

SUMMER 2017 STUDENTS : This is a sample syllabus from a past summer hybrid of this course. The 2017 version will be available later this spring. Until then, please feel free to e-mail with any questions you have, and I'll be happy to answer them.

Hope to see you this summer!

ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

01:508:201:01

Instructor: Sandy Russell Jones

Office Hours: Weds 4 – 5:30pm

88 College Ave, Room 103

srussjo@rci.rutgers.edu (If you look me up, be aware that there is another Sandra Russell at Rutgers with whom I often get confused!)

Summer 2013

Mondays ONLINE/Weds 6–10pm

Van Dyck Hall 301

How did Islam begin? How did it become one of the world's major religious traditions? What do Muslims believe? What do they do that makes them Muslims? What is Islam's relationship with other religious traditions? Why do some Muslim women wear veils (and others do not)? What's the difference between Sunni and Shi`i Muslims? What are Sufis, and why has it been suggested recently in the American media that Sufis are somehow Americans' "natural allies against the extremists?"¹ Most significantly for this course, why do we have a course on "Islamic Civilization" when there is no such course on "Christian Civilization," or "Jewish Civilization?" Specifically, what do we mean by the word "civilization?"

This course will attempt to provide answers to these questions and many others. We will look at the emergence of this religion in 7th century Arabia and its development, discuss the central role played by the Qur'an and the Arabic language, and examine Islamic theology (*kalam*), law (*shari`a*), and mysticism (Sufism). We will also consider women's role in the Islamic texts and in law. The main theological differences between Sunni and Shi`i Islam will be examined, as well as how those differences, as well as other historical factors, have effected the development of distinct historical narratives.

For the first time, this course is being offered in a HYBRID format, which means that half of our class time will be face-to-face, and the other half will be ONLINE.

SASC Core Goals:

This course satisfies SAS Core Goals H, K, and M. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

H. Understand the bases & development of human and societal endeavors across time and place.

K. Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time, including the history of ideas or history of science.

M. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.

¹ William Dalrymple, "The Muslims in the Middle," *New York Times*, August 16, 2010.

Required Texts:

BOOKS:

- Frederick M. Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, Prentice Hall, 2011.
- Amin Maalouf, *Samarkand*, Interlink Books, 2004

Optional:

- `Abdullah Yusuf `Ali, trans., *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, 11th Edition, Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2006.

This translation of the Qur'an is one of the most consistent with the Arabic text, and also includes extensive commentary offering background on events referred to in the text and discusses majority opinions on meanings and interpretations.

READINGS:

- posted on the class website under the tab "doc sharing"
- links to online readings are also online
- handouts

Course Requirements and Grading:

Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Online Discussions (threaded and live)	20%
Online Projects	20%
Class Participation	20%

Absence Policy:

Because this is a summer course, and the material that would normally be covered in **fifteen** weeks is condensed into only **six** weeks, attendance in summer class meetings is crucial. For instance, missing just one summer class is equivalent to missing almost three regular class sessions. Therefore, please make every attempt to attend all class meetings. If, however, a serious illness occurs, or you experience some other emergency, please contact me right away by e-mail. Absences should also be reported through the online absence reporting system. Go to the following link, and follow the instructions:

<https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/>

Laptop Policy:

Laptop use in the classroom is permitted for **NOTE-TAKING ONLY**. If **you** choose not to pay attention to the material, that is your decision and will only affect your own grade. However, when you watch YouTube and do Facebook on your screen, it distracts the students around you, therefore, your actions are impacting others. This is not fair to your classmates. Non-course related activity will result in dismissal from class.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1 Origins: AN ARABIAN PROPHET

WEDNESDAY (5/29) In class

- Introductions
- Video: *Roundtable: Holy War: Should Americans Fear Islam?*
- Discussion
- BREAK
- Lecture: The Near East on the Eve of Islam
- Video: *The Message*

Assignment for MON 6/3:

- read DENNY Chs 2, 3, 5
- read Donner (doc sharing, WEEK 1)

WEEK 2 Sect: SUNNIS AND SHI'IS: THE CRISIS OF SUCCESSION

MONDAY (6/3) Online

- 6 – 7pm Live Chat – How did Islam begin?
- 7 – 8pm Online exercise on the Qur'an
- 8:30 – 10pm Online exercise on the Five Pillars

Assignment for WEDS 6/5:

- read DENNY Chs 4, 5
- reading on Shi'i Islam (doc sharing, WEEK 2)

WEDNESDAY (6/5) In class

- Lecture: The “Rightly-Guided” Caliphs
- Exercise: Taxes and Politics
- Mapping the players
- Video: *Karbala: When the Skies Wept Blood*
- Discussion
- Lecture: The Abbasid Revolution

Assignment for MON 6/10:

- read DENNY Ch 8, 9

- read Maalouf to p. 93

WEEK 3 Orthodoxy: THE SUNNI “REVIVAL”

MONDAY (6/10) Online

- Online Threaded Discussion: Does God have hands?
- Online slideshow: Rumi: A Closer Walk With God
- Online video: *I Named Her Angel*

Assignment for WEDS 6/12:

- Read DENNY Ch 9
- read Maalouf to p. 152

WEDNESDAY (6/12) In class

- Lecture: Political Fragmentation
- Discussion
- Exercise: Omar Khayyam and the Rubaiyyat
- MIDTERM EXAM
- Video: Baghdad and the House of Wisdom

Assignment for MON 6/17:

- El Fadl (doc sharing WEEK 4)
- Hattox (doc sharing WEEK 4)
- TBD

WEEK 4 Law and gender: THE SHARI'A AND WOMEN

MONDAY (6/17) Online

- 6 – 7pm live chat
- Online Project: The Legality of Starbucks
- Online Threaded Discussion

Assignment for WEDS 6/19:

- Tucker (doc sharing WEEK 4)
- On Egypt (doc sharing WEEK 4)

WEDNESDAY (6/19) In class

- Lecture: The Development of the Law
- Handout and discussion on Shafi`i
- Discussion: *Khul'*: The Woman's Divorce
- Lecture: Approaching the Modern Era: The Fall of the Gunpowders

Assignment for MON 6/24:

- read Said (doc sharing, WEEK 5)
- read Ahmed (doc sharing, WEEK 5)

WEEK 5**The Modern World: ORIENTALISM, ARABS, & THE VEIL**

MONDAY (6/24) Online

- 6 – 7:30pm live chat (on Said reading)
- 7:30 – 9pm online exercise on Arabs & the media
- 9pm Threaded Discussion on The Discourse of the Veil

Assignment for WEDS 6/26:

- read Wadud (doc sharing, WEEK 5)
- read DENNY pp. 142 - 146

WEDNESDAY (6/26) In class

- Video: Women of Islam: Veiling and Seclusion
- Discussion
- Lecture: Interpreting the sources
- Activity: Engaging in Tafsir

Assignment for MON 7/1:

- Read El Fadl (doc sharing WEEK 6)
- read Qutb (doc sharing WEEK 6)
- read bin Laden (doc sharing WEEK 6)

WEEK 6**Politics: ISLAMISM, EXTREMISM, AND THE ARAB SPRING**

MONDAY (7/1) Online

- 6 – 7:30 pm live chat
- 8 – 10pm online videos
“Absolute Power”
“The People Want the Fall of the Regime”

Assignment for WEDS 7/3:

- STUDY for FINAL
- Read editorial on the Arab Spring at
<http://www.merip.org/mer/mer258/editors>

WEDNESDAY (7/3) Online

- Online exercise and writing assignment – The Arab Spring
- FINAL EXAM

* * * HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!! * * *