This course is designed for graduate students who wish to learn about Islamic civilizations in their historical contexts as a basis for further study of Islam, for comparative purposes, and in particular to become prepared to offer undergraduate lectures on Islam or to offer an undergraduate survey course on the history of Islamic civilizations. By the end of the course, each student will be familiar with the origins and development of Islam, its spread worldwide, and the major methodological and historiographic issues involved in studying Islam in a historical and geographic context. For each topic and period, students will receive a general overview of the topic, read primary and secondary texts related to the period, and discuss the issues in a seminar setting. In addition, each student will have an opportunity to present an in-depth analysis of one or more topics during the course of the semester. Each presenter or team of presenters will prepare an oral presentation for the seminar discussion of an assigned topic (for examples of weekly assignments, see attached samples). They will also prepare a final written version of their material in the form of a lesson plan to be distributed to all members of the seminar. All students will also be involved in preparing an annotated bibliography that will be available to each seminar member. At the end of the course, each student will have a file of lesson plans, an annotated bibliography, and will have read relevant primary and secondary texts on the major phases of Islamic civilizations.

No prior knowledge of Islam or Islamic languages is required.

Topics

1. Introduction
   a. Methodology
   b. Teaching a Religious Tradition Not Your Own
   c. Ethnology & linguistics
   d. Geography
2. The East Mediterranean Before Islam
   a. Religion and Big Power conflicts
   b. Arabia and the conflict of client states
   c. Trade, camels, & Bedouinization
3. Muhammad and Earliest Islam
   a. Birth and Early Life
   b. First Revelation
c. The Quran
d. Makkan Islam

4. The Medinan State
   a. Hijrah
   b. Conquest of Arabia
   c. Muhammad’s Praxis

5. Islam outside Arabia
   a. The Conquest
   b. The Early Caliphs

6. Heterodoxy and Orthodoxy
   a. Shiism
   b. Kharijism
   c. The Sunni consensus and its Opposition
   d. Arab, Ajam and Dhimmi

7. Abbasid Compromise
   a. Sharia
   b. Falsafa
   c. Adab, and the Arts
   d. Greek Science and the Islamicate Intellectual Tradition

8. International Civilization
   a. Slave Soldiers and the Social Order
   b. Sufism
   c. Shu’ubiyyah
   d. Ulama

9. Muslim Empires
   a. Ottoman, Safavids, & Timurids
   b. Taqlid & Ijtihad
   c. The case of the Wahhabis

10. The Modern Challenge
    a. The Great Western Transmutation
    b. Women
    c. Family Life
    d. Islamic Modernism
    e. National and Pan-Islam
    f. Tajdid and Islamic “Fundamentalism”

11. Summary
    a. Review of Major Issues
    b. Review of Pedagogy

Sample Topic Assignments

**Topic 3: MUHAMMAD AND EARLIEST ISLAM**

a. Birth and Early Life
b. First Revelation
c. The Quran
d. Makkan Islam

Reading Assignment for all students:

All students will be expected to read and be prepared to discuss the following items:


Assignment for Presenters:

In addition to the assignment for all students, presenters will be expected to prepare a discussion on the topic of the “origins” of Islam. This topic will include but not be limited to the theories of Jewish, Christian and Pre-Islamic pagan influence on Muhammad and the Quran.

Suggested readings:


**Topic 4: The Medinan State**

a. The Hijrah
b. The Conquest of Arabia
c. Muhammad’s Praxis

Reading assignment for all students:

All students will be expected to read and be prepared to discuss the following items:


Assignment for Presenters:
In addition to the assignment for all students, presenters will be expected to prepare a discussion on the topics of the Hijrah, the formation of the political dimension of Islam in Medina, including the question of what was the “original” Islamic state, and Muhammad’s religious practice in the Medinan period. One aspect of the Hijrah that should be included is a typological and structural analysis of the literary representation of the Hijrah.

Suggested readings:


**Selected Bibliography**

The following bibliography lists the required textbooks and a sample of general books of interest to students in this course.

**Textbook assigned for the course:**


**General Supplemental Reading:** (This list is an incomplete sample bibliography. As noted above, one of the projects for the class will be to prepare an annotated bibliography for the history of Islam which will be available to members of the Emory community through the MESAS website).