes will be made available on Sakai: Tests and Quizzes. Quizzes will be made available according to the schedule below. Once you begin the quiz, you will have a set time limit to complete it. If you submit an uncompleted quiz by mistake, you must contact me. I will determine if you deserve to retake the quiz.

3) Midterm Exam (30% of final grade): The exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false and fill in the blank questions. A study guide for the exam will be provided. Make-up exams are permitted for those having an excused absence. The make up exam must be completed within one week of the student's return to class, depending on the arrangements made with the department secretary. This will be the *only* possibility for a make-up.

4) One Research Paper (30% of final grade): The paper must have a cover page, eight to ten pages of text (averaging 250 words per page), and a bibliography. Students must make extensive use of academic sources, such as books, journals, and encyclopedias. These can be published in print or online. Non-academic sources can be used but must be properly referenced. The topic for the paper must focus on a specific theme related to the Quran. It can deal with issues of the Quran in general, e.g., history of its compilation, or of themes, e.g, the nature of God, creation, marriage, etc. Students must demonstrate their understanding of all theoretical and methodological concepts discussed during the semester. To ensure that students are making proper progress on the research paper, all students must hand in their paper topic, short abstract of the paper, and a preliminary bibliography on Wednesday, 4/1. **Failure to meet this deadline will result in a five (5) point deduction from the total paper grade.** Papers must conform to all academic standards. Completed papers must be handed in by the due date listed below, late papers will *not* be accepted with out prior approval.

Grading Policy: All final grades will be calculated according to the Rutgers' grading system. Letter grades and numerical grades on a scale of 100 to 65 will be converted to the point system as follows: 4.0 = A (100-90), 3.5 = B+ (89-85), 3.0 = B (84-80), 2.5 = C+ (79-75), 2.0 = C (74-70), 1.0 = D (69-65), 0.0 = F (64 and below). For the purpose of quizzes, tests, and papers, as applicable to each course, a grade of A- (90-92) will be used and is equivalent to 3.8 points. An incomplete ("T" grade) for this course will not be given unless the student consults with me about the reason for not completing the course work on time. Grades that appear in the Sakai Gradebook are estimations of your grade. Final grades will be calculated according to the percentages listed above. I reserve the right to adjust and override these grades as I deem necessary. All final grades are based on my assessment of your work.

Office of Disability Services:

Any student requiring special accommodations to participate in and successfully complete this course must contact the Office of Disability Services and ask to speak with a Coordinator (848-445-6800 or dsoffice@echo.rutgers.edu) to discuss accommodations.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments:

- 1/21 Introduction: Review of syllabus and overview of course content.
- 1/26 Quran in Translation: Abdel Haleem, Introduction, pp. ix-xxxvi.
- 1/28 Overview of the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Frederick M. Denny, Chapter 6, "The Nature and Function of the Qur'an," in *An Introduction to Islam*; OrderofSurahs; Al-NadimSequence
Recommended Reading: BeestonNomenclature

- 2/2 Overview of the Quran (continued): Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Denffer Manuscripts
Recommended Reading: The Quranic Manuscripts
- Quiz 1 online multiple choice, true-false, short answer: Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 2/2 6:00 pm and closes 2/9 9:00 am, 45 min. time limit.**
- 2/4, 9 The Quranic Concept of Revelation: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: William A. Graham, "Chapter 1: The Early Muslim Understanding of the Prophetic-Revelatory Event" pp. 9-24 in *Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam* (1977).
- 2/11, 16 The Quranic Concept of Revelation (continued): Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: William A. Graham, "Chapter 2: Concepts of Revelation in Early Islam" pp. 25-48, in *Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam* (1977).
- Quiz 2 Essay quiz on the prophetic-revelatory event: Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 2/16 6:00 pm and closes 2/23 9:00 am, 60 min. time limit.**
- 2/18, 23 The Quranic Concept of Revelation: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Abdallah Saeed, "Rethinking 'Revelation' as a Precondition for Reinterpreting the Qur'an: A Qur'anic Perspective." in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, 1999, pp. 93-114.
- Quiz 3 Essay quiz on rethinking revelation: Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 2/23 6:00 pm and closes 3/2 9:00 am, 60 min. time limit.**
- 2/25, 3/2 The Hadith: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Frederick M. Denny, Chapter 7, "The Prophet's Sunna as Preserved in the Hadith," in *An Introduction to Islam*; and notes: Verses on Sunnah and Example Hadith.
- 3/4, 9 Overview of Tafsir: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Marston Speight, "The Function of Hadith as Commentary on the Qur'an, as Seen in the Six Authoritative Collections" in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an*, pp. 63-81.
- 3/11 **Midterm Exam**
- 3/16, 18 **Spring Break**
- 3/23, 25 Creation: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: notes: Creation in Quran; from the *Encyclopedia of the Quran*: Peterson, Daniel Carl. "Creation." Read all the related verses in Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A new translation*.

- 3/30, 4/1 Adam, Eve, and Satan: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: notes: AdamEveStories; Read all the related verses in Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A new translation*.
- 4/1 Paper topic, abstract, and current bibliography due. (This must be typed and presented in class.)**
- 4/6, 8 Women in the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Asma Barlas, "Chapter 1: "The Qur'an and Muslim Women: Reading Patriarchy, Reading Liberation," in *"Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*, pp. 1-28; and notes: WomeninQuran. Read all the related verses in Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A new translation*.
- 4/13, 15 Women in the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Mohamed Mahmoud, "To Beat or Not to Beat: On the Exegetical Dilemmas Over Qur'an, 4:34," in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 126, No. 4, 2006, pp. 537-550; M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, "Euphemism in the Qur'an: A Case Study of Marital Relations as Depicted in Q. 2:222-3," in *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2011, pp. 125-131; and notes: WomeninQuran. Read all the related verses in Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A new translation*.
- Quiz 4 Essay quiz on Barlas's "Chapter 1: "The Qur'an and Muslim Women: Reading Patriarchy, Reading Liberation," Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 4/15 6:00 pm and closes 4/22 9:00 am, 60 min. time limit.**
- 4/20, 22 Non-Muslims in the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: notes: PeopleoftheBook; Read all the related verses in Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A new translation*.
- 4/27, 29 Jihad in the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: notes: JihadinQuran; from the *Encyclopedia of the Quran*: Landau-Tasseron, Ella. "Jihād." Read all the related verses in Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an: A new translation*.
- 5/4 **No class meeting. Research paper is due. A printed hard copy must be brought to the Department of Religion office Loree 140/DC by 4:00 pm.**
- There is no final exam for this class.**