

HIST 200 (Fall 2020)

“Islam and Politics: Power and Practice”

In the early twentieth century, a series of movements arose in the Middle East and South Asia, calling Muslims to return to Islam. Today, leaders and members of such groups – now known as Islamists – insist that one cannot live a fully Islamic life in the absence of an Islamic state. How and why did these movements come to focus on building an Islamic state? When did Islam come to be seen as indivisible from Politics, and what does it mean for Islam and Politics to be related? Are contemporary claims to Islam as the basis for political action consistent with the ways in which Muslims have understood their core texts historically? This course will introduce students to the study of Religion and Politics in Islamic History, beginning with the early Islamic community under the rule of the Prophet Muhammad, stretching through a period of rule that saw multiple Islamic Caliphates, and finally, reaching the present day. The bulk of this course, however, will focus on the diverse ways in which Muslims in the twentieth and twenty first centuries have laid claim to their religion as a template for political and social action. In particular, it will push students to consider how Muslim men and women live religion in their daily lives, whether through dress, prayer, or facial hair, and how these claims to religion shape political systems from the ground up.

Course Logistics

Time: T 2:30-3:45 (Synchronous), R (Asynchronous)

Location: The World Wide Web

Office hours: By appointment (BB Collaborate)

Office: Humanities 4118

Contact Information

My email address is rocksinger@wisc.edu. The teaching assistant for our course is Carly Lucas (clucas2@wisc.edu), a PhD candidate in the History Department and specialist in African History.

Email Hours

I will do my best to respond to your questions as quickly as I can during business hours (8:00 AM-4:00 PM). I may also be able to respond outside of those hours, but I will generally respond the next morning. It is your responsibility to think ahead on this front! When you email, please also be mindful of the difference between texting and emailing; the following guide may be of help:

<http://udel.edu/~jsoares/How%20to%20Use%20Proper%20Email%20Etiquette%20When%20Writing%20to%20a%20Professor.pdf>. In short, more punctuation, fewer emojis.

Required Texts

Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds.), *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

Learning Objectives

In this course, you will learn about how Muslims have understood the relationship between religion and politics in both past and present. Specifically, you will gain an understanding of the key moments in Islamic history that have shaped this understanding and a nuanced knowledge of competing Islamic movements, institutions, and approaches that emerged during the twentieth century.

Credit Hours

This 4-credit course has three core components: a flipped-classroom style lecture, once/week synchronous BB collaborate sessions, and once/week asynchronous role-playing exercises. In addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, completing weekly role playing assignments, and studying for exams.

Canvas

Most of the most important information in this course is contained on Canvas. Under “Files,” you will find numbered weekly secondary and primary source readings (other than those that appear in the Euben and Zaman reader). You will also find a folder entitled “Course Documents,” which includes the course syllabus and weekly reading questions. Finally, under “Recorded Lectures,” you will find PowerPoint files with audio for every week of our course.

Digital Devices

We will be conducting much of this class on our computer screens. In order to facilitate your learning, I ask that you print out and mark up the text before class so as to allow you to both look at the text and see your classmates. Alternatively, if you own a tablet, you may use that device as a second screen.

Accommodations

I welcome open communication regarding your learning needs. If you intend to request accommodations in this course, please contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center *as soon as possible* in order to register. I work according to the University’s policy, as articulated by the Committee on Access and Accommodation in Instruction:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability

information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

Academic Integrity

My expectation is that you will adhere to the university's policies on academic integrity, available at <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>. While we will discuss particular questions that pertain to academic integrity in class –such as correct citation, how to paraphrase an argument –you are responsible prior to addressing these particular questions. Broadly speaking, the guidelines are simple A) when in doubt, cite B) cite not only language, but also ideas and c) when paraphrasing, change the language.

Late Policy

If an assignment for this course coincides with assignments in other courses, students may request an extension *no less than one week in advance*. Extensions will not be granted beyond this point, and late assignments lose one letter grade/day. In other words, the onus is on you to structure your time so that you can successfully complete the assignments by the due date.

Course requirements:

1. BB Collaborate participation (10%): Come to class ready to discuss and analyze the assigned secondary and primary source texts.
2. Weekly D&D-style Role Playing (20%): You will be responsible for posting at the appropriate time for the weekly asynchronous portion of our class.
3. Midterm exam (30%): This take home exam will include two long essay questions, of which one must choose one.
4. Final: (40%): the take-home final will include two long essay questions, of which you must pick one to answer.

