

MEDIEVAL ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION
HIST-337-87649
FALL 2019
UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON

Instructor: Nabil Al-Tikriti
Office Hours: TR 3:30-6:00 (or by appointment)
Class Time/Place: TR 9:30-10:45 am, Monroe 210

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Course Description: This course traces the articulation and development of Islamic Civilization from the appearance of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula in the 7th century CE to the spread of this civilizational impulse throughout much of Eurasia and Africa by the 13th century CE. We will concentrate on the historical evolution of Islamic Civilization's political, religious, cultural, and institutional aspects during this period. While the course is primarily organized on a chronological basis, the following topics will be covered in thematic lectures: literature, law, philosophy, theology, mysticism, and the visual arts. There is no prerequisite for this course.

Course Goals: This course satisfies a **major elective** requirement for History majors. As such, it is intended to sharpen students' skills in the following areas:

- Historical understanding of global processes.
- Ability to conduct self-directed study.
- Ability to read critically primary sources and modern authorities.
- Ability to write with clarity about the past.

In addition to fulfilling a **major elective** for the History major, HIST 337 also satisfies the **Human Experience** and **Global Inquiry** areas of the General Education curriculum. As such, the following are additional goals for this course:

- Students will be able to express an understanding of forces that foster global connections among places, persons, groups, and/or knowledge systems.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast multiple perspectives or theories on global processes and systems.
- Students will be able to reflect upon how global relations impact their own lives and the lives of others.
- Students will be able to explain human and social experiences and activities from multiple perspectives.
- Students will be able to draw appropriate conclusions based on evidence.
- Students will be able to transfer knowledge and skills learned to a novel situation.

HIST 337 also satisfies elective requirements for the **International Affairs** major and **Middle East Studies** minor.

Course Format:

The majority of class time consists of an interactive lecture format, whereby I present and discuss with you a variety of historical topics in rough concert with assigned readings. The material presented in lectures constitutes a significant portion of several of your quizzes, as well as your midterm and final exams. While the secondary readings are meant to supplement lectures, I recommend that you read both required textbooks (Denny and Egger) in their entirety. Both texts are excellent, and come from the same school of thought which will inform your lectures. Some class time is devoted to primary source discussion, provided through certain readings posted on *Canvas*. While you are responsible for all assigned readings, lecture content is extremely important for exam preparation.

Required Texts and Readings:

Denny, Frederick Mathewson. *An Introduction to Islam*, 4th Edition. New York: MacMillan, 2010. [NB: Any edition is fine, but page numbers are for the fourth edition].

Egger, Vernon O. *A History of the Muslim World to 1750: The Making of a Civilization*, 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 2017. [NB: Any Edition is fine].

Al-Nuwayri, Shihab al-Din. *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition*. Elias Muhanna, trans. London: Penguin, 2016.

Most classes include a supplementary primary source reading posted on *Canvas*. These readings are primarily meant to provide source perspective and ideas for further research.

Grading System:

Participation: 10%

In-Class Writing Assignment: 15%

Quizzes: 10%

Research Paper: 25%

Midterm Exam: 15%

Final Exam: 25%

Grading Scale:

95-100 = A

87-89 = B+

80-83 = B-

74-76 = C

67-69 = D+

Below 63 = F

90-94 = A-

84-86 = B

77-79 = C+

70-73 = C-

63-66 = D

Participation:

Participation is based on attendance, contribution to class discussion, and interaction with the discussion forums on the course website – at my discretion. Students who have a failing course average or have missed three or more classes will be given an “unsatisfactory” grade on their mid-semester reports. Course website link: <http://hist337.nabilal-tikriti.com>.

Quizzes:

There are several multiple-choice/short answer quizzes given during the semester. I drop the lowest score.

In Class Writing Assignment:

An in class writing assignment will measure your comprehension of Shihab al-Din al-Nuwayri’s *The Ultimate Ambition in the Arts of Erudition*. Read the entire translation for certain thematic points, to answer the requisite questions.

Research / Term Paper:

A 10-12 page term paper covering a topic of your choice is due towards the end of the semester. It is expected that this paper will display students’ knowledge of critical apparatus and scholarly notation. Research sources can consist of internet entries, books, periodicals, music, art, etc. – **with full notation**. As writing a solid paper is a process, parts of the assignment is requested earlier in the semester. For additional guidance on correctly completing history research papers, see the History Dept. resources page: <http://cas.umw.edu/historyamericanstudies/history-department-resources/>.

