

Course Title: *Islam Culture/Society*

ANT 3930 Section 09GA
Fall 2015

Days and Periods: T 02-03 and R 03 (T 8:30am-10:25am and R 9:35am-10:25am)
Classroom: TUR 2318 (Turlington Hall)

Instructor: Khadidja Arfi
Office: B 137 TUR
Email: karfi@ufl.edu
Office Hours: T and R from 12:00 – 1:30 and by appointment

Course Overview and Objectives

The course is an introduction to the fundamental concepts of Islam and the role the religious ideas and institutions play in Muslim communities. This course uses a combination of some classical and theoretical texts together with a rich variety of ethnographic accounts of Muslim societies produced by anthropologists. This course aims to a better understanding of the Islamic religious tradition. It offers an insight into various forms of Islam as practiced in different geographic, social, and cultural contexts. Topics explored include daily *salat* (prayer) performance, *Ramadan* (fasting), *Hajj* (pilgrimage), *Id al-adha* (the feast of sacrifice), *zakat* (almsgiving), and the representation of Islam. The use of an anthropological perspective directs our attention to the multiplicity of perspectives involved in the study of local forms of Islam. We also recognize the transformation of knowledge and power relation of Muslim communities with the establishment of print media and the introduction of new media including the use of television, broadcast media, cassette recordings, and the internet. Thus, with the transformation in the perception and religious obligations and practices, in a globalized word, distinctive “Muslim” consumer cultures emerge within Muslim communities, especially in relation to Halal food consumption and Islamic fashion industry.

Students Learning Outcomes

- Get a direction toward more research in the emerging academic field of the anthropology of Islam
- Appreciate the importance of fieldwork and comparison of theory and methodology
- Further their understanding of Muslims in a critical and reflexive manner
- Appreciate the presented glimpses of Islamic diversity through different anthropological accounts
- Discover that studying existing discourses and practices can contribute to a refined understanding of Muslims, their religion, and their practice.
- Explore the ways Muslims adjust their practices to the challenges of modern life and support and question each other by accounting to the diversity of traditions practiced by Muslims
- Become informed about variation even in common forms of Islamic practices and the tenets of Islam

Textbooks and Required Readings

The textbooks for the course are as follows:

- Islam observed by Clifford Geertz (1968).
- Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Middle East by Michael Gilsenan (2000).
- Anthropology of Islam by Gabriele Mirranci, (2008) (One Chapter only)
- The Anthropology of Islam Reader, edited by Kreineth Jens, 2012 (selected chapters) (on Reserve Lib. W.)
- The Halal Frontier: Muslim Consumers in a Globalized Market by J. Fishcher, (2011) (on Reserve Lib. W.)
- Visibly Muslim: fashion, politics, faith, by Emma Tarlo, (2010).

- On reserve readings, videos, DVDs may be obtained through course reserve at Library West
- Chapters, articles and syllabus may be obtained through Canvas
- Other resources: online video clips to be chosen as needed

Graded Assignments

1. Discussions:

Each student is required to hold discussions via CANVAS as scheduled. Each student must submit a new discussion thread and respond to an existing thread (paragraph form). Discussions will be open for few days. This is an opportunity for you to react to readings, reflect, and comment on specific themes in the readings, lectures or presentations. It is also a chance to share ideas with your peers.

2. Presentations:

1. Each student is required to hold at least one presentation. Each presentation is based on the readings/theme of the week. The presentation may include audio-visual materials, handouts, and/or educational activities. Presenter(s) must produce 3-5 discussion questions for the class. The presentation should last 30-40 minutes leaving ample time for discussion and questions [10%].

2. Oral presentations will be held at the end of the semester as shown in schedule; each student presents the findings of the ethnography of a specific issue related to the final paper topic [10%].

3. Exams: Three take-home exams to be taken on the specific dates as shown in the schedule [10% x3 = 30%]

4. Papers/Writing: the writing assignments are of three forms:

1. Weekly reflections, comments or questions on the assigned readings sent via discussion board on Canvas [10%]

2. One page report on the "in the field" due 9/26 on Assignment/Canvas [10%]

[In the field] assignment is for each student to be a participant observer of one or both of the communal Muslim rituals (get extra credit if you do both)

- Friday congregational prayer or one of the daily prayers at the local mosque of Gainesville on University Street (ICG)
- Eid al-Adha (the feast of the sacrifice) communal gathering (time and place to be announced)

3. Final paper (6-10 pages) based on the ethnography of a specific Muslim practice sent via Sakai (20%)

Attendance: Attendance is required. Excused absences need to be documented and discussed with instructor 10%

Policies on make-up work: *No late assignments and make-up exams except with instructor's permission.*

Final Grades. A detailed breakdown of final grades is as follows:

A=93+, A-=90-92.9, B+=87-89.9, B=83-86.9, B-=79-82.9, C+=75-78.9, C=72-74.5, C-=69-71.9, D=62-68.9, E=<62

One can also link to the following: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Course Policies and Procedures

Classes, Readings, & Attendance Policy:

- Students are responsible to get their books prior to the beginning of class

- Students are responsible to follow the syllabus on Canvas
- Students are responsible to read the assigned text prior to class period
- Students are responsible to post “Discussion Forum” on Canvas their comments/questions/critics preferably prior to class period
- Students are required to attend class unless excused for out of the ordinary circumstances [attendance is taken on each class meeting]

Classroom Behavior Rules: total courtesy for classmates and instructor is required.

