

**RS 312**  
**Muslim Lives and Practices Worldwide**  
**Fall 2019**  
**Department of Anthropology**  
**M, W 11:30am-12:50pm, HH 344**

**Office Hours:** Mondays 1-2:30pm or by appointment

**Course Description**

This course examines the religion, culture, history, and politics of Islam throughout the world focusing mostly on ethnographic case studies. Islam and Muslims are regularly the subjects of media headlines, impassioned commentary, and public policy initiatives. This course attempts to deepen the students' knowledge of this ongoing discourse through an introduction to the historical trajectories and religious commitments of Muslims and the cultures associated with Islamic civilization. After a basic overview of the theoretical debates on how to approach and study Muslims lives and practices in the context of Islamophobia, we will consider the basic requirements of Islam as they are lived, negotiated, and contested by individuals on the ground in a variety of geographical areas from Asia to North America. It is important to state at the outset that this course does not focus on the theology of Islam. Our approach is not textual but ethnographic. This means that we are not interested as much in the different juridical interpretations of Islam as a religion, but in *the diversity of the ways in which Muslims construct their religious, political, and cultural identities in practice*. Selected case studies raise issues concerning Islam in modern times such as gender, authority, representation, stereotypes, fundamentalism, and secularism. We will conclude the course with an ethnographic study of Muslim student experiences in North America.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and analyze different ethnographic approaches to Islam
- Develop critical reading, research, and thinking skills about Muslim lives and practices
- Observe and write analytically about public debates on Islam and critically engage many different kinds of sources on the topic (including textbooks, interviews, global news media, and more).
- Better understand how Islam shapes and is shaped by global communities and forces of modernity and the ethical connections between our own lives and those of others who are marginalized due to their Muslim backgrounds.

**Required Texts**

- Shabana Mir. 2014. Muslim American Women on Campus. University of North Carolina Press
- All journal articles are available to download from the library website or coursereserves
- <https://www.reserves.uwaterloo.ca/ares/ares.dll>

### Optional Text:

Jens Kreinath, (ed.). 2012. *The Anthropology of Islam Reader*. Routledge (Most of the assigned articles are published in this reader —some in abridged forms. If you wish to have a hardcopy of the readings, you may choose to buy the reader which is available at the Bookstore, and also put on reserves at Dana Porter Library)

### Course Requirements and Assessment

|                                         |      |
|-----------------------------------------|------|
| Participation (10%) and Attendance (5%) | 15%  |
| Presentation                            | 10%  |
| Online Discussion Posts                 | 10%  |
| Response Paper                          | 15%  |
| Movie/Controversy Analysis              | 20%  |
| Final Paper                             | 30%  |
| <hr/>                                   |      |
| Total                                   | 100% |

#### Participation (10%) and Attendance (5%)

Each class will combine lecture and discussion elements. Many will include interactive student activities (discussions, in-class writing activities, etc.) as well. None of these elements work unless you attend regularly and read the assigned materials. Please come to class ready to analyze and respond to the assigned readings, as well as to the contributions of your fellow students. Your active engagement in all of these exercises is essential. Please note that engagement includes attentive listening as much as speaking. Evaluation of participation will be based on the quality of what you contribute. **Contributions to the discussion might involve introducing a topic, examining assumptions, assessing the source and reliability of information and formulating new questions. They might also include statements of where you are confused or questions about the meaning of core concepts; questions about what the author is trying to communicate.** Arriving late or departing early will affect your participation grade if they happen recurrently.

At some point during each lecture, expect to be asked to write down your response to a content-related question in relation to the assigned reading for that lecture. The question may be in the fill-in-the blank or multiple-choice format and will most likely be a general question the theme or topic of the assigned chapter/article. This is to make sure that you do the readings before class time. Your overall performance in these exercises will count towards your participation mark.

#### Presentation (10%)

To ensure focused discussions of the weekly readings, and to allow students to develop their presentation skills, students will be asked to make **one** class presentation. You should prepare to take charge of the class for a 15-20 minute period in order to present key themes and raise questions that emerge from that week's readings, to be followed by discussion.