Course Policies

1. All readings will be available, organized according to week, on Blackboard except for those contained in *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*.
2. Students are expected to do their own work and cite correctly. If you need an example of this, see the *Chicago Manual of Style* or www.easybib.com.
3. Late assignments will lose one letter grade each day. For emergencies, please contact me by email and, when relevant, obtain a doctor's note. The same is true of the final exam.
4. Plagiarism: any students caught plagiarizing in any way (copying quotations without attribution, taking ideas without attribution, etc.) will receive an F for the assignment.
5. Absences: there's no official absence policy in this course but you will not be able to succeed in it without attending regularly.
6. This class does not require prior knowledge of either Islamic or Middle Eastern history. It does, however, require a willingness to think critically about the key terms, approaches and questions that surround the study of religion and politics generally, and Islam and politics in particular.

How to Succeed in This Course

1. *Recorded lectures*: please come to class having taken notes on and digested the recorded lecture.
2. *Reading preparation*: I expect you to come to class having read carefully, done your best to answer the reading questions, and to be prepared to clarify any confusing portions of the reading.
3. *In class*: The success of this course depends on your engagement with our classroom discussion; you should come out of our class feeling a bit fatigued!
4. *Prior knowledge*: In this course, prior knowledge of leading events, figures and topics in Islamic and Middle Eastern history will be useful, yet they are hardly necessary to succeed. The last time I taught this course, a significant number of my most successful students had no prior background in the study of Islam or the Middle East. What they did all have in common, however, was a commitment to working their tails off.

Weekly Expectations

Each Tuesday, I expect you to log on to BB Collaborate having completed *all* the secondary and primary source readings for the week. Based on these readings, I further expect that you will have made a good-faith effort to answer the reading questions. Our Tuesday classes will be devoted to discussing the secondary sources, while in section, we will focus on primary sources. On Thursdays, you will synthesize what you have learned in discussing secondary and primary sources while working in groups to complete the role-playing exercises.

Role Playing Format

For those of you who are familiar with Dungeons and Dragons (D&D), this will be relatively straightforward. For those of you who are not and wish to understand the basics of this game, you may watch the following video produced by Vox.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PEt5RdNHNw> Please know that I do not expect you to inhabit your characters!

Grading Expectations for Exam Essays

A-/A: Exceptional essay that makes a clear argument, supports it with well-chosen examples and does not include an inordinate number of typos.

B-/B/B+: Essay that nearly makes a clear argument but doesn't quite reach the goal. Alternatively, a paper may begin with a clear statement but not support it sufficiently. This involves a student clearly having read the material.

C-/C/C+: Essay doesn't make a clear argument, doesn't use sources and doesn't think critically about the question.

D: Essay is unfocused, doesn't consider assigned readings, and shows no evidence of student engagement in the question.

F: Assignment not handed in/the submitted essay shows no evidence of effort.

PART I: Formative Moments in Islamic History

Week 1: An Introduction to the Study of Islam and Politics

September 3:

- “An Introduction to the Study of Islam and Politics” (watch on Canvas)
- Syllabus discussion (BB Collaborate)
- *Assignment*: Please write me a paragraph about why you chose to take this course. This can also include information that might be of relevance to me in helping make your learning experience in this course a productive one.

Week 2: Religion and Politics in Pre-Modern Islam I

September 8: Islam’s formative moment: a fusion of religion and politics

- Lecture: “Islam’s Formative Moment” (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - o Secondary: Vernon O. Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405*, 20-32.
 - o Primary: “The Constitution of Medina” in Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 227-32.

September 10: Role playing assignment

Week 3: Religion and Politics in Pre-Modern Islam II

September 15

- Lecture:
 - o “Islam and Politics from Muhammad’s Death to the Fall of the Caliphate” (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - o Secondary: Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405*, 44-52, 54-61, 69-73, 85-93.
 - o Primary: “Abu Hamza’s comments on the caliphs” in Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God’s Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 129-32.

September 17

- Role playing assignment

Week 4: Islamic Political Theory

September 22

- Lecture: “Theories of Islamic Rule” (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - o Secondary: Patricia Crone, *God’s Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 3-16, 286-314.
 - o Primary: Michael Cooks (trans.), Ziya’ al-Din Baranī (au.) “The Dilemma of a Muslim ruler”

September 24

- Role playing assignment

Week 5: The Shari‘a

September 29:

- Lecture: The Pre-Modern Shari‘a (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - Secondary: Bernard Weiss, *The Spirit of Islamic Law* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2006), xi-xiv, 1-24
 - Primary: Malik b. Anas, *The Muwatta of Imam Muhammad - the Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas in the narration of Imam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ash-Shaybani, Mālik ibn Anas* (N.P: Turath Publishing, 2004), 51-2, 409-10, 421-22.

