History 347 I Religious Studies 347  
The Rise of Islam, 600-1258  
Spring 2007  
Class Meetings: MWF 1:50-2:40, O&M 206

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Office Hours: Wednesday 2:40-3:40 and by appointment

Course Description:  
This course is an introduction to Islamic civilization from the rise of Islam to the  
Mongol conquests of Baghdad. Every week offers primary sources in translation, which  
should stimulate dialogue and debate. We will examine pre-Islamic poetry, the Qur’an,  
early Islamic laws on prayer, the ethical conventions of jihad, the lives of Muslim women,  
and the relation of Islam to Christians and Jews.

Prerequisites: Junior or senior classification.

Core Objectives for Language, Philosophy and Culture component area

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation and  
synthesis of information).

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas  
through written, oral and visual communication)

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic  
responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national and global  
communities)

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences  
to ethical decision-making)

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. identify the struggles and controversies that shaped the history of the Islamic world from  
   600-1258.

2. demonstrate the religious, economic, political and social complexity of the Islamic world.
3. express a historical understanding of different cultural groups and issues.

4. assess the role of interpretation in the creation of history.

**Required Readings:**

Please expect about 150 pages of reading per week, with the number varying depending on the difficulty of the material.

* Sourcebook, a substantial collection of readings available as an Electronic Resource through the Texas A&M Library. To access the readings, you can either search for "Course Reserves" under the Services folder of library.tamu.edu or go directly to ereserves.tamu.edu/eres. (Readings are organized by weekly folders, corresponding to the week-by-week breakdown of this syllabus.)

**Course Requirements:**

Class Participation: 10%
Weekly Papers: 25%
Midterm Exam: 25%
Final Exam with Essays: 40%
Final Paper (Alternative to Final Exam): 40%

**Attendance**

Attendance is expected and indirectly informs each part of your course grade. I will handle all absences and work related to them in accordance with current university policy. Please see [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm) for more information.

**Class Participation**

Please come well prepared and ready to discuss the readings. You will find class infinitely more worthwhile, enjoyable and rewarding if you come and participate.

**Weekly Papers**

Short response papers of 100 to 300 words each are due Thursdays at the beginning of class. These short papers must show that you have read and thought about the weekly readings in advance of our discussion. In these response papers, you should take an informed position. Present cogently an interesting argument or a personal opinion in relation to the primary sources. Every response paper must have a thesis or argument underlined. Late response papers will not be accepted except in the case of university approved excuse. Of fourteen possible response papers, you must hand in ten: five before and five after the midterm exam.

**Midterm Exam**
This exam will be a multiple-choice test consisting of 50 questions maximum. The questions-covering key names, dates, and concepts-will be derived from your textbook, lectures, and the primary sources. A review or study-guide will not be provided in advance. For this reason, it is essential you take good notes during the course of the semester.

Final Exam
This exam will consist of two parts: identifications from the second half of the course (following the same format as the midterm) and an in-class essay. There will be no make-up exams, except in the case of university approved excuse.

Final Paper (ALTERNATIVE TO FINAL EXAM)
As an alternative to your final exam, you may produce a 10 page paper. Over the course of the semester, a number of steps need to be taken before submission of the final, revised paper (as outlined below in the syllabus). You will need, first, to submit a paper topic, including a brief bibliography; identify the sources you will be reading and define the questions you will be trying to answer. Next, you will need to submit a detailed outline, including a hypothesis or tentative thesis statement. The preliminary submissions leading toward the final paper will not be graded, yet are essential for the production of a good final paper. All papers must include a thesis (underlined), an introduction and a conclusion. The papers should be based largely on the Sourcebook readings or other pre-approved primary sources, though any serious effort to integrate secondary sources will be rewarded. Failure to submit any of the preliminary assignments or the final paper on the due dates means forfeiture of the right to choose the Final Paper option; in such a case the student will need to take the Final Exam.

Grading Scale (percentages):

90-100 is an A
80-89 a B
70-79 a C
60-69 a D
59 and below an F.

Academic Honesty:
Students who commit acts of plagiarism will be reported to the Honor Council and will receive an F in the course. I have served on the Honor Council and will again, and I take all forms of academic misconduct extremely seriously. For further information, please consult http://aggiehonors.tamu.edu

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
The ADA is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for
Students with Disabilities, in 118B, Cain Hall. The phone number is 845-1637.

**Career Options for History Majors**
History majors who wish to explore career ideas are encouraged to contact history department advisors, Dr. Philip Smith (pms@tamu.edu) or Mrs. Robyn Konrad (robyn-konrad@tamu.edu), in Room 105, Glasscock Building or the Career Advisor for Liberal Arts, Tricia Barron (patriciab@careercenter.tamu.edu) in 209 Koldus for more information.

**Course Schedule:**
Please complete all readings by the Monday of each week

**Week I.** Al-Jahiliyya, uThe Age of Ignorance" (1/17, 1/19)
Textbook, intro. and chap. 1
Sourcebook, nos. 1 & 2

**Week II.** Muhammad and the Qur'an (1/22, 1/24, 1/16)
Textbook, chap. 2
Sourcebook nos. 3-5
The Koran, Siiras 1-3, 9, 17-21, 30, 34, 67-114

**Week III.** The Arab Conquests and the Ethics of Jihad (1/29, 1/31, 2/2)
Textbook, chap. 3
Sourcebook, nos. 6-8

**Week IV.** The Caliphate in Transition (2/5, 2/7, 2/9)
Textbook, chaps. 4-5
Sourcebook, nos. 9-13
Friday February 9 Final Paper Topic Due (Optional)

**Week V.** The Development of a Sacred Law (2/12, 2/14, 2/16)
Sourcebook nos. 14-15

**Week VI.** Christians and Jews in the House of Islam (2/19, 2/23)
Sourcebook nos.

**VII.** Gender, Sexuality and the Early Muslim Family (2/26, 2/28, 3/2)
Sourcebook nos. 25-27
Wednesday February 8 Midterm Exam!

**Week VIII.** The Slave Revolt and Political Fragmentation (3/5, 3/7, 3/9)
Textbook, chap. 6
Sourcebook, nos. 28-31

Spring Break, March 12-16
Week IX. Moorish Spain. (3/19, 3/21, 3/23)
Textbook, chap. 7
Sourcebook, no. 32

Week X. Science, Philosophy & the Rise of the College (3/26, 3/28, 3/30)
Textbook, chap. 8
Sourcebook, nos. 33-34
Wednesday March 28 Outline & Thesis Statement Due (Optional)

Week XI. Heresy, Orthodoxy and Sufism (4/2, 4/4)
Sourcebook, no. 35-6
April 6 Reading Day- No class

Week XII. Islam and the West in the Age of the Crusades (4/9, 4/11, 4/13)
Sourcebook, no. 37

Week XIII. The Mongol Invasions & the Question of Decline (4/16, 4/18, 4/20)
Textbook, chap. 9
Sourcebook, no. 38-9
Wednesday April 18 Optional Final Paper Due!!!

Week XIV. Islam in World History (4/23, 4/25, 4/27)
Textbook, chap. 10
Sourcebook, nos. 38-42

XV. Review

Tuesday May 8, 3:30-5:30PM Final Exam!

Sourcebook Index & Bibliography

Week I


Week II


Week III


Week IV


Week V

Week VI


Week VII


27. alil<, Al-Muwatta, pp. 209-22, 237-43
Week VIII


Week IX

Week X


Week XI


Week XII

Week XIII

Week XIV