



EXTENDED CAMPUS

COLLEGE *of* PROFESSIONAL
and CONTINUING STUDIES

RELS 5970-106: Special Topics Seminar – Islamic Culture

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to Islamic religion and culture. Through lectures, reading assignments, and videos, we will explore the historical development of the world's second largest religious tradition. In the course of our survey we will investigate the major tenets of Islam, the Qur'an, the life of Muhammad, forms of worship and ritual patterns, the development of Islamic law and theology, mysticism, and the spread of Islamic civilization and culture. The final portion of the course will focus on Islamic renewal and revival movements as well as contemporary issues related to political upheaval, women in Islam and the growth of Islam in the West.

Class Dates, and Format Information:

Dates: January 29 – 31 & Feb. 5 – 7, 2021
Format: Hybrid/online course, Professor will release more information as course approaches
Hours: Friday 5:30-9:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Sunday 12:00-4:00 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: December 31, 2020

Site Director and Information for VA Benefits:

Location: College of Allied Health, OU Health Sciences Center, 1200 N. Stonewall, Oklahoma City, OK 73117-1215
Hours: Friday 5:30-9:30 p.m.; Saturday 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Email: apokc@ou.edu. Phone: 405-271-4522.

Professor Contact Information:

Course Professor:	Charles Kimball, Th.D.	
Office Address:	Presidential Professor Emeritus OU Religious Studies Program 731 Elm Ave. Norman, OK 73019	Mailing Address: Prof. Charles A. Kimball 1356 Monterey Bay Drive Wake Forest, NC 27587
Cell phone number:	(405) 365-1068	
E-mail Address:	kimball@ou.edu	
Website:	http://charles-kimball.com	
Professor availability:	The professor will be available via email or FaceTime to students before and after the class session and by appointment.	

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:

Student materials are available at the OU Bookstore Website at <https://ou.textbookx.com/institutional/index.php>. There is no longer a physical bookstore, the store will remain, but textbooks will not be stocked. The website has book selling, renting, buying, returning, and order tracking capabilities. If you need help with an order, or if you have any questions contact the toll-free phone at 1-(855)-790-6637, agents are available from 9a – 5p (EST) Monday – Friday. For more information or questions about textbooks, feel free to contact apsyllabi@ou.edu. Text prices are available online.

Updated 13 October 2020

1. Sonn, T. (2015). *Islam: history, religion, and politics* (3rd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN: 9781118972304.
2. Miles, J. & McAuliffe, J.D. (Eds.) (2015). *The Norton anthology of world religions: Islam*. New York: W.W. Norton. ISBN 9780393918984
3. Materials posted on the OU Canvas learning management system: Access Canvas at <https://oklahoma.instructure.com/>, enter your OU NetID and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

One Additional Required Reading:

Each student will write a critical essay based on his/her reading of **one** of the following books. The student can choose the topic that is most interesting to him/her.

1. Armstrong, K. (2007). *Muhammad: A Prophet for our Time*. New York: HarperCollins. ISBN 9780739482636.
2. Kimball, C. (2019) *Truth over Fear: Combating the Lies About Islam*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press. ISBN 978066426462
3. Nasr, V. (2007). *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future* (2007). New York: W.W. Norton. ISBN 9780393066401.
4. Kimball, C. (2011). *When Religion Becomes Lethal: The Explosive Mix of Politics and Religion in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass. ISBN 9780470581902

Course Objectives:

To develop a thoughtful and accurate understanding of the religion and culture shaping the world's second largest religious community: Islam. To do this, the student must study the emergence and development of Islam historically, theologically, politically, and militarily as this religious tradition and civilizational system moved rapidly through the lands from Spain to India in the 7th and 8th centuries. Diversity within Islam and various ways Muslims have interacted with Christians and Jews, structured government systems, etc., are all key elements in understanding the often turbulent dynamics in many predominantly Muslim lands in the 21st century.

Course Outline:

Days 1-3

Lectures, discussion, and videos on the birth of Islam, the life of Muhammad, the Qur'an and *hadith*, the Growth of the Early Islamic Community, the Five Pillars of Islam and Islamic law (*shari'ah*), Sufism, and Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations.

Videos include "Inside Islam" (The History Channel), "The Message," and "The Crusades: Jerusalem."

Days 4-5

Lectures, discussion and videos on renewal, reform, and the emergence of contemporary nation-states, major issues in contemporary Islam, women and gender, and Islam and the West.

Videos include "The Sword of Islam" [BBC] and selections on Islamic extremism in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Day 6

Student presentations and discussion on the books selected for special focus.

Important Note on How The Seminar Will Be Conducted:

Since our seminar will be online rather than an intensive, in-person seminar, a few words about how it will be conducted are in order. Each of our six days will include 3 to 5 hours on Zoom. These times will be for live lectures, Q&A, discussion, etc. And, we'll have breaks. Each day will also include time for videos and for pre-recorded lectures. Three weeks before the class begins students will be given access to

pre-recorded lectures and videos. Students will have options on when they view the videos and listen to the pre-recorded lectures. Students may view these materials during the scheduled class time. Or, students may choose to watch some or most of the videos before class begins and then have more time for a break during the daily seminar. Whenever one chooses to view the videos and pre-recorded lectures, each student must be available during the prescribed times for the live Zoom portions of the seminar each day.

Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

Course Requirements:

Prepared attendance is crucial to the success of the course, and you should come to class each day ready to analyze the material, pose questions, try out new ideas, and listen to and challenge the ideas of your classmates and the professor.

Readings:

Read all the course materials before the course begins. Note: The Norton Anthology book on Islam is lengthy. Students are not expected to master the contents of this book. Rather, students should read through the book to gain a good overview of the types of literature and issues that have shaped the Islamic tradition over the past 1400 years.

Pre-Seminar Assignment:

Based on your readings (and some additional research, choose one key element of the Islamic religious tradition as the focus for your pre-seminar essay. Possible topics include: the origin, collection and central uses of the Qur'an, positive and negative factors that have shaped Muslim-Christian and Muslim-Jewish relations, the role and function of Islamic law, ideal and practical approaches to Islam and politics, etc. What intrigues you most about this topic? What have you learned about the ways different approaches and understandings inform different Muslims on this topic? What questions do you continue to have about this topic? The essays should be 8-10 pages in length (2000-2500 words). **This essay should be submitted four (4) days before the beginning of the seminar, January 25, 2021**

Presentation and Class Discussion:

Each student will select one of four additional course books listed above. Students will make a brief presentation on that additional book highlighting key insights, challenging or provocative issues, etc., then lead the class discussion on how their more in-depth exploration on a particular set of issues supplemented what they have discovered in the seminar.

Post-seminar assignment:

After the seminar, each student will submit a reflective essay synthesizing the readings, videos, discussions, and their experiences in the seminar. In particular, each student should address how their views of on particular aspects of Islamic religion and culture have changed and/or been confirmed during the seminar. The reflective essay should also address the advantages and disadvantages of different ways of studying religion (through primary sources, secondary studies, first-hand accounts, field study, etc.). This reflective essay, which is **due no later than two weeks after the end of the class, February 21, 2021**, should be 10-15 pages in length.

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

Notice: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.

POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution's policy regarding "I" (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy. Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any "I" (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on "financial aid probation." If the "I" grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student's Financial Aid may be suspended making the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct

Academic integrity means honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Academic assignments exist to help students learn; grades exist to show how fully this goal is attained. Therefore all work and all grades should result from the student's own understanding and effort.

Academic misconduct is any act which improperly affects the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement. Misconduct occurs when the student either knows or reasonably should know that the act constitutes misconduct. Academic misconduct includes: cheating and using unauthorized materials on examinations and other assignments; improper collaboration, submitting the same assignment for different classes (self-plagiarism); fabrication, forgery, alteration of documents, lying, etc...in order to obtain an academic advantage; assisting others in academic misconduct; attempting to commit academic misconduct; destruction of property, hacking, etc...; intimidation and interference with integrity process; and plagiarism. All students should review the Student's Guide to Academic Integrity at http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. All students should review policies regarding student conduct at <http://studentconduct.ou.edu/>

Accommodation Statement

The University of Oklahoma is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your local OU Site Director.

Adjustment for Pregnancy/Childbirth-Related Issues

Should you need modifications or adjustments to your course requirements because of documented pregnancy-related or childbirth-related issues, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss. Generally, modifications will be made where medically necessary and similar in scope to accommodations based on temporary disability. Please see <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo/faqs/pregnancy-faqs.html>.

Title IX Resources

For any concerns regarding gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, stalking, or intimate partner violence, the University offers a variety of resources, including advocates on-call 24/7, counseling services, mutual no-contact orders, scheduling adjustments, and disciplinary sanctions against the perpetrator. Please contact the Sexual Misconduct Office at smo@ou.edu or (405) 325-2215 (8-5), or the Sexual Assault Response Team at (405) 615 -0013 (24/7) to report an incident. To learn more about Title IX, please visit the Institutional Equity Office's website at <http://www.ou.edu/content/eoo.html>

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: <http://www.goou.ou.edu/>

INSTRUCTOR VITA

Charles Kimball, Th.D.

Education

- M. Div. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
- Th.D. Harvard University

Current Positions

Presidential Professor and Director of Religious Studies, University of Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

- RELS 5970 Comparative Religions
- RELS 5970 Islamic Culture

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

- Introduction to Religious Studies
- Comparative Religion
- World Religions in America
- Conceptions of the Afterlife
- Religion and Politics in the Middle East
- Islam

Representative Publications and Presentations

Dr. Kimball's articles have appeared in a number of publications, including:

- Sojourners;
- The Christian Century;
- The Los Angeles Times;
- The Christian Science Monitor, and
- The Boston Globe.

He is the author of five books, including:

- When Religion Becomes Lethal: The Explosive Mix of Politics and Religion in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Jossey-Bass/Wiley, 2011);
- His previous book, When Religion Becomes Evil (HarperOne, rev. ed. 2008), was named one of the "Top 15 Books on Religion" by Publishers Weekly and one of the top ten books of the year by the Association of Parish clergy. It has been published in Swedish, Indonesian, Korean, and Danish translations;
- Striving Together: A Way Forward in Christian-Muslim Relations (Orbis Books);
- Religion, Politics and Oil: The Volatile Mix in the Middle East (Abingdon Press), and
- Angle of Vision: Christians and the Middle East (Friendship Press).