Course Description

There are 1.8 billion Muslims in the world (24% of the world’s population). As a global religion, Islam is rapidly growing. In a little over four decades, there will be as many Muslims in the world as Christians and more Muslims than Jews in the U.S. Unfortunately, many Americans (including evangelical Christians) are ignorant about Islam. In the twenty-first century, it is important for Christian leaders to be growing in their understanding of Islam so they can help their communities to love their Muslims as neighbors and bear witness to Christ. This course will help you better understand the history, culture, traditions, beliefs, and practices of Islam. We will reflect on the ways in which Islamic faith and practice have been shaped by historical/cultural circumstances. You will discover that, like global Christianity, Islam exists a rich variety of forms (both in its past and present). For Christians, the presence of Islam raises many important questions: How, from a biblical/theological perspective, should we think about Islam? How do we address Muslim objections to Christian teaching? What are the most effective ways to bear witness to Christ as the way, the truth and the life? Where/how might we partner with Muslims (e.g. addressing social issues)? We will explore Christian engagement with Islam from historical, biblical/theological, missiological and ethical perspectives. As a result of this class, you will be better equipped for cross-cultural ministry in a religiously pluralistic world.

Learning Outcomes

Affective
1. Grow in your desire to understand Muslims and represent their faith accurately.
2. Cultivate a greater desire to live out the Great Commandment toward your Muslim neighbors and winsomely bear witness to Christ as the way, the truth and life.

Cognitive
1. Grow in your understanding of Islamic history, culture, traditions, beliefs, and practices.
2. Become more aware of diversity within Islam, both historically and in its contemporary expressions.
3. Better understand how Christians, both in the past and present, have reflected on Islam and engaged Muslims (politically, missiologically, evangelistically, apologetically, theologically).

Behavioral
1. Grow in your capacity to critically evaluate Christian responses to Islam.
2. Grow in your ability to articulate the distinctiveness of the Christian gospel to Muslims and address their questions.
3. Grow in your capacity to cross cultures with the gospel in your future ministry.
Learning Resources (Required)


Recommended Resources


Learning Tasks

1. **Class Participation**: Class participation includes attending all class sessions and actively engaging in the course discussion. If you must miss a class session, please send me an email prior to class letting me know you will be absent;

2. **Readings (Due: Monday, May 13)**: If you are wanting to work ahead, read all of Chapman. You will submit the percentage of the reading you completed on the last day of class.

3. **Journal (Due: Tuesday, May 14)**: Over the course of the semester, you will keep a journal where you record what you are learning and experiencing. Following each class session, you will write a short journal entry (150-200 words) reflecting on how you felt about something you read, heard or discovered. It could be something that surprised you, something you found helpful or something that upset you. Consider the following questions: What was the most important thing you heard or read in today’s session? Why was it important? What there anything you found challenging in the week’s class or readings? Why? Was there anything that made you feel uncomfortable or with which you disagreed? What is one way your future life and ministry might be impacted by what was discussed today? In your final journal entry, describe how your understanding of Islam has changed. At the end of the
class, you will submit a copy of your journal electronically through Canvas. It will count
toward your class participation grade.

4. **Report on Mosque Visit (Due one week after the Mosque visit):** We will visit a local
mosque together, observing, but not participating in, a Muslim service of worship.
Following the service, we will talk with one of the leaders at the mosque. The visit will take
place on a Friday afternoon and the date of the visit will be announced early in the semester
so you can plan accordingly. Following the visit, you will write a report (3-4pp, single-
spaced, 12-point font) reflecting on what your experience. In your report, you should not
merely describe what you experienced but also reflect critically on how this experience
affected your understanding of Islam. Your report should be structured around the
following questions:

   a. Have you ever attended a service at a Mosque before? If so, when and where?
   b. What fears or concerns did you have before you went?
   c. What did you observe about the worship service? How would you describe it to one
      of your friends?
   d. What stood out to you from your experience? (Consider what you heard, what you
      saw, what you smelled, what you tasted, what you felt at this service.)
   e. What values did you perceive were being communicated at the service?
   f. What was confusing and/or surprising to you during your experience of the service?
   g. What were your preconceptions before the visit? How were your preconceptions
      confirmed or challenged?
   h. What similarities and differences exist between Muslim worship and Christian
      worship?
   i. How did your visit change your attitude towards either Islam or Muslims?
   j. After reflecting on your experience, what questions do you have?
   k. What did you learn from this experience that might help you build bridges to
      Muslims in the future?

