2014

392-01 Islamic Civilization and the West

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Course Description and Objectives:

This course examines the interaction between Islamic and Western civilization during the past fourteen centuries. After setting the general geographical and historical background for the course, Christian contact with Islam and the development of Christian views about Islam as a religion are discussed. Extensive attention is then paid to the formation of Islamic civilization and the influence of Islamic ideas upon the West in the fields of theology, philosophy, science and the arts, including literature. Consideration is next given to the encroachment upon, and finally colonization of, much of the Islamic world by the West and the spread of Western ideas among Muslims. This section is followed by a discussion of the various Islamic responses to the advent of modernism coming from the West. The course concludes with an analysis of present day relations between the two civilizations.

Course Requirements:

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The mid-term and final exams will consist of essay questions in which there is a range of choice, e.g. choose three of four questions.

Undergraduate students are expected to write a term paper of ten pages on a subject of their choice which must be approved by the instructor in advance of its completion.
Course Outline:

1. *Dar al-Islam* and Christendom--the encounter of two religions and civilizations
2. The Christian West in contact with Islam and its civilization--historical survey
3. Christian views of Islam as a religion
4. Islamic civilization--survey of its foundation and growth
5. Islamic thought and its influence upon Christian theology and European philosophy
6. Islamic science--its transmission to the West and its role in the rise of Medieval and Renaissance science in Europe
7. Islamic art and Western art
8. Arabic and Persian literature and the West
9. The Western expansion into the Islamic world
10. The advent of modernism in the Islamic world
11. The general Western image of Islam in modern times
12. Western scholarship and interpretations of Islam
13. The Islamic response to the West and the Western image of Islam
   A. traditional
   B. reformist
   C. "fundamentalist"
14. Islam and the West today--issues and factors causing confrontation and those making possible mutual understanding.

Required Reading:


Recommended Reading: