REL 5365: ADVANCED INTERPRETATIONS OF THE QURAN: GENDER AND JIHAD

SPRING 2013- AKHTAR
WEDNESDAYS 5:00PM - 7:45PM IN CHARLES PERRY (PC) 445

Department of Religious Studies

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course shall explore contemporary political, social, and economic themes among various Islamic societies. The first part of the course shall introduce students to Islamic civilization, including the position of the Quran and Muhammad in the Islamic tradition. The second part of the course shall focus on contemporary debates such as human rights and democracy. The third part shall explore male and female Muslim voices in the United States post-9/11.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students shall be able to: (1) Recognize the major ideas being debated in the Islamic world from the Near East to South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. (2) Compare and contrast traditional, modernist, and neo-fundamentalist interpretations of core Islamic beliefs from the Quran to warfare. (3) Analyze the debates over human and women’s rights in postcolonial Muslim societies. (4) Assess the legacy of September 11th on American Muslim identity formation and nationalism.

COURSE TEXTS

GRADING

Attendance 15%
Weekly Questions 15%
Assignments 30%
Personal Interview 40%

CLARIFICATION

Attendance is mandatory for the course and unexcused absences count against a student’s final grade. If a student is unable to attend a session, he/she must inform the instructor in advance to request a dispensation for the absence. Over the course of the semester, class writing assignments shall be posted in Blackboard and must be completed and uploaded by the deadline provided by the instructor.

Each week, students shall prepare at least one discussion question for class based on the reading for the week. In lieu of a final paper, students will interview a Muslim on the impact of 9/11 on his/her identity and place within American society. Students will create a list of interview questions before the interview and can choose their manner of recording the interview and final product. Examples of final interview assignments can include a YouTube video, magazine article, or paper.

SCHEDULE

Part I: Global Themes in the Contemporary Islamic World

Week 1 (9 Jan 13): Introduction to Islamic Civilization
Reading: all of Smith
Watch ‘The Light In Her Eyes’ by 12 Jan 13
http://video.pbs.org/video/2253823130

Week 2 (16 Jan 13): Globalization
Reading: Kamrava, Chapters 1 and 2

Week 3 (23 Jan 13): Neo-fundamentalism
Reading: see Blackboard

Week 4 (30 Jan 13): Pluralism
Reading: Kamrava, Chapters 6 and 7

Week 5 (6 Feb 13): Democracy
Reading: see Blackboard

Week 6 (13 Feb 13): Human Rights
Reading: see Blackboard
Part II: American Muslim Experiences

Week 7 (20 Feb 13): African-American Muslim Experiences
Reading: Malcolm X

Week 8 (27 Feb 13): African-American Muslim Experiences II
Reading: see Blackboard

Week 9 (6 Mar 13): 11 September 2011 and Male American-Muslim Experiences
Reading: First ½ of Ali book

Week 10 (20 Mar 13): 11 September 2011 and Male American-Muslim Experiences
Reading: Second ½ of Ali book

Week 11 (27 Mar 13): Feminism and Female American-Muslim Experiences I
Reading: First ½ of Ebrahimji book
See Blackboard

Week 12 (3 Apr 13): Feminism and Female American-Muslim Experiences II
Reading: Second ½ of Ebrahimji book

Week 13 (10 Apr 13): American Muslim Female Sexuality I
Reading: First ½ of Maznavi book

Week 14 (17 Apr 13): American Muslim Female Sexuality I
Reading: Second ½ of Maznavi book

28 April 12: Final Assignment, Personal Interview Due

All assignments must be submitted on time through Blackboard.