

SOCI 399: Engaging Islam
SOCI 199: Engaging Islam (Public access)
The King's University
Winter 2019

Tuesdays 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Dr. Usama Al-Atar & Dr Randolph Haluza-DeLay

e-mail: Usama.al-atar@kingsu.ca & randy.haluza-delay@kingsu.ca

Office hours by Appointment. For Dr Al-Atar by arrangement immediately before class.

The Course

Students will develop an understanding of the social, historical and theological dimensions of contemporary Islam from an insider approach. By the end of the course, students will have a good grasp of the early history of Islam, the subsequent growth of the Muslim community, and contemporary issues. No prior knowledge of Islam is required. Principles of Interfaith Dialogue will be applied.

Summary of Course:

The term “emic” refers to “an approach to the study or description of a particular language or culture in terms of its internal elements and their functioning rather than in terms of an existing external (*etic*) scheme.”) Congruent with a dialogical approach to sociological or interfaith study of the topic, the focus of the course will be Islam as understood by practicing Muslims.

The course will initially discuss the role of the Prophet Muhammad in fashioning an Islamic community from a tribal society in Pre-Islamic Arabia. It will also discuss the function of the Qur'an in molding the socio-political lives of the early Muslims. Students will be acquainted with issues like the formulation and crystallization of Islamic belief system (*'aqida*), the formation of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence, and the development and canonization of *hadith* literature.

Moving toward contemporary times, the course will shift into topical foci, beginning with scientific contributions and advancements made by Muslim scholars, and Muslim understandings of topics such as evolution and environmental stewardship (e.g., *khalifa*). Other topics will include global variability in Islam, Islam in North America, gender debates, Islamic financial and political systems, or other topics of interest.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Regular attendance and active class participation are mandatory.

MARK DISTRIBUTION IN PERCENT:

1. Mid-term Video Project	25 %	(March 5)
2. 2 Exams (2 at 20% ea)	40 %	(Feb 12 & April 9)
3. Topical Paper (1500 words)	15%	(March 26)
4. Weekly Reflective Journal (6 entries)	15 %	April 16
5. Final Learning Self-Assessment	10 %	Final Class period (April 16)

Reading assignments:

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Ayoub, Mahmoud (2005). *Islam: Faith & History*. London: Oneworld Publications.

Recommended Text (On Reserve): Shomali, *Discovering Shi'a Islam*

Other readings will be assigned.

The translation of the Qur'an that will be used is *The Qur'an* translated by 'Ali Quli Qara'i
ISBN: 978-600-92543-7-8 (one copy will be on reserve – translations (sic) matter!)

MIDTERM VIDEO PROJECT

The midterm project will require students making a 5-7 minutes video summarizing what they've learned. Students will be provided with a rubric describing what they will be graded on. The class will share with each other.

Topical Paper (15%)

any topic related to what has been discussed in the class

REFLECTIVE PROJECT (10% of course mark)

Through the term you will be asked to reflect on the course material. This assignment will begin with a response to the introductory classes. By the end of the term, we want you to do a self-assessment of what you have learned in terms of knowledge, attitudes, feelings, convictions, intentions for action and so on.

The mark is for those that are complete and reasonably thorough (i.e. not just dashed off at the last minute), showing engagement with the material and the feelings about the topics of the weeks. The marks assigned recognize the meaningful effort (note, the % is not weighted on a per entry basis). The ongoing process gives you an opportunity to internalize course material and reflect on your beliefs on these potentially contentious issues. Focus on conceptual material. Because regular journaling is a great deal of work, you are expected to have at least SIX entries (suggest you go above and beyond! Do more than the minimum!)

FINAL LEARNING ASSESSMENT. (10%)

This can be an essay, work of art, video, play, poem, etc. It can use any of a variety of media forms. I am open to the many ways people ruminate, know, learn, use their intelligences, and present their thoughts. Review your ongoing reflections and summarize them. Re-engage your initial reflection. Consider the goals on the first page of this syllabus and discuss them in light of your learning process. You will give a self-assessment of what you have learned, what is the same and what is different now. I will encourage you to consider what you will do with your new understandings, or how you will use your understandings of the topics we have dealt with in class.

If a paper, this assignment would be 5-7 pages, so any non-written projects should show equivalent work and thought.

MIDTERM EXAM

FINAL EXAM

Classes & Readings (some adjustment to this schedule will occur, due to student interest):

Week 1 (Jan 8): The World Today; We are all Neighbours; Orientation to Interfaith discussion.

Introduction to Islam and Pre-Islamic Arabia; Muhammad at Makka & Medina

Readings: Ayoub, *Islam* – Chapters 1 & 2

Week 2 (Jan15): The Qur'an; Qur'an and Historical events, Christian Muslim Interaction

Readings: Handout

Week 3 (Jan22): Succession & the Early Muslim Community: The Rightly Guided Caliphs

Readings:

Week 4 (Jan 29): The Umayyad and 'Abbasid Dynasties;

Readings: Ayoub, *Islam*, pages 81-90

Week 5 (Feb 5): Shari'a & the Schools of Law; Devotional Acts - The Five Pillars

Readings: Ayoub, *Islam*, pages 109 - 138

**Week 6 (Feb 12): First Quiz
Islam & Science**

Readings: Handout

READING WEEK

**Week 7 (Feb 26): The Theory of Evolution, from an Islamic Perspective
Islam and The Environment**

Readings: Handout (e.g., Syed Hossein Nasr, or selection from *Green Deen*)

**Week 8 (Mar5): Video Project DUE
Qur'an and the Other: Minorities and Religious Pluralism**

Readings: Handout

Week 9 (Mar12): Islamic Political & Financial Systems

Readings: Handout

Week 10: (Mar 19): Women in the Islamic Tradition

Readings: Ayoub, *Islam*, pages 177 - 192

**Week 11 (Mar26): Essay Due
Islam in North America**

Readings: Assigned different excerpts from current events and articles.

Week 12 (Ap2): Islam in Contemporary View

Readings: Assigned different excerpts from current events and articles.

Week 13 (Ap9) Course Review; Second Quiz

Week 14(Ap 16) Final Learning Assessments presented; Course Conclusion.

EXPECTATIONS On Class Format, Ground Rules & Being Respectful: PLEASE READ!

This class follows a lecture and group work format intermixed with audio and video to stimulate thought, illustrate concepts, and provoke and promote in-class discussion. In order to make this format more interactive, I ask that you respect the following ground rules:

- ATTENDANCE is the top predictor of excellence and coming to understand the material. This is especially important in that much of the course content will not be easily captured as “notes” you can get from a peer in class.
We expect that students express their views, raise questions, and challenge taken for granted assumptions about society and the environment. For this to be possible, it is necessary that we all come to class with an open mind and willingness to listen to other points of views and perspectives that may challenge our own values and ways of thinking.
- Therefore, whoever is speaking (instructors or fellow students) must be heard in silence. Talking and whispering disturbs others who are listening, and is a sign of disrespect. If you have something to contribute to the discussion, or topic under consideration, share it with the class; otherwise save it for a later and more private opportunity outside of class. DO NOT require me to manage you in order to manage the classroom. I am a teacher not a talk cop.
- Cell phones must be turned off or silenced at all times during class and exams. If it is an expected emergency (i.e. family illness, child care issue, etc.) please quietly step out into the corridor before taking the call.
- Arriving late and/or leaving early disturbs others. If it is unavoidable, sit in a place such that you will create the least disruption – for example if you come in late, sit in the nearest seat or if you have to leave early, find a seat that will allow you to leave with as little disturbance as possible. If coming late or leaving early on a regular basis cannot be avoided, please let me know.
- We cannot emphasize enough the value of regular attendance in class. Students who attend regularly and read the assigned chapters and readings in advance have greater comprehension and retention, and perform better on various forms of evaluations. Assigned readings and lectures overlap and, while not identical, are complementary and mutually reinforcing. If you decide to not attend class you should be aware of the risk. The University holds students responsible for any information provided during class time. If you will be missing classes occasionally, or regularly, I recommend you find a classmate who is willing to lend you their notes and fill you in on what was missed.
- SOCI 199/399 has a Moodle class site. The course syllabus will be posted on Moodle. Readings will also be posted on Moodle – you can print them for yourself or read online. If you do not bring a laptop to class, at the least, print the first page and print or write your notes for discussion of the reading.
- Lecture notes will be posted online (on Moodle), but the class will inevitably deviate from the planned notes. Since class is not merely me lecturing at you, classes are prepared ahead, but then emerge organically in a different form.
- Grades will not be discussed through e-mail, nor will I discuss your course and assignment grades in comparison to other students in the class. Grades can be discussed them in person by appointment.
- While this should go without saying, I will not ‘raise’, ‘increase’, ‘upgrade’, or ‘bump up’ your grade at your request at any time in the course, or after the final exam.
- **Finally, and perhaps most importantly, if you are having trouble in this class, please come see me sooner rather than later: Sooner – there is a good chance that we can work together to address your problems in the course, Later – there is a good chance that you will be left with a lower grade than you would like.**

Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. For missed exams where after consulting the student policies you believe there to be a potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify Dr. Haluza-DeLay by e-mail, explaining the circumstances underlying the absence. This email should be as soon as possible, and within two working days from the date of the missed exam. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult Attendance under Academic Regulations of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities or medical conditions who require academic accommodations in this course must contact a Coordinator in the Student Support and Accessibility Office (SSAO) to complete a registration and receive the necessary Letters of Accommodation.

After registering with the Student Support and Accessibility Office, students must present their Letter of Accommodation and discuss their needs with their professor as early in the term as possible.

Please note that more information including deadlines for the submission of documentation and completed forms to Student Support and Accessibility Office are available on the website:

<https://www.kingsu.ca/current-students/student-services/student-support-and-accessibility/disabilities-and-accomodations>

INDEPENDENT WORK & PLAGIARISM:

Students are directed to the section on Scholarly Ethics and Academic Honesty of The King's University College calendar concerning regulations on cheating and plagiarism. Students will be reported to the VP-Academic. The first instance of breach of honesty will result in a mark of zero for the assignment involved. Second case will result in failure of the course.

Plagiarism and cheating are on the rise.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to know what constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism includes ANY instance of representing someone else's work in whole or in part as your own. This includes material taken from a public source including a webpage. Use quotations and citations; “three substantive consecutive words” must be referenced (Hiemstra, personal communication, 2006). Plagiarism includes when material is improperly referenced. Rule of thumb: if a reader might think that the words and ideas are yours when they are not yours, then cite sources. (However, every sentence does not need a citation – look at reference guides available in the library, and learn how to do this properly).

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Late assignments will be assessed a 10% reduction per day late. Assignments are due at the start of class. Assignments turned in after we have started class will be considered late. This goes for electronic delivery as well.

INTERNET CREDIBILITY:

Increasingly, the internet is a major resource for finding information. But the internet is laden with hoaxes and misinformation. In addition, web sites disappear or are restructured, making it difficult for someone else to check the information you are citing. As with any source of information, you must be responsible in judging credibility. In scholarly work (such as the assignments for this course), be cautious or find more reputable sources of information than the internet. Document clearly.

DETAILS of ASSIGNMENTS:

Deviation from these directions will affect the mark

- Work must be original and not used for any other course.
- All written assignments should be typed and double spaced (**1.5 spacing is acceptable and will save paper**). The 1.5 or double spacing improves readability for me and provides space for comments.
- Maximum lengths are absolutely firm. You should be able to write what you need to in whatever the allotted length.
- For references and citations, American Sociological Association (ASA) style should be followed as appropriate (for example, you would follow ASA style for an academic paper, but not for a personal journal, nor a magazine article). The “I” subject voice is appropriate for reflective papers.

See below for examples.

- **A cover or title page is not necessary** but please put your name and student #, *AND course #*, at the top of first page. **Staple** and include a page header/running title - just in case the staple comes out.
- You may email assignments to me by the following method.
 - Include your last name as the first part of the filename, followed by course code, and title (e.g., Jones319 EnvJustice scrapbook). If you use Microsoft Word or Open Office simply email the document. **DO NOT USE A GENERIC FILENAME.**
 - If you use another word processor (e.g., Pages), convert your written assignment to RTF (Rich Text Format) by using the “save as” function on your word processing software. (Beware that some formatting may be lost). Alternatively, convert the document to PDF (PDF is complicated to read my comments). Do not send a file created in Microsoft Works.
 - Learn to use the functions of your wordprocessor (e.g., headers, footers, hard page returns, etc.) Learning the technical details of our electronic world will serve you greatly in your future.
 - Keep a copy of your work on your computer. Email the document to me as an attachment. Tell me the word processing software that you use (e.g., WordPerfect 2000). Add yourself as CC, and Keep a copy of your email sending the assignment. This is your only evidence that you actually sent it when you claim to have sent it.
 - EXPECT a response that I received it. Things do get lost in cyberspace. Getting it to the recipient IS your responsibility.
 - I will mark the document using the “track changes” and “comments” functions and send it back to you.

Remember that the key to writing is *to communicate*. Therefore, you must pay attention to the reader, using the most appropriate style for what you wish the reader to understand.

Write economically. More is not better; usually more is worse. The best thing that ever happened to my writing was a stint as a newspaper columnist. I only had 17 column inches of space to fit whatever I wanted to say. It was never enough on the first draft. But the final draft was far better written by being forced to stick in that allocated space. Thank you to tough editor.

REFERENCING FORMAT:

Follow one of the following two styles that use an Author-Date format for citations.

- 1) American Sociological Association style guidelines.
- 2) Alternatively, you may use APA (American Psychological Association).

DO NOT USE MLA STYLE (it is a humanities style that is not author-date, not social science).

Summaries can be found at: <http://calstatela.libguides.com/style>

and for electronic formats in APA: <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx>

In-text citations:

Within the text of your paper, use author's last name only and date of publication in parentheses after the idea. Not referencing ideas not your own is stealing (called plagiarism.)

Example: *In the movie I watched, the leadership style was transformative, exemplifying vision, charisma and attentiveness and concern for others (Davis, 1981).*

ANY TIME you use the author's own words, you are quoting. Quotes require quotation marks around the quote, and are immediately followed by the author's last name, date of publication followed by a colon and page number on which the quote was found.

Example: *Surprisingly, the challenge to mainstream taken-for-granted viewpoints went unacknowledged, and multiculturalism was often reduced to “fun, food, feathers and festivals” (McGillicuddy, 1995: 46).*

Notes

- All reference entries in a reference list are in alphabetical order and have a “hanging indent” or reverse-indented (1st line of each entry flush right, subsequent lines indented.)
- DON'T USE FOOTNOTES. Use “in-text citations” and a reference list.
- For citations, use “Author,date” or “Author, date, p.#) format.
- Notice how references are cited: Author of actual reference leads the entry.
- **Follow all punctuation properly. ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS IMPORTANT.** (It may seem silly to you, but such attention to detail may be seen by some readers as representative of the attention of the writer to the data analysis or thought process.)
- **Check a Sociology journal for format for other sources.**

References:

In a separate section at the end of each paper there should be a list of references used in the paper. List only references actually used in the paper. Note the various types of sources in the reference list below.

(book)

Davis, Angela. 1981. *Women, Race and Class*. New York: Random House.

(chapter in an edited book)

McGillicuddy, John. 1995. “Multicultural Efforts and Social Cohesion.” Pp. 34-56 in *Challenges to the Way it Isn't: A Question of the Future*, edited by Marianne Somebody and Joseph Nobody. Toronto: Wadsworth.

(Journal article)

Samuelson, Leslie. 2003. “The Mystery of Mysteries: Canadian Society.” *Journal of Social Balance* 24: 119-123.

(World Wide Web webpage)(basic) (don't provide the “proxy url” from a database)

American Sociological Association. 2000. “Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Workshop.” Washington, DC: American Sociological Association, Retrieved May 5, 2000 from <http://www.asanet.org/members/socwkshp.html>.

Haluza-DeLay, Randolph B. 2001. Green fire and Religious Spirit, *Journal of Experiential Education*, 23 (3), 143-149. Also available at <http://csopconsulting.tripod.com/jee/>

Notes

- All entries are in alphabetical order and have a “hanging indent” (also known as “reverse-indented”: 1st line of each entry flush left, subsequent lines indented.)
- Do not use footnotes in place of in-text citations. (Footnotes are only to be used to extend the argument by adding useful, but not essential extra material. See the explanations for footnotes in the style guides.)
- DO NOT NUMBER THE REFERENCES!
- Notice how references are cited: Author of actual reference leads the entry, NOT the editor of the actual book. Therefore, the citation in the paper should be (McGillicuddy 1999) NOT (Somebody and Nobody 1999).
- Follow all punctuation properly. ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS IMPORTANT. (It is sort of silly, but some readers see such attention to detail as representative of the attention of the writer to the data analysis or thought process. So, this is good training!)
- **Check a Sociology journal for format for other sources.**