October 1:

- Role playing assignment

Week 6: Islamic Revivalism in the 18th and 19th Centuries

October 6

- Lecture: Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - Secondary: David Commins, *The Wahhabi Mission and Saudi Arabia* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2006), 7-39.
 - Primary: Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab, *Kitab at-Tauhid* (N.P: Islamicbasics.com, N.D) 12-15, 29-38

October 8

- Role playing assignment

Week 7: Midterm

October 13: Midterm review (BB Collaborate session)

October 15: Midterm (2:30-3:45, open book)

PART II: THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

Week 8: Secular Nationalism and Islam

October 20

- Lecture: “Secular Nationalism and Islam” (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - Secondary: Adeed Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 14-48
 - Primary: “Syrian Michael ‘Aflaq Addresses the Relationship Between Arabism and Islam, 1943,” in Akram Fouad Khater, *Sources in the History*

of the Modern Middle East (Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2004), 130-5.

October 22

- Role playing assignment

Week 9: Islamism

October 27

- Lecture: "The Rise and Fall of the Muslim Brotherhood" (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - o Secondary: Beth Baron, *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 117-34.
 - o Primary: Hasan al-Banna, "Towards the Light," in Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds.), *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 49-50, 60-2, 74-8.

October 29

- Role playing assignment

Week 10: Salafism

November 3

- Lecture: "The History of Salafism in Egypt" (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - o Secondary: Joas Wagemakers, *Salafism in Jordan: Political Islam in a Quietist Community* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 27-59.
 - o Primary: 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Baz, "The Danger of Women Joining Men in Their Workplace"

November 5

- Role playing assignment

Week 11: Jihad and Contemporary Jihadism

November 10

- Lecture: "The Rise of Jihadism in the 20th Century Middle East" (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - o Secondary: Barbara Zollner, "Prison Talk. The Muslim Brotherhood's Internal Struggle During the Period of 'Abdel Nasir's Persecution, 1954 to 1971," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39:3 (2007), 411-33.
 - o Primary: "Resist the New Rome," in Bruce Lawrence (ed.) and James Howarth (trans.), *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama Bin Laden* (New York: Verso, 2005), 213-21, 227-32.

November 12

- Role playing assignment

PART IV: WHEN ISLAM BECOMES THE NORM

Week 12: The Islamic Revolution in Iran

November 17

- Lecture: “The Islamic Revolution in Iran”
- Reading:
 - Secondary: Michael Axworthy, *Revolutionary Iran: A History of the Islamic Republic* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016), 76-132, focus on: 76-78, 89-95, 104-117, and 130-132.
 - Primary: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, “Islamic Government,” *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, 155-80.

November 19

- Role playing assignment

Week 13: Turkey Between Secularism and Islamism

November 24

- Lecture: “Between Kemalism and Islamism”
- Reading:
 - Secondary: Jenny White, *Muslim Nationalism and the New Turk* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 24-53.
 - Primary: “The 18 Directives of February 28, 1997,” in M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003), 275-6.

November 26 (THANKSGIVING RECESS)

Week 14: Building an Islamic Society: Egypt’s Islamic Revival

December 1: The Rise of an Islamic Revival

- Lecture: “The Rise of an Islamic Revival in 1970s Egypt” (Canvas)
- Reading:
 - Secondary: Aaron Rock-Singer, “Prayer and the Islamic Revival: a Timely Challenge,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 48:2 (April 2016), 293-312.
 - Primary: Zaynab al-Ghazali, “Days of My Life,” *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*, 275-301.

December 3:

- Role playing assignment

Week 15: Concluding Reflections: Are either Islam or Islamic Piety exceptional?

December 8

- Michael Cook, *Ancient Religions, Modern Politics: The Islamic Case in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), xi-xx, 371-98

December 10: Final exam preparation

In this class, we will practice responding to essay questions and outlining essays similar to those you might see on the final exam. This an opportunity for students to both develop their writing skills generally and to focus on a particular type of concise argumentation.

FINAL EXAM

Exam: December 14, 7:45 AM-9:45 AM (Take home)