

Rutgers University Dept. of Religion (848-932-9641) Spring 2017
840:203:01 (685:233:01) Islamic Scriptures
MW (4:30-5:50) FH-B4/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) *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran: an Explanatory Translation.* Trans. by Marmaduke Pichthall. New York: Everyman's Library, 1992. ISBN: 978-0-679-41736-1
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. 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 (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 five (5) 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. 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) In-Class Participation (10% of final grade): Various pop quizzes and short writing assignments will be given throughout the semester. There will be no make ups for these assignments. If you qualify for an excused absence, then any assignment on that day will also be excused.

3) Quizzes (30% of final grade): Three multiple choice/true-false or essay quizzes will be given to test the students' grasp of ideas and concepts under discussion. The three quizzes will be made available on Sakai: Tests and Quizzes according to the schedule below. Once you begin a quiz, you will have a set time limit to complete it. If you submit an uncompleted quiz by mistake or any problems occur, you must contact me. I will determine if you deserve to retake the quiz.

4) Two Writing Assignments (50% of final grade): The 1st writing assignment is a discussion and analysis of the themes that appear in the Meccan Surahs (*The Koran*, Surahs lxvii [67] to cxiv [114], pp. 598-678). It is to be a short research paper of approximately 1500 words (e.g., 6 pages with 1 inch margins and double-spaced). You must include the proper references and bibliography. You must identify at least three themes that you find most interesting and significant. In this respect, you must indicate the verses that relate these themes and how

frequently they appear. Your discussion must describe these themes in the context of Muhammad's preaching in Mecca, and you should identify the main features of Arab culture and religion as part of this description. Finally, you should address questions such as, why are these themes important, what message is being delivered to the pagan Arabs, what were the theological and social implications of these ideas?

The 2nd writing assignment must be focused on a specific topic related to the Quran and/or Hadith. There is a wide range of possibilities, so you should pick a topic that is of most interest to you. This assignment is also a short research paper, and the same requirements and format apply as with the 1st assignment. The specific theme you choose must be developed thoroughly by identifying and explaining how this theme is presented in the Qur'an. Depending on the topic, you will need to address issues such as the significance of the theme, how it fits in to the broader message of the Qur'an, and what implications are there for Islamic thought (e.g., theological, legal, social, political, economic, etc.).

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.

Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/ www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)

(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services

(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Scarlet Listeners

(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments:

- 1/18 Introduction: Review of syllabus and overview of course content.
- 1/23, 25 Muhammad and the Origins of Islam: an Overview: Read the introductions in *The Koran*, pp. ix-xxviii and 1-19. Library Resource: *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*, article "Pre-Islamic Arabia and the Qur'an" (and available on Sakai Resources in PDF format.)
- Extended Reading Assignment:** Meccan Surahs, *The Koran*, Surahs lxxvii (67) to cxiv (114), pp. 598-678 (discussion on 2/27)
- 1st Writing Assignment:** Based on the Meccan Surahs, write an essay describing the major themes of the early revelations. **Due Date: 3/8**
- 1/30, 2/1 Quran in Translation: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: Stefan Wild, "Muslim Translators and Translations of the Qur'an into English," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 17.3 (2015): 158-182.
- 2/6, 8 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*
- 2/13, 15 Overview of the Quran (continued): Library Resource: *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*, article "Collection of the Qur'an" (and available on Sakai Resources in PDF format.)
Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: OrderofSurahs; NadimSuraSequence; DenfferManuscripts
- Quiz 1 Introduction to the Quran online multiple choice, true-false, short answer: Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 2/15 6:00 pm and closes 2/22 4:00 pm.**
- 2/20, 22 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 2 Essay quiz on Rethinking Revelation: Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 2/22 6:00 pm and closes 3/1 9:00 am, 45 min. time limit.**
- 2/27, 3/1 Discussion: Meccan Surahs, *The Koran*, Surahs lxxvii (67) to cxiv (114), pp. 598-678
- 3/6, 8 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: VersesonSunnah and ExampleIsnad.

- 3/13, 15 **Spring Break**
- 3/27, 29 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.
- Quiz 3 Hadith/Tafsir online multiple choice, true-false, short answer: Sakai: Test and Quizzes, open 3/29 6:00 pm and closes 4/5 4:00 pm.**
- 4/3, 5 Creation: Sakai: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: CreationinQuran
Library Resource: *Encyclopedia of the Qur’an*, articles "Creation" and “Nature as Signs” and “Science and the Qur’ān” (These are also available on Sakai Resources in PDF format.)
Read all the related verses in *The Koran*.
- 4/10, 12 Adam, Eve, and Satan: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: notes:
AdamEveStories
Library resource: *Encyclopedia of the Quran*, articles "Adam and Eve", “Angel”, “Devil” and “Jinn” (These are also available on Sakai Resources in PDF format.)
Read all the related verses in *The Koran*.
- 4/17, 19 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 *The Koran*.
- 4/24, 26 Non-Muslims in the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading:
PeopleoftheBook
Library Resources: *Encyclopedia of the Quran*, articles “People of the Book,” “Jews and Judaism,” and “Christians and Christianity” (These are also available on Sakai Resources in PDF format.)
Read all the related verses in *The Koran*.
- 5/2 Jihad in the Quran: Sakai: Resources: Required Reading: notes: JihadinQuran;
Library Resources: *Encyclopedia of the Quran*, articles “Fighting”, "Jihād" “War”
Read all the related verses in *The Koran*.

There is no final exam for this class.