

History 2607

Introduction to Islamic history and civilization

Fall 2024

Instructor: **Professor Maya Shatzmiller**

Email: **maya@uwo.ca**

Office: **Department of History, Lawson Hall Room 2229**

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30 – 2:30

This is a **draft** outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

Course Description

This is a survey course aiming to introduce students to the main events and achievements of Islamic history and civilization, covering their main features and placing them within a comparative perspective as universal components. We begin in the 7th century with the appearance of a third Monotheistic religion, Islam, and follow with the conquest and settlement of the Middle East in the seventh century, the Arab sweep across the Middle East, North Africa and central Asia and a newly established Islamic Empire and new civilization. We end the survey at 1500, before the Ottoman conquest. The course is structured thematically but also presented in chronological order of events and achievements. Topics include: Muhammad and the Qur'an, pre-Islamic Middle East and the conquest, the Islamic legal system, the economy, social structures, political institutions, literature, philosophy, theology, art and architecture, medicine and science, interaction with Europe, the Crusades, trade, and the translation of scientific knowledge into Arabic. The course methodology combines lectures and students' independent study with readings of selected primary Arabic sources in translation and study of scholarly work from secondary sources, articles, books, Encyclopedia entries etc.

Course Syllabus

The course is built on the lectures and the tutorials. Students are asked to prepare for both by reading chapters from two textbooks and analyze and discuss the themes covered in the tutorials. Course readings are available on OWL but I ordered the textbooks and they should be available in the bookstore.

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Lectures 1-4 Students are asked to read in the Oxford Islamic Studies, Muhammad and the Caliphate (All 12 sections) To gain background for all lectures in addition to specific entries from Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405* Orientation Structure, general introduction. Readings: Egger, xv-xvi, 1-20.

1. Muhammad: The man and the mission. The Environment. Readings: Egger, 20-32.

2. Political Developments 1: Conquest and the Empire

Readings: Heidemann, Stefan, "The evolving representation of the early Islamic empire and its religion on coin imagery" (OWL).

3. The Qur'an

Readings: Egger, 33-61; Bauer, K., "The Male Is Not Like the Female (Q 3:36): The Question of Gender Egalitarianism in the Qur'an" (OWL).

4. Social Structures and Institutions. The Islamic City.

Readings: Egger, 62-103

5. The Legal System

Readings: Egger, 114-122 *Library Assignment due by email

6. The Economy.

Readings: Egger, 104-113 *Library Assignment due on the Friday by email

For Lectures 5-6 general background is Oxford Islamic Studies online, Law and Society (All 9 sections) *Encyclopedia of Islam Assignment due printed in class*

7. Political Developments 2: Regional States

Readings: Egger, 94-104

8. Arabic Literature, Philosophy and Mysticism *Research Essay due printed in class*

Readings: Egger, 123-138. General background Oxford Islamic Studies: Philosophy and Theology (All 13 sections)

9. Islamic Medicine and Science

Readings: Oxford Islamic Studies: Science, Medicine, and Technology (All 10 sections); van Dalen, Elaine, "Medical translations from Greek into Arabic and Hebrew" (OWL). For Lectures 11-12 Oxford Islamic Studies online, read: Art and Architecture (All 6 sections)

10. Islamic Architecture

Readings: Goodson, Caroline, “Topographies of Power in Aghlabid-Era Kairouan” (OWL).

11. Islamic Art Readings: no additional readings

Course Materials: -Vernon O. Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405. The Making of a Civilization*. (Pearson Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 2004) –

Oxford Islamic Studies online (Gain access through the UWO Library website) –

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing In History*, Sixth Edition. (Bedford/St.Martin’s, 2010) OR

William Kelleher Storey and Towser Jones, *Writing History. A Guide for Canadian Students, Third Edition*. (Oxford University Press, Canada, 2011) All other readings available on OWL

Methods of Evaluation

Component Weight

Encyclopedia of Islam Assignment (20%)

Library Assignment (5%)

Annotated Bibliography Assignment (5%)

Research Essay (10 pages) (30%)

Cumulative Final Exam (30%)

Participation (10%)

Assignments Encyclopedia of Islam (20%): Due: Oct 1 (hand in printed version in class) Details to come.

Library Assignment (5%): Due: 8 October Assignment outline on OWL. This assignment comes in two short sections. The first necessitates you visit the D.B. Weldon Library and explore resources relevant to this course. The second allows you to familiarize yourself with online sources. The goal of this assignment is to expose you to research resources, databases, and contacts that can help you excel, not only in this course, but in many others.

Annotated Bibliography Assignment (5%): Due: 22 October

Assignment outline to come on OWL. This assignment follows the library assignment in a complementary way that allows you to utilize your skills in researching to start building your

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bibliography for your larger research essay. This means you must also have an idea for what you wish to research for the essay.

Research Essay (30%): Due: 12 November (hand in printed version in class) Assignment outline and potential topics on OWL.

Cumulative Final Exam (40%): Details to come.

Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Counselling. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

Absences and Late Assignments:

Students must attend at least seven of our twelve meetings in order to pass the course, regardless of grades received for other assignments.

Students must complete all course assignments in order to pass the course.

Additional Statements

Communication policies: through email and office hours

Classroom behavior: no cell phones and no eating in classes.

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI):

You may not make any use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, for any assignments in this course.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.