CIEE in Amman, Jordan

Course name: Islam in the Modern Context
Course number: MEST 3001 AMJO
Programs offering course: Middle East Studies
Language of instruction: English
U.S. Semester Credits: 3
Contact Hours: 45
Term: Spring 2019

Course description
This course covers a number of areas of Islamic thought in the contemporary world. It sheds light on the development of theories, philosophies and debates shaping and influencing reformist movements, cultural transformations, and the Muslim way of life. The emphasis is on primary texts where major thinkers grapple with the existential matters of change and continuity, such as liberalization, politics and democratization, human rights, women’s rights. On the practical side, some fiqh responses to challenges posed by modern applications of science and technology in the fields of ecology and biomedical ethics will be explored.

Learning Objectives
On completing this course, students are expected
1. to be able to discuss, define and compare the different trends in modern Islamic thought;
2. to recognize the contribution of major Islamic thinkers in the modern era, such as Iqbal, Qutb, Shari’ati, into their historical contexts; among others;
3. to explain the development in fiqh rulings concerning biomedical and ecological policies; and
4. to expound analytically some key concepts and paradigms in politics, relations with the West for instance, representative of the different schools of thought.

Course Prerequisites:
A basic knowledge of Islam, its sources, and a general idea about it history can be helpful.

Methods of Instruction
- The basic methods followed in this course are discussion and debate. 10% of the grade depends on students’ participation in the discussion.
- Guest speakers are invited to provide additional perspectives on some of the topics in the syllabus.
- Films and documentaries are screened and discussed.
- Field trips to religious sites.
- Participation in cultural and academic events (announced in due course)

**Class Requirements**

- Group work: students form groups of two or three to prepare and present a topic they choose from the syllabus; analyzing and discussing the relevant texts. (10 points)
- A research paper (three thousand words; 20 points) is required. Individual students decide on relevant topics approved by the instructor. A 10-minute summary of the paper is presented in the last class meeting followed by 5 mins Q&A.
- Late submissions will be marked down 1 point for each day after deadline.

**Assessment and Final Grade:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Class participation: participation in the general discussion, presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Research paper (written form and class presentation)</td>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>Mid term exam</td>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
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**Weekly Schedule:**

(A reader with texts of the reading assignments will be available at Ja’far Bookshop next to UJ north gate.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
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| 1    | General introduction: Islam and Muslims, historical background, internal and external influences; representative figures: Afghani and ‘Abduh | - Afghani, “An Islamic Response to Imperialism”  
- Hanafi, “Reformist and Moderate Voices of Islam …”, in Reform Voices of Islam, pp. 98-128 |
| 3    | Traditional art: A rediscovery                 | - Critchlow, Islamic Patterns, pp. 1-8;  
- Film screening: A documentary on Saladin Minbar |
| 4    | Reconstruction of religious thought            | - Iqbal, “The Spirit of Muslim Culture”, in his Reconstruction …, pp. 98-128 |
| 5    | Pluralism, democracy and Muslim Utopia          | - “The Madinah Charter”  
- Hoffmann, “Democracy or Shuracracy” in The Islamic Impulse, pp. 226-243 |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mid-Term Exam</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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| 8 | Arab Spring and the Turkish Experience | - A guest speaker  
- Also reading: Duman, “Islam and Democracy: Arab Spring and the Turkish Experience”,  
- Gozaydin, “Ahmet Davutoglu: Role as an Islamic Scholar Shaping Turkey’s Foreign Policy” in *International Relations …*, pp. 59-73, 91-110 |
| 9 | A critique of Western thought | - Qutb, *Islam, Religion of the Future*, pp. 49-68  
- "Introduction", *In the Shades of the Qur’an* |
| 10 | Sunni Islam, Shi'i Islam | Ra’uf, “What Is Sunni Islam?”  
Nanji and Daftary, “What Is Shiite Islam?” in *Voices of Islam*, pp. 185-248 |
- Hope and Young, “Islam and Ecology” |
| 13 | Islam and global concerns: women’s rights | - Jamal Badawi, *Gender Equity in Islam: Basic Principles*  
- Mir-Hosseini, “Classical Fiqh … and Gender Justice” pp. 77-105 |
| 14 | Students’ presentations of research papers |   |
| 15 | Final Exam |   |

**References:**

   http://www.crosscurrents.org/islamecology.htm
   kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../ISN/.../8006_IqbalReconstruction