Mid-term and Final:

Exams consist of fill in the blank, multiple choice, term-identification, and essay sections. Exam questions are based on texts, supplementary readings, lectures, class discussion and select video presentations. The final exam is cumulative.

Policy on Make-ups and Late Work:

Make-up exams are given in very rare cases, and only with documented justification for the missed exam. Late work is accepted (and penalized) at my discretion.

Students with Disabilities:

The Office of Disability Services has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. Students with disabilities who require certain accommodations (note taking assistance, extended time for tests, etc.) should contact that office (x1266) as soon as possible so that warranted accommodations can be implemented in a timely fashion. They will require appropriate documentation. If you already receive services through the Office of Disability Services and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. Disability accommodations must be arranged PRIOR to relevant examinations.

Statement on Academic Honesty:

Cheating and plagiarizing constitute Honor Code offenses. All writing assignments for this class must be original. The unattributed citation of material written by someone other than yourself constitutes plagiarism. You must footnote material you cite, paraphrase, summarize or draw on extensively for inspiration in the writing of your own prose.

“Plagiarism—the use of another person’s ideas or wording without giving proper credit—results from the failure to document fully and accurately. Ideas and expressions of them are considered to belong to the individual who first puts them forward. Therefore, when you incorporate ideas or phrasing from any other author in your paper, whether you quote them directly or indirectly, you need to be honest and complete about indicating the source to avoid plagiarism. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism can bring serious consequences, both academic, in the form of failure or expulsion, and legal, in the form of lawsuits. Plagiarism is a violation of the ethics of the academic community.”

William G. Campbell, Stephen V. Ballou, and Carole Slade, *Form and Style: Thesis, Reports, Term Papers*, 6th Edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), p. 52.

For more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it, go to:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>, <http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/plagiarismtutorial.php>, or <http://cas.umw.edu/historyamericanstudies/history-department-resources/plagiarism/>.

Syllabus Revisions:

I reserve the right to revise this syllabus at any time during the semester. Materials may be added or subtracted after the start of the term.

[NB: Last day to drop class without “W” penalty is Friday, Sept. 13; without “F” grade is Friday, October 25]

I: A FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF THE ISLAMIC MIDDLE EAST

Tues. Aug. 27: Course Introduction

Thurs. Aug. 29: Civilizational Perceptions [Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations” vs. Said] [Berwick, “Europe 2083”]

Griffel: Review of Ahmad’s *What is Islam?* and Thomas Bauer.

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2f/Clash_of_Civilizations_map.png

Edward Said: <http://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance?page=full>

Adam Shatz: <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2019/05/20/orientalism-then-and-now/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkK4pApcwMc>

II: LATE ANTIQUITY

Tues. Sept. 3: Islamic World Geography [Book of Curiosities Link]

<http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/book-curiousities-or-medieval-islamic-view-cosmos>

http://press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B1/Volume2_Book1.html

http://press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B1/HOC_VOLUME2_Book1_gallery1.pdf

http://press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B1/HOC_VOLUME2_Book1_gallery2.pdf

Thurs. Sept. 5: The Mediterranean World and Arabia in Late Antiquity [Egger, 1-20]

III: A PROPHET’S CONTRIBUTION

Tues. Sept. 10: The Life of Muhammad [Egger, 21-34] [Denny, 1-73] [Quiz]

Source Readings: [Qur’an: Prophets, Mi’rajnama, Ibn Ishaq Readings]

Images of Muhammad: http://www.zombietime.com/mohammed_image_archive/islamic_mo_full/

Rageh Omar BBC Biography of Muhammad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oVGieY0W6lY>

Thurs. Sept. 12: The First Islamic Polity, Early Conquests [Denny, 74-96] [Egger, 35-45]

Source Reading: [Baladhuri Reading]

http://www.constitution.org/cons/medina/con_medina.htm

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1308575>

IV: THE EVOLUTION OF ISLAMIC BELIEF

Tues. Sept. 17: The Islamic Religious System [Denny, 97-129, 261-401]

Source Reading: [Qur’an: Islam Reading]

Thurs. Sept. 19: The Qur’an [Denny, 130-149]

Source Readings: [Qur’an: Meccan, Qur’an: Medinan Readings]

<http://ISLAM.ORG/mosque/arabicscript/1/1.htm>

V: ARAB ISLAM

Tues. Sept. 24: The Question of Caliphal Succession & Division [Denny, 74-96] [Quiz]

Source Reading: [‘Uthman’s Killing Reading]

Thurs. Sept. 26: The Umayyads [Denny, 307-312] [Egger, 46-64]

