

SPRING 2006

MAJOR THEMES IN THE QUR'AN (REL294)

LINC CATEGORY: ULTIMATE QUESTIONS (M3)

TIME: TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, 8:50-10:00 AM

INSTRUCTOR: SHALAHUDIN KAFRAWI

CONTENT

The course outlines characteristic features of Qur'anic worldview. Topics include Qur'anic views of God-world relation, Islam and other religions, Islam's ideals and identity, and ethics. An emphasis is given to whether the Qur'anic claim of universal salvation gives room to tolerance. As background knowledge to understand these issues, the course elaborates on Muslims' approach to the Qur'an and its various methods of interpretation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the course, students are expected to achieve the following objectives:

1. to discuss the significance of the Qur'an in Islam;
2. to talk about Qur'anic portrayal of Islam and other religious traditions;
3. to elaborate on various methods of interpretation of the Qur'an;
4. to discuss the significance of understanding the contexts of revelation and implementation;
5. to elaborate on Qur'an's support of universal values and its maintenance of particular identities;
6. to list some shared values of Islam and other religions.

GRADING FORMAT:

1. Participation (20%);
2. Two popup quizzes (20%)
3. One structured paper (4-6 pages; 15%);
4. Research paper (8-15 pages; total of 30%): research proposal (5%) and first draft (5%) of the paper are required prior to final submission (20%);
5. Final exam (15%)
6. Perfect Attendance (5% extra).

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Students are required to honor academic integrity. The course imposes the application of Moravian College's Academic Honesty Policy. The policy is to be found at Moravian College's *Student Handbook: 2004-2005*, pp. 52-8.

PARTICIPATION:

Students' participation is highly valued. Active participation includes any input that enables the achievement of the course objectives. It includes—but not limited to—making comments about the reading, asking questions about the reading or the themes under discussion, answering questions posed by the instructor or the class, and suggesting alternative views on the issues in class discussion. Attending a lecture(s) on philosophy, whenever applicable, can be counted toward increasing the participation grade. Complete attendance without any form of participation indicated above will give students a participation grade of no more than D.

ATTENDANCE:

Students are encouraged to attend all scheduled meetings for this course. Those with complete attendance will receive A (worth 5% extra percent of the total). Students have the liberty to miss four classes without any reason. Those who miss more than the allowed four absences will be downgraded by a point for each additional missed class. Those who miss a class with written justifiable reason(s) may be waived from absence if they write a report on the reading to substitute each missed class.

PAPER SUBMISSIONS:

All papers—including (1) structured paper, (2) research proposal, (3) draft of research paper and (4) final research paper—should be electronically submitted through Blackboard on or before the indicated dates. If for some reason there is a problem with electronic submission, the printed copy of the paper should be submitted to the instructor's office on the same day. Late submissions will be downgraded for that specific assignment by one point per day. Students are encouraged to rewrite the structured paper. The rewritten paper should also be submitted via Blackboard. Final research paper cannot be rewritten. The rewritten paper is due within a week after the paper is electronically distributed. Since the grade of the rewritten paper can be better or worse than the originally submitted paper, the best grade will be counted toward the final.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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E-mail: skafrawi@moravian.edu
Classroom: Comenius 114
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 10:30 AM-12:30 PM; or by appointment.

READINGS

Required texts are available at Moravian's Bookstore:

Barlas, Asma. "Believing Women" in *Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*. Austin: University of Texas, 2002.

Esack, Farid. *Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression*. Oxford: Oneworld, 1997.

_____. *The Qur'an: A User's Guide*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2005.

McAuliffe, Jane Dammen. *Qur'anic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Supplemental reading is available at Reeve's Library Reserve:

Rahman, Fazlur. *Major Themes of the Qur'an*. Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1989. Pp. 1-16.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002. Pp. 1-54.