Think about the following as you prepare your presentation:

1. What is the author trying to convey to his/her audience in this chapter?
2. What are the strengths of the argument or examples he or she is presenting?

3. For journal articles: How do the arguments relate to or compare with the view of other authors you have read in the course or elsewhere?
4. What is confusing or unsatisfying about the reading?
5. Pose 2-3 discussion questions for the class to consider.
6. You may also introduce some relevant additional material you want us to consider in light of the reading. These could be from your own travel experiences; from popular culture, including print materials (e.g. political or entertainment magazines, newspapers), music, film clips, video selections of news or television programming, social media, etc (e.g. a newspaper article, item in the news, policy, etc.).

**Online Discussion Posts (1% per post, 10 in total** from week 2 until last class, to be submitted before the end of the class for which the readings are assigned)

This course requires each student to submit discussion posts to Learn on the assigned reading(s) of the class before the start of the class. You can choose for which classes (of 22 classes in total) you wish to discuss the assigned reading(s), but you are required to submit 10 of these throughout the term. The discussion posts can be considered as the very early stages of a response paper. They do not need to be longer than a short paragraph and can be as short as two sentences, or one question (so long as these sentences or the question demonstrate a clear and specific engagement with the reading). Unlike the response paper that requires engagement with all the readings assigned for the class, discussion posts can engage only one of the two (or on rare occasions, three) readings.

They can be in the form of a discussion question for the others to consider, a critique or comment of the readings' content, or simply a question about a part of the reading that remains unclear to you. You may also use the space to discuss how that reading connects to or diverges from the previous readings' approach to the same issue. Unlike the response paper (below) which requires that you demonstrate formal academic writing, discussion posts can include personal reactions to the readings and outside materials that the readings make you think, and they are for all the class to see. They do not have to have an obvious organization. You are free to let your ideas develop and wander through the text.

I will try to go over at least some of these questions in class time, but feel free to respond to others' comments online. Even though these online responses won't count the same as in-class participation, I will consider them while marking your overall participation. I recommend that those of you who may not feel as comfortable as others to speak in public make use of this option. The discussion posts (just like the response papers-see below) will be evaluated on quality and the originality of your engagement with the text, and not simply completion.

**Response Paper (15% no longer than 3 pages, double space, before Wednesday class)**

You need to submit **1** response paper out of the 10 weeks that you are assigned readings **until Week 10 (I won't accept response papers after October 30)**. Response paper is on a weekly basis, meaning that it should cover engage with ALL the readings assigned for that week and must be submitted no later than 11:30 am –before the Wednesday class. A response paper is not simply the summary of the readings and must analyze the assigned readings comparatively (or in relation to previous topics and themes). If all you do in your response paper is to summarize the

texts independently of each other, the best grade that you can get for it is a B-. You should design your response papers to provoke critical conversation on the themes and problems raised in the reading, pose questions that arise from the readings, relate the reading to each other and the discussions in class, and if possible, address their limitations. Your response paper could include the reading that you presented on as long as you tie it to the other reading(s) on the same topic.

In your response papers, for each reading pay attention to:

- What is the author's central argument?
- How does the author's approach to border and boundaries build upon, challenge, or relate to previous readings?
- What are the problems or issues that you see with this approach?

Response papers are formal academic texts and should have an overarching argument. Yet you should pay attention to spelling and grammar, and make sure that your engagement with the readings is centered around one or two themes that you engage in-depthly. The papers will be evaluated on quality and the originality of your engagement with the text, and not simply completion. There are supporting documents on how to write responses at Learn which would be useful also for the online discussion posts.

I give the option to all students who are not happy with the grade they receive on their response to submit one more response paper on the readings of another class. If students choose to do that, I will count the one with the highest mark towards the final grade.

### **Movie or Debate Analysis (20%) Due Nov 25 at 11:59pm!**

Students are asked to choose one of the two options mentioned below to write a short paper.

