ISLAMIC HISTORY I (HI-624)

This course explores the history of Islamic societies and civilization from its beginnings in seventh century Arabia until the fall of Granada in 1492. Attention will be given to the expansion process of the Dār al-Islām, the changing nature of the caliphate and the development of regional powers, as well as to socio-economic realities, ideological evolutions and significant cultural achievements. Students will read and discuss selections of important primary sources available in English translation, such as Ṭabarī’s History, Ibn Munqidh’s Memoirs, Ghazālī’s Book of Counsel for Kings, Abū Dulaf’s Qasīda sāsāniyya, Ibn Baṭṭūṭa’s Travels, and Ibn Khaldūn’s Muqaddima.

(Fall 2009)

Class will meet twice a week for 12 weeks: Wednesdays and Mondays, 7:40-9:30 p.m., beginning Wednesday 7 September 2011. Each of these twelve classes will be divided in two sessions: A) Lecture; B) Discussion of the required readings.

Course Objectives

1) Students should be able to find their way around in the major reference works on Islamic history and civilization.

2) They are expected to gain an acquaintance with the most important political and civilizational developments in Islam up to the end of the 15th century.

3) They should also be able to have an informed opinion on major ideological debates concerning Islamic societies during these centuries.

4) They should be able to benefit from the methodological approaches adopted in these classes and apply them for their own studies and/or research projects.

Course Requirements

1) It is strongly recommended that the student arrive at the first class already having a general knowledge about the religion of Islam, as well as about the geography and ancient history of Europe and the Middle East.

2) Attendance in class is required. If you know you will be unable to attend a session please inform the professor in advance. Missing two classes will result in an automatic lowering of your final grade by 10%. Missing three or more classes will result in automatic failure of the course.

3) For each session B of weeks 2-12, students shall submit a summary of one and/or two of the reading assignments and be ready to speak about it in class. Each student can skip any two weeks during that time for a total of 9 submissions. Here are the guidelines for these summaries:
- Approximately 2 pages (3 pages maximum)
- One modern study must be used in each summary
- Students must make copies of their summaries for all students in the class

4) A final research paper and a *viva voce*, as described below.

**The final grade will be based upon the following:**

1) Weekly summaries (36%) and class participation (24%).

2) A final research paper of approximately 10 pages* on an aspect of Islamic history and civilization (7th–15th c.). The topic should be chosen by the end of class VI in consultation with the Professor. This paper will be due by the end of class XII (20%).

3) A final *viva voce* exam discussing the course, with an emphasis on the final research paper submitted (20%).

* All written work is to conform to the seminary writing guidelines, which can be found online at: [http://www.hartsem.edu/student/forms/researchpaperguide.pdf](http://www.hartsem.edu/student/forms/researchpaperguide.pdf). It must use the transliteration system given in class I. It must be run through a grammar and spell-check program or read by the writing tutor if necessary before submission. The Hartford Seminary Grading Guidelines will be the standard of evaluation for work in the course.

**General references**

*ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF ISLAM, INDEX ISLAMICUS…*


**Class Schedule**


Topics: Introduction to the course. Historiography. Pre-Islamic Arabia. The world in the time of the Prophet.

General references:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: Succession. Expansion. *Fitna*.

General reference:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: The Arab Dynasty. From the Indus Valley to France. A revolution.

General references:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: Baghdad. Caliphs, ulemas.

General reference:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: Regional powers. The Shi‘ite century. The Turkish normalisation.

General references:


Reading Assignments:


b. WALKER, Paul E., Exploring an Islamic Empire. — Ch. 2: A Century of Empire, p. 40–64.


General references:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: Barbarian invasions. The Latin states. Saladin and the Ayyubids. After the fall of Akko.

General references:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: Genghis Khân. The fall of Baghdâd. The conversion of Ghâzân. Tamerlane.

General references:


Reading Assignments:


(DS22 J613 1958)


(PJ3002 .Z5 G6 1948)
Class IX. A: Nov. 2. B: Nov. 7. *Northern Africa, Spain, Sicily (710-1492)*


General references:


Reading Assignments:


Topics: From the barracks to the throne. The “Champions of Islam”. The Muslim civil society. Black plague and starvation.

General references:


Reading Assignments:


Class XI. A: Nov. 28. B: Nov. 30. *The Mamlāks II: The “Other” Golden Age*


General references:

LANE, E. W., *Arabian Society in the Middle Ages. Studies from The Thousand and One Nights*. Edited by S. LANE-


Reading Assignments:


Class XII. A: Dec. 5. B: Dec 7. The Early Ottomans (1300-1453)


General references:


Reading Assignments:


c. HERRIN, Judith, Byzantium. — Ch. 27: Better the Turkish Turban… & Ch. 28: The Siege of 1453 (p. 299–320).