5. **Research Paper (Due Thursday, May 16):** You will compose a 12-15pp essay (double-
spaced, 12 pt font, 1” margins) on some aspect of Christian engagement with Islam. Your
topic must be approved by the instructor. Your paper should present a clear thesis and offer
critical analysis. Possible topics could include the following:

   a. Discuss the question, “Do Muslims and Christians worship the same God?”
   b. Explore abrogation in Muslim exegesis
   c. Examine the Holy Spirit in the Qur’an and Islam
   d. Compare/contrast Muslim and Reformed approaches to religious law
   e. Explore Islamic views of women
   f. Explain and respond to Muslims criticisms of some aspect of Christian teaching (e.g.,
doctrine of the Trinity, divinity of Christ, Christian worship).
   g. Examine a major figure from Christian history who has reached out cross-culturally
to Muslims (e.g., Raymond Lull, Francis of Assisi, Samuel Zwemer, etc.).
   h. Discuss and address a missiological challenge in evangelizing Muslims
   i. Explore how might Christians partner with Muslims on social issues (abortion,
      religious freedom, injustice, etc.) in a way that is faithful to Christian commitments.
   j. Compare/contrast Islamic and Reformed teaching on free will and predestination.
   k. Compare/contrast two or more Christian approaches to Muslim outreach.
Course Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  97 - 100     C  80 - 82
A-  94 - 96     C-  78 - 79
B+  91 - 93     D+  75 - 77
B   88 - 90     D   72 - 74
B-  86 - 87     D-  70 - 71
C+  83 - 85

Course Overview

This course will be divided into two sections. First, we will focus on understanding Islamic history, culture, traditions, beliefs, and practices. Our approach will largely be descriptive. This will occupy two-thirds of the course. Then we will consider how Christians have encountered and engaged Islam from several perspectives.

1. Introduction: Why study Islam?
2. Understanding Islam
   a. Early history and expansion of Islam
   b. Islamic sources: Qur'ān and Hadith
   c. Islamic law (fiqīh)
   d. Islamic theology (kalam)
   e. Islamic responses to modernity and the West
   f. Islamic responses to other religions (including Christianity)
   g. Mosque visit
3. Christian engagement with Islam
   a. Historical perspective: The good, the bad and the ugly - What can we learn from the history of Christian encounter with Islam?
   b. Theological perspective: How should we think biblically and theologically about Islamic culture, institutions, beliefs and practices in light of God’s self-revelation in Holy Scripture?
   c. Apologetic perspective: How might we address Islamic objections of Christian teaching and practices?
   d. Missiological perspective: How can we winsomely and effectively bear witness to Jesus Christ?
   e. Pastoral perspective: How can we live out the Great Commandment toward Muslim neighbors?
## Course Schedule and Reading

**NOTE:** Double asterisk (**) means reading will be discussed in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic and Dates</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Qur'an <em>Suras</em> (Chapters)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Why Study Islam?**  
Feb. 11 | CC: Intro, chapters 1-3 [42pp]  
SAFJ: prologue, chapters 1-6 [30pp] | 1 (“The Opening”)  
62 (“The Day of Congregation”)  
112 (“Purity of Faith”) [15pp] |
| **What Does It Mean to Be Muslim?**  
Feb. 18 | CC: Intro, chapters 4-6, 11, 12, 14 [37pp]  
SAFJ: chapters 7-10 [22pp] | 17 (“The Night Journey”)  
96 (“The Clinging Form”) [10pp] |
| **Life of Muhammad and Early Expansion of Islam**  
Feb. 25 | CC: Intro, chapters 7, 13 [15pp]  
| **“The Message”**  
(Movie about the History of Islam)  
March 4 | Ansary [10pp]  
| **Islamic Sources:**  
*Qur’an and Hadith*  
March 11 | CC: chapters 8-9 [18pp]  
| **Spring Break**  
March 18 | | |
| **Islamic Law**  
March 25 | CC: chapters 10, 16 [23pp]  
| **Islamic Theology**  
April 1 | SAFJ: chapters 44-47 [32pp]  
| **Islamic Responses to Modernity**  
Islam in America  
April 8 | CC: chapters 15, 17 [23pp]  
12 (“Joseph”) [17pp] |
| **Islamic Interpretations of Religious Diversity**  
April 15 | Aydin [12pp]**  
Griffiths [22pp]  
Legenhausen [24pp]** | 14 (“Abraham”)  
19 (“Mary”) [10pp] |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Key

CC = Chapman, *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the Challenge of Islam*
SAFJ = Qureshi, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*
Early Creeds = several creeds from Arthur Jeffrey, *A Reader on Islam* (online)
Griffiths = Paul Griffiths, *Christianity through non-Christian Eyes* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1990), 67-71, 102-110 and 126-134. (online)
Kidd = Thomas J. Kidd, “Islam in American Protestant Thought” *Christianity Today* (online)
Tennent = Timothy C. Tennent, “Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?” *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 25-49. (online)
### Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** Christian Encounter with Islam  
**Professor:** Johnson  
**Campus:** Orlando  
**Date:** Spring 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomeness</strong></td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>