#### ***Option 1***

Write a short paper on a public controversy about Islam in a context of your own choice. Analyze the debate in light of the course readings, lectures, and class discussions. Use at least two course readings in your analysis.

#### ***Option 2***

Reflect on one or two of the films that we have viewed in the course to date. In your essay, be sure to refer to at least two themes addressed in at least two relevant course readings that you will cite.

The detailed guidelines will be provided later in the term. The papers **MUST** be submitted to Dropbox by the deadline. Each paper is to be approximately 1000 words which is not more than 4 double spaced pages (12 Font, Times New Roman, one inch margins on all sides). They must be carefully written reflections and not first drafts or simple stream of consciousness essays. They should use the Chicago Manual of Style author-date citation available at [https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html). The content and structure of the argument as well as the writing (spelling, grammar, organization, etc.) will be graded. Best papers are those with a clear argument. Guidelines are available at Learn

**Book Review (30%) due December 9 at 11:59pm, about 1500 words (approximately 6 PAGES 12 Font, Times New Roman, one inch margins on all sides):**

The goal of this assignment is to explore in more detail a topic that interests you in the anthropology of Islam, that is addressed in the ethnography *Muslim American Women on Campus*. The review is meant to develop your skills of applying the conceptual tools you learned in this class to a more in-depth case-study. **Please note this review is not merely a summary of the content of the book**, but it is a reflection of what are, in your view, the strengths and weaknesses of the book; how it relates to other material you have read in this course; how 'well' is written and how poignant are the anthropological themes in Islam that it presents.

### **Grading**

In this course, you will be graded on **how** you think, not **what** you think. In other words, **you will not be graded on your beliefs, opinions, or the positions you advance**. You will be graded on how well you articulate your thoughts and positions, how closely you read the assigned texts, and how much your ability to think **critically and synthetically** about course themes develop throughout the semester.

### **Late Work**

**Response papers:** For fairness and the overall purpose of response papers, **it is not possible to submit a response paper after the class on the assigned readings for that week is over**. Please note that you are not required to submit a response paper each week, in fact you need to submit one only for one week. To avoid losing marks on this assignment, make good use of this flexibility to choose the weeks that fit your schedule and allow you to submit your response papers on time.

**Final essay:** If you turn your final essay in late, your mark will be downgraded by 3% per day (including weekends). Feedback may not be provided on late papers.

### **Electronic Device Policy**

During classtime you are expected to be fully engaged in the class. This means that the only documents that you should have open on your phone/computer are 1) notes 2) readings 3) class powerpoints. Students who are caught on Facebook, texting, surfing the Web, et. al during class will lose marks for their participation. Please resist the temptation to check email, Facebook, internet browsing during class.

### **Attendance Policy**

Arriving late or departing early will affect your attendance grade, if it happens on a regular basis. If you miss a class due to absence, you are still responsible for making up your missed work. You can get notes from a classmate.

Please note that travel plans are NOT considered acceptable reasons for asking extensions on assignments and rescheduling of exams: <https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar/final-examinations/examination-regulations-and-related-matters>

## **Cross-listed courses**

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#).

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Other sources of information for students

[Academic integrity](#) (Arts) [Academic Integrity Office](#) (uWaterloo)

## **Note for Students with Disabilities**

The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term. Accessibility related extensions on assignments with fixed deadlines (short essay+book review) should be requested through the AccessAbility Services. The student should make necessary arrangements for the response paper individually given the flexibility provided to students about submission time for that particular assignment. For fairness to all students, it is not possible to submit a response paper after the class is over.

## **Turnitin**

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.