SCHEDULE

	Date	Topic and Reading	Due Date
1.	01/17	Introduction: Syllabus and Basic Principles of Islam	
2.	01/19	What is the Qur'an? 1 [Reading: Esack, "The Qur'an in the Lives of Muslims," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 13-29.]	
3.	01/24	What is the Qur'an? 2 [Reading: Esack, "The Word Enters the World," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 30-55.]	
4.	01/26	What is the Qur'an? 3 [Reading: Esack, "The Qur'an as Written Word," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 56-77.]	
5.	01/31	What is the Qur'an? 4 [Reading: Esack, "Gathering the Qur'an," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 78-99.]	
6.	02/02	What is the Qur'an? 5 [Reading: Esack, "The Prophet and the Begotten-Not-Created Qur'an," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 100-20.]	
7.	02/07	Understanding the Qur'an 1 [Reading: Esack, "Understanding and Interpreting the Qur'an," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 121-45.]	
8.	02/09	Understanding the Qur'an 2 [Reading: McAuliffe, "Text and <i>Tafsir</i> ," in <i>Qur'anic Christians</i> , 13-36.]	
9.	02/14	Understanding the Qur'an 3 [Reading: Esack, "Between Text and Context: In Search of Meaning," in <i>Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism</i> , 49-78.]	Structured paper
10.	02/16	Understanding the Qur'an 4 [Reading: Esack, "Hermeneutical Keys: The Engaged Interpreter and the Search for Liberating Meaning," in <i>Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism</i> , 82-111.]	
11.	02/21	Belief in the Qur'an [Reading: Rahman, Major Themes of the Qur'an, 1-16 and Esack, "Belief in the Qur'an," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 146-65.]	Research proposal

12.	02/23	Video Presentation	
	02/24	Mid-Term	
13.	02/28	Major Praxis of the Qur'an [Reading: Esack, "Righteous Conduct in the Qur'an," in <i>The Qur'an</i> , 166-92.]	
14.	03/02	Qur'an on Islam and the Other 1 [Reading: Nasr, "One God, Many Prophets: The Unity of Truth and the Multiplicity of Revelations," in <i>The Heart of Islam</i> , 1-54.]	
	03/4-12	Spring Break	
15.	03/14	Qur'an on Islam and the Other 2 [Reading: Esack, "Redefining Self and Other," in <i>Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism</i> , 114-44.]	
16.	03/16	Qur'an on Islam and the Other 3 [Reading: Esack, "The Qur'an and the Other," in <i>Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism</i> , 146-76.]	
17.	03/21	Qur'an on Islam and the Other 4 [Reading: Esack, "Redefining Comrades and Opponents," in <i>Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism</i> , 179-203.]	
18.	03/23	The People of the Book 1 [Reading: McAuliffe, "Nazarenes of Faith and Action," in <i>Qur'anic Christians</i> , 93-128.]	
19.	03/28	The People of the Book 2 [Reading: McAuliffe, "Followers of the Qur'anic Jesus," in <i>Qur'anic Christians</i> , 129-59.]	Draft of research paper
20.	03/30	Video Presentation	
	04/04	Service Day—No Classes	
21.	04/06	The People of the Book 3 [Reading: McAuliffe, "Steadfast and Submissive," in <i>Qur'anic Christians</i> , 160-79.]	
22.	04/11	The People of the Book 4 [Reading: McAuliffe, "Christians as Pre-Qur'anic Muslims," in <i>Qur'anic Christians</i> , 240-59.]	
23.	04/13	The People of the Book 5 [Reading: McAuliffe, "Compassion, Mercy, and Monasticism" and "Conclusion," in <i>Qur'anic Christians</i> , 260-92.]	
	04/17	Easter Recess	
24.	04/18	Feminist Perspective 1 [Reading: Barlas, " <i>Believing Women</i> " in <i>Islam</i> , 1-28]	Research paper
25.	04/20	Feminist Perspective 2 [Reading: Barlas, " <i>Believing Women</i> " in <i>Islam</i> , 31-89]	
26.	04/25	Feminist Perspective 3	

		[Reading: Barlas, <i>“Believing Women” in Islam</i> , 93-166]	
27	04/27	Concluding Remarks	
	05/1-6	Final Exams	