Communication: Students are in a course in which we communicate with each other through academic learning, thus, students should communicate with classmates and instructor with total respect and courtesy when discussing the course subjects.

Academic Honesty: Students must conform to the University of Florida’s academic honesty policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of cheating. The university specifically prohibits cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, bribery, conspiracy, and fabrication. Violations will lead to the Department’s and the University’s procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty. All students are expected to honor their commitment to the [University’s Honor Code](#) and the student conduct code.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Please make any requests by the second week of class.

UF Counseling Services

Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

1. [University Counseling and Wellness Center](#), 3190 Radio Road, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
2. [Sexual Assault Recovery Services](#) (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
3. [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling
4. [Reading & Writing Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-0791, writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

Critical Dates:

- Take home exam I: Week 9: Due Monday 10/19 @ 8:00am on Assignments/CANVAS
- Take home exam II: Week 12: Due Monday 11/9 @ 8:00am on Assignments/CANVAS
- Take home exam III: Week 15: Due 12/1 @ 8:00am on Assignments/CANVAS
- Final paper topic proposal: Due Week 14 on Assignments/CANVAS
- Oral presentation: From 12/03 – 12/08 (select a date)
- Final papers due: December 12 or 15 Assignments/CANVAS

Course Schedule

Week #	Day	Theme	Topics	Source
Week 1	T 08/25/15	Introduction	Introduction to Islam Culture/Society	
	R 08/27/15	Visualizing Islam	Islam: Faith and History	DVD 4608 In class viewing and discussion
Week 2	T 09/01/15	Ethnography 1	Chap. 1 and 2 Discussion Post 1	Observing Islam by Clifford Geertz on CANVAS
	R 09/03/15		Chap. 3 and 4 Students Presentation 1	
Week 3	T 09/08/15	Ethnography 2	Discussion Post 2	Recognizing Islam by Michael Gilson on CANVAS
	R 09/10/15		Students Presentation 2	
Week 4	T 09/15/15	Theorizing	Conceptualizing / approaching Islam Discussion Post 3	Beyond Ideology by el-Zein
	R 09/17/15			The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam by Assad Islam by Mirranci (on CANVAS)
Week 5	T 09/22/15	Practice	Religious practices 1. Salat: performing daily prayer In the Field Report due 9/26 Assignment/Canvas No class if Eid is on 9/24	Rehearsed spontaneity by Mahmood
	R 09/24/15			Between belief and unbelief lies the performance of Salat by Henkel The Private Performance of Salat Prayers by Haeri short movie on how Muslims perform daily prayers Participant observance of Gainesville Muslim community celebration Eid al-adha and/or Friday Prayer.
Week 6	T 09/29/15		2. Sawm: Fasting the month of Ramadan Discussion Post 4 Students Presentation 3	The observance of Ramadan in Swahili- Land by P.J. Frankl
	R 10/01/15			Being good in Ramadan by samuli Schielke
Week 7	T 10/06/15		3. Hajj: Pilgrimage to Mecca Discussion Post 5 Students Presentation 4	The social significance of the hajj for Thai Muslims by Scupin
	R 10/08/15			The strength in the song by Cooper Hajj movie viewing and in class discussion
Week 8	T 10/13/15		4) Zakat: almsgiving Discussion Post 6 Students Presentation 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sealing the Quran: Offering and sacrifice among Pakistani Labour Migrants by Pnina Wer Reorganizing social welfare among Muslims: Islamic
	R 10/15/15			

			Take-home exam I Due Monday 10/19 @ 8:00am on CANVAS	<p>voluntarism and other forms of communal support in Northern Ghana by Holger Weiss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial worship: the quranic injunction to almsgiving by Jonathan Benthall
Week 9	T 10/20/15	Islam: a way of life	The Halal life style Discussion Post 7	The Halal Frontier: Muslim Consumers in a Globalized Market by Fishcher (selected chaps)
	R 10/22/15		Students Presentation 6	The economy of slaughter house FIANZ Doc.
	T 10/27/15		The Halal life style.....CONTINUE	
Week 10	R 10/29/15		Identity faith and dress Discussion Post 8	Visibly Muslim: fashion, politics, faith, by Tarlo (2010)
Week 11	T 11/03/15			Islamic production video
			Students Presentation 7	
	R 11/05/15		Take-home exam II Due Monday 11/9 @ 8:00am on CANVAS	
Week 12	T 11/10/15	Evaluating approach to the study of Islam and Muslims	Methodological reflections on the anthropology of Islam 1. situating anthropology Discussion Post 9 Students Presentation 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toward Islamic anthropology by Ahmed Islamic anthropology and anthropology of Islam by Tapper
	R 11/12/15			
Week 13	T 11/17/15	Representation of Islam and Muslims	2. Representing Islam Discussion Post	Covering Islam by Said
	R 11/19/15		Students Presentation 9	
Week 14	T 11/24/15		Students Presentation 10 Final paper and oral presentation topic Due 11/24 @ 12:00pm Assignment/Canvas	Islam obscured by Varisco
	R 11/26/15		Thanksgiving Holiday	NO CLASS
Week 15	T 12/01/15		Take-home Exam III Due 12/1 @ 8:00am on Canvas Islam obscured/Muslims observed movie	
	R 12/03/15		Oral Presentation	
Week 16	T 12/08/15		Oral Presentation and Last Day of Class	
Final Paper due 12/ 12 @ midnight (no later than 12/15 @ 5:00pm), ELECTRONIC COPY, VIA Canvas				