Alternatives for using Turnitin include:

- an annotated bibliography;
- a draft bibliography identifying and documenting all sources and submitted on a specified date before the due date for the assignment;
- a “scaffolded” assignment where the student submits an outline of their paper in advance and then at least one draft of the paper with their list of resources before the submission of the final paper with a bibliography

### **Writing and Communication Centre**

The Writing and Communication Centre (WCC) works with students as they develop their ideas, draft, and revise. Writing and communication specialists offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, synthesizing and citing research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or you can drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 25- or 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [uwaterloo.ca/wcc](http://uwaterloo.ca/wcc). Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

### **Mental Health Support**

#### ***On campus:***

Counselling Services department is located in Needles Hall North on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor. Their phone number is 519-888-4567 ext. 32655

- Individual appointments: Same day appointments for students at immediate risk and booked appointments with counsellors. Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Walk-in appointments: Wednesday and Thursday between 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- Seminars and workshops: Running all term. Topics include mindfulness, depression, anxiety, and resiliency.

Health Services department offers mental health care and has psychiatrists on staff. HS is located across the bridge from the SLC and can be reached at 519-888-4096.

#### ***Off campus: 24/7***

- [Good2Talk](#) is a free confidential help line for post-secondary students. 1-866-925-5454
- [Grand River Hospital](#) offers 24/7 emergency care for mental health emergencies. 834 King Street West, Kitchener. 519-749-4300 x 6880.
- [Here 24/7](#) is Waterloo Region’s Mental Health and Crisis Services team. 1-844-437-3247
- In an on campus emergency, call UW Police Services at ext. 22222.
- If you are away from campus and can’t come to our offices, please call our phone number 519-888-4567 x32655 and we will do our best to put you in contact with local resources.

Download the [WatSAFE](#) app to have access to these contacts on your phone.

### **Territorial Acknowledgement**

The Faculty of Arts acknowledges that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The

University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule over the course of the term in order to better guide the learning process.

### Course Outline

|               |                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Week 1</b> | <b>Sept 4</b>  | <b>Conceptualizing Islam and Islamophobia</b><br>Introduction, Scheduling of the Presentations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Week 2</b> | <b>Sept 9</b>  | <b>Approaching Islam</b><br><br>Shryock- Islam as an Object of Fear and Affection (pp. 1-11)<br>Optional: Kreinath- Toward the Anthropology of Islam- An Introductory Essay (in the Reader/Course Reserves)<br><br><b>Film:</b> <i>Inside Islam</i>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|               | Sept 11        | 1) Gilsenan- Recognizing Islam (in the Reader/Course Reserves)<br><br>2) Interview with Asad – Do Muslims Belong in the West?<br><a href="http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/31747/Do-Muslims-Belong-in-the-West-An-Interview-with-Talal-Asad">http://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/31747/Do-Muslims-Belong-in-the-West-An-Interview-with-Talal-Asad</a><br><br>Recommended: Asad- The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam (in the Reader/Course Reserves) |
| <b>Week 3</b> | <b>Sept 16</b> | <b>Daily Prayers</b><br>Henkel- Between Belief and Unbelief Lies the Performance of Salat (in the Reader/Course Reserves)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|               | Sept 18        | Niloofar Haeri- The Private Performance of Salat Prayers: Repetition, Time, and Meaning (coursereserves only)<br><br><b>Film:</b> <i>Me and the Mosque</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Week 4</b> | <b>Sept 23</b> | <b>Fasting during the month of Ramadan</b><br>Frankl – The Observance of Ramadan in Swahili-Land (in the Reader/Course Reserves)<br><br><b>Film:</b> <i>Ramadan Primetime</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |



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|               | Sept 25        | Schielke – Being good in Ramadan (in the Reader/Course Reserves)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Week 5</b> | <b>Sept 30</b> | <b>Pilgrimage to Mecca</b><br>1) John Bowen — Rites of Passage – The Pilgrimage to Mecca (49-57)<br>2) Scupin – The Social Significance of the Hajj for Thai Muslims (in the Reader/Coursereserves)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|               | Oct 2          | Cooper- The Strength in the Song (in the Reader/Coursereserves)<br><b>Film:</b> <i>Pilgrimage to Mecca</i> +<br><a href="https://www.theguardian.com/cities/video/2016/sep/09/inside-real-mecca-demolition-hajj-pilgrims-saudi-video">https://www.theguardian.com/cities/video/2016/sep/09/inside-real-mecca-demolition-hajj-pilgrims-saudi-video</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Week 6</b> | <b>Oct 7</b>   | <b>Feast of Sacrifice</b><br>Bowen – On Scriptural Essentialism and Ritual Variation (in the Reader/Course Reserves)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|               | Oct 9          | Lerner and Robello- The Prohibition of Ritual Slaughtering (Kosher Shechita and Halal) and Freedom of Religion of Minorities<br><br>OR<br><br>Bergaud-Blackler –New Challenges for Islamic Ritual Slaughter: A European Perspective (coursereserves only)<br><br>AND<br><br><a href="https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/animal-slaughter-ruling-belgium-stirs-debate-halal-meat-190906101608102.html?fbclid=IwAR3wi3-ZhvBVDrv-ta2rpoFx0fm4IU6AKdF0oUsRW4cxNXFDgdt9kJ2kha8">https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/animal-slaughter-ruling-belgium-stirs-debate-halal-meat-190906101608102.html?fbclid=IwAR3wi3-ZhvBVDrv-ta2rpoFx0fm4IU6AKdF0oUsRW4cxNXFDgdt9kJ2kha8</a><br><br><u>Recommended:</u> Brisebarre- The Sacrifice of 'Id al-kabir: Islam in the French Suburbs<br><b>Film:</b> A Son's Sacrifice |
| <b>Week 7</b> | Oct 14,16      | <b>THANKSGIVING AND READING WEEK No Class!</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Week 8</b> | Oct 21         | <b>Almsgiving</b><br>Benthall – Financial Worship (in the Reader/Course Reserves)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|               | Oct 23         | Mittermaier- Trading with God (coursereserves only)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Week 9</b> | Oct 28         | <b>Representing Islam</b><br>Mamdani- Good Muslim, Bad Muslim (coursereserves only)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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|                |               | RECOMMENDED: Alireza Doostdar- How not to Understand ISIS<br><a href="https://divinity.uchicago.edu/sightings/how-not-understand-isis-alireza-doostdar">https://divinity.uchicago.edu/sightings/how-not-understand-isis-alireza-doostdar</a> |
|                | Oct 30        | Abu-Lughod - Do Muslim Women Need Saving? (coursereerves only)<br><b>Film:</b> <i>Fashioning Faith – Yasmin Moll</i>                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Week 10</b> | Nov 4         | <b>Muslim Responses to Islamophobia</b><br>Bilici- Muslim Ethnic Comedy: Inversions of Islamophobia (Learn only)                                                                                                                             |
|                | Nov 6         | <b>Ethnography</b><br>Muslim American Women on Campus-Chapter 1 Introduction                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Week 11</b> | Nov 11        | Muslim American Women on Campus- Chapter 2 + chapter 3 (until page 63)                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                | Nov 13        | Muslim American women in campus Life Muslim American Women on Campus-<br>Chapter 3: I didn't want to have that outcast belief about alcohol (from page 63)                                                                                   |
| <b>Week 12</b> | Nov 18        | <b>Film:</b> New Muslim Cool<br><br>Özyürek – German Converts to Islam and Their Ambivalent Relations with Immigrant Muslims (no presentation)                                                                                               |
|                | Nov 20        | <b>AAA Conference No Class!</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Week 13</b> | <b>Nov 25</b> | <b>MOVIE or CONTROVERSY ANALYSIS DUE!</b><br>Muslim American Women on Campus- Chapter 4 You can't really look normal and dress modestly                                                                                                      |
|                | Nov 27        | Muslim American Women on Campus Chapter 5 Let them be normal and date                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Week 14</b> | <b>Dec 2</b>  | Muslim American Women on Campus Chapter 6 Conclusion                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                | <b>Dec 9</b>  | <b>BOOK REVIEW DUE!</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |