

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

UC 1148611F

Undergraduate Council *Core code 81*  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: WI-ID Effective Fall 2012

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall 2012

1. Department: RELS College: CLASS

APPROVED DEC 7 2011

2. Faculty Contact Person: Lynn Mitchell Telephone: 3-3213 Email: lemitchell@uh.edu

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:

- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
RELS / 2350 / Introduction to Islam
- Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
RELS / 2350 / INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM
- SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 38.0205.00 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED OCT 14 2011

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements

5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No

If Yes, please complete:

- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
- Course ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): \_\_\_\_\_

- Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No
- Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No
- Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title

RELS / 3350 / Islam

- Course ID: 041386 Effective Date (currently active row): 8212000

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)

Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304 or ENGL 1310. Description (30 words max.): Introduction to Islam from its origins in the Koran, the Hadith, the Sunna, to its later interpreters; impact of Muslim ideas on politics, law, and culture in diverse societies.

10. Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/13/11

Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

U N I V E R S I T Y *of* H O U S T O N  
CORE CURRICULUM REQUEST FOR COURSES NEW TO THE CORE

Originating Department/College: CLASS/ Religious Studies Program

Person making request: Lynn Mitchell Telephone: 3-3213

E-mail: lemitchell@uh.edu

Dean's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 12/13/11

**I. General Information:**

**Course number and title:** RELS 2350 Introduction to Islam

**Catalog description** must be included on completed CBM 003 form and attached to this document.

**Category of Core** for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
- American History
- Government
- Humanities
- Visual/Performing Arts Critical
- Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
- Natural Sciences
- Social/Behavioral Sciences
- Writing in the Disciplines (IDO)

**II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):**

**Call ext. 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at [www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum](http://www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum)**

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course.

**SVP. Effective 8/23/10. Replaces all previous forms, which may no longer be used.**

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- Students will have an understanding of the study of religion as an interdisciplinary academic field.
  - Students will develop understanding of Muslim practices through critical analysis of the sacred texts.
  - Students will further their understanding of the religions by focusing further writing on ethnographic study and historical analysis.
  - Writing produced throughout the course will be developed through an instructor and university writing resource services feedback process involving discussion of invention, assistance with organization, opportunity for draft revisions and editing, and finally presentation of writings via class group and/or instructor discussion.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- Use of evidence, experience, critical reason, and coherent argumentation will be the standards upon which all of the written work will be graded, and will be modeled and encouraged within the course itself.
  - Instructor evaluations
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course
- Evaluation of papers and of final essays will serve to refine the selection of readings and amount of time spent in certain formative areas of the course.
  - Instructor evaluations will serve to refine presentation style to increase the correlation between the course goals and the methods for achieving the goals.

# INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

RELS 2350

Dr. Erkan Kurt

Fall 2011 (August 22 - December 16, 2011)

Class meeting: TuTh 2:30 pm - 4 pm

Class location: SEC 205

Office hours: Tue 11:00 am - 1 pm

Office: Gulen Institute, Social Work Building #417

Email: [ekurt@uh.edu](mailto:ekurt@uh.edu)

## **Description and objectives**

This course is an introductory study of the historical, doctrinal, cultural, and societal aspects of Islam. It will cover the historical foundations of the religion, the elements of Muslim faith and practice, the diversity of Islamic sects and denominations, the essential characters and themes of Islamic disciplines (namely Islamic theology, philosophy, law, ethics, and mysticism), the cultural manifestations of Muslim faith, the modern Islamic movements and trends, and the communities of Muslims in the United States. The course is structured so that you may develop an understanding of Islam as a universe of social and human phenomena. What makes such a study significant is the fact that we all live in a global community in which all others are our own neighbors.

## **Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will have an understanding of the study of religion as an interdisciplinary academic field.
2. Students will develop an understanding of Islam as a universe of social and human phenomena.
3. Students will develop understanding of Muslim practices through critical analysis of the sacred texts.
4. Students will further their understanding of the religions by focusing further writing on ethnographic study and historical analysis.
5. Writing produced throughout the course will be developed through an instructor and university writing resource services feedback process involving discussion of invention, assistance with organization, opportunity for draft revisions and editing, and finally presentation of writings via class group and/or instructor discussion.

## **Writing In the Disciplines**

This is writing-intensive content course which fulfills a CORE requirement for a Writing in the Disciplines course (WID) and it can be counted towards minor requirements. As such, its educational objectives include:

- Read published articles informed by religious studies in order to gain knowledge of discipline specific debates and ways of writing.
- Demonstrate through your writing familiarity with key concepts and arguments developed by scholars of religion and use them to develop your own analyses and arguments through complex reasoning and critical thinking.
- Develop writing skills specific to religious studies by working through all stages of the writing process including: invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
- Prepare a research paper with documentation in accordance with disciplinary standards.
- Clearly communicate your ideas in writing with organization and technical proficiency.

## Required book

Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam* (4th Ed.), Pearson, 2010, ISBN 978-0-13-814477-7

## Class format

Classes will include the instructor's lecture, open discussion, questions and comments. Your presentations are also an essential component of the class, as explained below. In some sessions, we will watch videos and have guest speakers as well.

## Attendance and participation

In order to benefit from this class, your regular and on-time attendance is essential. Failure to attend class more than 4 times without prior notice will have a negative impact on your grade. You are strongly encouraged to participate in class discussions and to raise questions and comments during and after lectures. All are expected to exhibit professional behavior during the class and not to use electronic devices including computers except for relevant purposes.

## Reading assignment

You are required to read the assigned text to come to class prepared.

## Writing Assignment

Religious studies is a deeply interdisciplinary field. Writing projects will require use of theories and methods drawn from many other departments, programs, and curricula of study. Various modes of investigation are possible—literary, historical, cultural, sociological, anthropological, etc. One significant aspect of these approaches is their tendency to contextualize religious phenomena (beliefs, rituals, etc). Every religion arises within a particular environment, which inevitably affects the development of the religion. When you explore a religion's context, seemingly mystifying aspects of the tradition often become more comprehensible (source: [http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/religious\\_studies.html](http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/religious_studies.html)).

### Tips for Writing the Religion Paper

- Consider your sources.

When reading for Religion - especially when reading sources found on the Web - note whether you are using materials from experts in the practice of religion (gurus, theologians, priests, nuns), or respected scholars, employed by reputable universities. While both sources might be useful to your research, it's important to understand the source, its purpose, and its intended audience.

- Consider the current conversation.

Consulting recent editions of new work by living scholars is a good way to determine which arguments are current and salient.

- Read footnotes and endnotes.

Often footnotes and endnotes will lead you to other sources. Moreover, good scholarly editions of religious texts have substantive footnotes that will help you to better understand the passages you are working with.

- Consider your audience.

If you are writing for readers who are not experts in the field, be sure to acquaint them with all relevant background material. Always write clearly and concisely, so that your paper is a pleasure to read.

- Don't let quotations speak for themselves.

In religion, passages taken out of context can be misread. Also, because so much dispute exists over meaning, you need to make sure that you explain to your reader what a passage means in terms of your argument, and why it is relevant. As in all papers, you need to provide background for passages *before* quoting them, and you need to analyze the passage *after*.

- Remember: religious texts require special citation methods.

When citing the *Bible*, for instance, you need to cite Book, Chapter, and Verse. Familiarize yourself with the appropriate citation methods.

Source: <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/humanities/religion.shtml>

### Book review and presentation

You are required to select a book, which may be related to your own academic interests, from the "Bibliography" file in the "Course Content" folder on Blackboard, write a review of it and prepare a brief presentation on it for the class. All books in the "Bibliography" are available at University of Houston libraries. I recommend that you preview the book (read its "summary" and "content") at the library's website before you make your selection. You may want to choose a book not listed in the mentioned file. In this case, you need to consult the instructor. Both the review and presentation should introduce the content, main idea or thesis, and major points and arguments of the book, as well as your overall evaluation of it. The review should be 1,500 to 2,000 words and include adequate and proper citations. The assignment must be submitted via Blackboard by November 18, 2011, 5 pm. The presentation should be 15-20 minutes. You need to let me know the book you have selected via email by September 9, 2011 so that I can make a schedule for your presentation. You are also expected to bring a copy of the book to the class in order to make the presentation more appealing.

#### Rubric

Identified and related significant ideas (20 points)	_____
Good discussion of ideas (20 points)	_____
Insightful and reflective (20 points)	_____
Well-written with few to no errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar (20 points)	_____
Presentation (20 points)	_____
Total Points:	_____

### Reflection paper on media coverage

You are required to write a reflection paper (1,500 words minimum) on a recent media story related to the topics we discuss in class. It can be a news story or an article from a newspaper, magazine, TV or radio program. Written sources may be either printed or online. This reflection paper should summarize the coverage you have chosen and then discuss the theses, opinions, and information presented, and it should reference at least 3 other online or printed sources. Do not forget to attach a scanned copy of the first page of the media story, if available, as a separate PDF file. The assignment must be submitted via Blackboard by November 18, 2011, 5 pm. During the last three classes of the semester (November 22, 29, and December 1, 2011), we will share these news stories and reflect on them. You are expected to talk briefly and informally about the coverage you have selected, based on your reflection paper.

#### Rubric

Identified and related significant ideas (20 points)	_____
Good discussion of ideas (20 points)	_____
Insightful and reflective (20 points)	_____
Well-written with few to no errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar (20 points)	_____
Presentation (20 points)	_____
Total Points:	_____

### **Take-home final exam**

The final exam will be take-home, open book, and open notes. You will be asked to choose 5 of the given questions and write your responses according to the required length. The questions will be available between December 7 and December 15, 2011. The assignment must be submitted via Blackboard by December 15, 2011, 5 pm.

### **Extra credit**

For extra credit (up to 10%) you can visit an Islamic center (mosque, cultural center, institute, etc.), meet with and interview the people if possible, and write 2 to 3 pages on your observations and impressions. Papers submitted for extra credit are due by December 15, 2011, 5 pm and must be submitted via Blackboard. (A good choice would be the Turquoise Cultural Center, which includes the Houston Blue Mosque and the Houston Institute of Islam, located at 9301 W. Bellfort Ave. Houston, TX 77031.)

### **Due dates**

September 9 – Inform the instructor of the book you have selected.

November 18 – Submit your book review via Blackboard.

November 18 – Submit your reflection paper via Blackboard.

December 15 – Submit your final exam via Blackboard.

December 15 – Submit your (optional) extra credit paper via Blackboard.

### **Grading**

Attendance: 20%

Book review and presentation: 30%

Reflection paper: 20%

Take-home final exam: 30%

### **Academic honesty**

Students are required to do their own work on exams and papers. Students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism, using research without citations or using a created production without crediting the source, is forbidden and will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Any words, phrases, or sentences taken from another text must be enclosed in quotation marks and the source cited. Whether you are quoting word for word or borrowing an idea and putting it in your own words, you must credit the source.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **1. Islam: Submission and Commitment to God**

Introduction: pp. 1-2 / 23 Aug

Chapter 1: pp. 7-31 / 25 Aug

### **2. History of the Revelation**

Chapter 2: pp. 32-46 / 30 Aug

Chapter 3: pp. 49-73 / 1 Sept

### **3. Qur'an: The Book**

Chapter 6: pp. 130-139 / 6 Sept

Chapter 6: pp. 140-149 / 8 Sept

### **4. Sunnah: The Prophet's Way**

Chapter 7: pp. 150-159 / 13 Sept

Chapter 7: pp. 159-163 / 15 Sept

## **5. Formation of the Muslim Community**

Chapter 4: pp. 74-84 / 20 Sept

Chapter 4: pp. 84-96 / 22 Sept

## **6. Essentials of Faith**

Chapter 5: pp. 99-101 / 27 Sept

Chapter 5: pp. 102-105 / 29 Sept

## **7. Principles of Worship**

Chapter 5: pp. 105-116 / 4 Oct

Chapter 5: pp. 116-129 / 6 Oct

## **8. Theology and Philosophy**

Chapter 8: pp. 164-184 / 11 Oct

Chapter 8: pp. 184-186 / 13 Oct

## **9. Law and Ethics**

Chapter 9: pp. 187-198 / 18 Oct

Chapter 9: pp. 198-208 / 20 Oct

## **10. Sufism: Mystical Way of Islam**

Chapter 10: pp. 211-237 / 25 Oct

Chapter 11: pp. 238-259 / 27 Oct

## **11. Cultural Manifestations**

Chapter 12: pp. 263-288 / 1 Nov

Chapter 13: pp. 289-311 / 3 Nov

## **12. Modern Islamic Movements and Trends**

Chapter 14: pp. 315-340 / 8 Nov

Chapter 15-16: pp. 341-352, pp. 365-382 / 10 Nov

## **13. Muslims in the United States**

Chapter 15: pp. 352-359 / 15 Nov

Chapter 15: pp. 359-364 / 17 Nov

## **14. Reflections on the news stories and final remarks**

First group / 22 Nov

Second group / 29 Nov

Third group / 1 Dec