Source Readings: [al-Hilli, Umar II’s Rescript Readings]

VI: THE CONSOLIDATION OF “ISLAMDOM”

Tues. Oct. 1: The Rise of the Abbasids [Egger, 65-90]

Source Reading: [Harun al-Rashid Reading]

Thurs. Oct. 3: The Evolution & Devolution of the Abbasids [Egger, 91-121]

VII: SHI’ISM

Tues. Oct. 8: Early Shi’ism & The Isma’ili Challenge [Egger, 65-121, 157-188]

Source Reading: [Assassins Reading]

Thurs. Oct. 10: **Midterm**

[BEGIN READING IBN AL-NUWAYRI]

VIII: FORBIDDING WRONG IN ISLAM

Tues. Oct. 15: **Fall Break**

Thurs. Oct. 17: Shari’a [Denny, 150-163, 187-208] [Egger, 122-152, 220-250, 313-342] [Paper Abstract Due]

Source Reading: [al-Shafi’i Reading]

IX: CRUSADES & AN EVOLVING THEOLOGY

Tues. Oct. 22: Kalam [Denny, 164-186] [Egger, 122-152, 220-250]

Source Readings: [al-Mihna, Qadar Readings]

Thurs. Oct. 24: The Crusades [Egger, 189-219] [**Quiz**]

Source Readings: [Malik b. Anas, Crusades Readings]

X: FRAGMENTATION AND REGIONAL FLORESCENCE

Tues. Oct. 29: Islamicate Commonwealth [Egger, 189-219, 251-278]

Source Reading: [Caliphate Reading]

Thurs. Oct. 31: **al-Nuwayri In-Class Writing Assignment**

XI: SELJUQS & MONGOLS

Tues. Nov. 5: Seljuqs & Turkification of Anatolia [Egger, 189-219] [**Paper Outline / Bibliography Due**]

Thurs. Nov. 7: Mongols [Egger, 279-312]

Source Readings: [Mongol, Ibn Khaldun's Meeting with Timur Readings]

XII: FALSABA & SUFISM

Tues. Nov. 12: Falsafa [Denny, 164-186] [Egger, 122-152, 220-250] [**Quiz**]

Source Reading: [Ibn Rushd Reading]

Thurs. Nov. 14: The Sufi Way [Denny, 209-260, 302-312] [Egger, 122-152, 220-250]

Source Readings: [ʿAttar on Sufis, Bistami Readings]

XIII: HISTORICAL WRITING & HUMANITIES

Tues. Nov. 19: Historical Consciousness & Scholarship [Egger, 220-250, 313-342]

Source Reading: [Ibn Khaldun Reading]

Thurs. Nov. 21: Sciences, Humanities, & Cartography [Egger, 220-250, 313-342]

http://press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B1/HOC_VOLUME2_Book1_gallery1.pdf

http://press.uchicago.edu/books/HOC/HOC_V2_B1/HOC_VOLUME2_Book1_gallery2.pdf

XIV: SCIENCES & LETTERS

Tues. Nov. 26: "Arabic Sciences" [Egger: 220-250, 313-342] [**Research Paper Due**]

<http://cosmos.bodley.ox.ac.uk> [*The Book of Curiosities*: may need to cut & paste this link]

<http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/ibn-sinas-canon-medicine>

<http://www.muslimheritage.com/article/rhazes-renaissance-andreas-vesalius>

Jamil Ragep's Articles [Especially: Copernicus and his Islamic Predecessors]

http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/R/IB5QBK8VVMLAYMX6YTAKJ21EMDR9Y2QF5VU2PY95B3D3DC8B16-00028?func=collections-result&collection_id=1860

Thurs. Nov. 28: **Thanksgiving**

XV: ART & ARCHITECTURE, WESTERN ISLAMDOM

Tues. Dec. 3: Poetry, Literature, Court Culture, Art & Architecture [Egger, 313-342] [**Quiz**]

Source Readings: [Sa'di, Firdawsi Readings]

<http://www.islamicart.com/> [<http://archnet.org/library/>]

<http://www.behance.net/gallery/Classical-Movies-in-Miniature-Style/4455311>

<http://ajammc.com/2013/01/17/ferdowsis-legacy-examining-persian-nationalist-myths-of-the-shahnameh/>

Thurs. Dec. 5: al-Andalus & al-Maghrib [Egger, 178-198]

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/pact-umar.html>

Fri. Dec. 6: History Symposium [**Attendance Counts for Participation Grade**]

THE FINAL EXAM IS TUESDAY, 10 DECEMBER, 8:30-11:00 AM