The Islamic World

Instructor: Howard Eissenstat
*E-mail: heissens@stlawu.edu
Office: Piskor 206
Tel: (315) 229 – 5744
Class times: MW 8:50 AM-10:20 PM
Class Room: Richardson 202
Office Hours: MW 12:30 – 1:30 PM

*Note: The most reliable way to contact me is by e-mail. Unless I am traveling, I will always respond to e-mails within twenty-four hours.

Class Description:

This course is an introduction to the history of Islam and of the Middle East as well as to some of the ways in which historians have approached that history. No previous knowledge or background in Islam or Middle Eastern history is required or expected.

The course is divided into two, uneven, sections. In the first section, we will address the roots of “the Islamic Tradition” and consider the question of how historians study religious traditions. In the second half of the course, we will focus more fully on the ways in which Islam has become the focus of debate, examining such issues as the veiling question, the relationship between Islam and modernity, and various iterations of political Islam.

Assignments:
Map Quiz 5%
Class engagement and participation: 10%
Short essay (Satrapi) 5%
Poster Presentation 15%
Paper Proposal 5%
Revised Proposal and Bibliography 5%
Final Paper 15%
In-class Midterm: 15%
Take-home Final 25%
Grading Scale used for all course work:

4.00 = 94-100  
3.75 = 91-93  
3.50 = 88-90  
3.25 = 85-87  
3.00 = 82-84  
2.75 = 79-81  
2.50 = 76-78  
2.25 = 72-75  
2.00 = 69-71  
1.75 = 66-68  
1.50 = 63-65  
1.25 = 60-62  
0.00 = 0-59

Required Texts

Rampolla (reference work)  
Satrapi, *Embroideries*  
*Additional readings available online or on Sakai*

Basic reading expectations: On average you can expect to have approximately 50 pages of reading assigned per week. Some weeks will be less; others will be more. It is incumbent upon you to have read, thought about, and be prepared to intelligently discuss these readings in advance of class. Also: please bring a hard copy of the reading to class for discussion.

A special note on studying the history of other cultures:

I am well aware that the study of foreign cultures can initially be very intimidating: new vocabulary, difficult to remember names, a historical narrative filled with events that leave you few handles to grab onto as you learn new content. Some of you may come with considerably more background than others. I recognize that this is a challenge and so should you. But it is also a process that can be worked through and you can expect to become increasingly comfortable as the semester continues. Don’t be afraid to ask or challenge: it is when you take charge of your education that the real university experience begins.

All that being said, the “intimidation factor” of studying a new culture will diminish as we move forward. Dive in, expect to be a little confused at first, and things will slowly take shape.

It is common for students to struggle with initial assignments in this class. For this reason, there will be graded work throughout the semester and, in general, graded work at the end of the semester counts for more than graded work at the beginning. The expectation is that you will be developing skills in writing and analysis over the course of the semester. Should you encounter
difficulties, please make an appointment to meet with the instructor immediately. *Developing your writing skills is a priority.*

You are welcome to discuss any aspect of the writing process for any assignment (including the midterm and final) with the professor in advance of the due date. I am happy to look at drafts, help with outlines, or check footnotes. Nonetheless, it is incumbent on you to seek out the help. Also please consider availing yourself of the Word Studio as you prepare your written work.

**Participation and attendance:**

As you will note from the grading breakdown, participation is a significant component of your final grade for the class. It is not an automatic A. Participation does not mean the same thing as attendance, though, obviously, you must attend in order to participate.

The following are some of the basic elements that I use to assess participation grades:

- Regular attendance (for details, see below)
- Is the student attentive to the professor and other students?
- Has the student come to class prepared? Has he or she read and thought about the assigned readings?
- Does the student offer ideas and ask questions on a regular basis?
- Does the student participate actively in small group exercises?

In short, your participation grade boils down to two basic ideas: are you actively engaged in your own education in class? Are you working to contribute to the overall educational experience of the class for everyone? If you are doing this every day, you are going to do well on your participation grade and, I suspect, will be getting a lot out of the class itself.

*The nitty-gritty of absences:* You are expected to miss no more than three class sessions over the course of the semester. These three absences include medical and personal emergencies (deaths in the family, colds, flu, etc.). If you miss more than three class sessions, your participation grade will be penalized .25 for every additional day that you miss (i.e., a 4.0 would be become a 3.75 after one additional absence, a 3.5 after two, etc.).

**Late assignments:**

Unless noted elsewhere, late papers will receive a .5 penalty for every day they are late. Thus, a 4.0 will receive a 3.5 if turned in one day late, a 3.0 if turned in two days late, etc. Materials not submitted within three days of the assigned due date will not be accepted and receive a zero.

**Written work:** All writing for this class will be in 12 point Times New Roman Font, double-spaced, with no right justification, and 1” margins. Citations will be in *Chicago Manual of Style* Format. Essays should include title pages and bibliographies. Pages will be numbered and stapled. Rampolla gives you models for citation or you can find them online at [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html). Failure to follow formatting guidelines will result in a lower grade.
Make-ups of in-class Exams or Quizzes

Make-ups exams or quizzes will only be offered in the case of documented medical or personal emergencies and at the professor’s discretion. Please note that family holidays and wanting to leave campus early are not considered “emergencies.” Make your travel plans accordingly.

A note on PowerPoint: I often use PowerPoint presentations to accompany the lecture and to facilitate discussion. For a variety of reasons, I do not post these presentations to Sakai. If you find that I am going too quickly for you to take down all information, please feel free to either ask me to slow down or ask me to reshow the slide at the end of class. I am always happy to do so. However, I will not post PowerPoints nor will I e-mail them to you.

Extra credit: Each semester, St. Lawrence University holds events or hosts guest speakers related to the Middle East or Islam. As a rule, I allow students to attend these events and present their findings to the class for a (very) small amount of extra credit. If you hear of an event on campus that I have somehow missed, please let me know in advance so that I can inform the class.

Contacting Me

In addition to my regularly scheduled office hours, I often work in my office, so it is generally easy to schedule a mutually convenient time to meet and discuss questions you might be having in class. Just send me an e-mail letting me know when you would like to meet and we’ll find a convenient time. Please do not just “drop by.” Outside of the office, it is easiest to contact me by e-mail, which I check often. Unless I am travelling or expect to respond to a question in class, I will always respond to e-mails within twenty-four hours of receiving them. I seldom check my voice mail and so this is a less effective way of contacting me. Should you decide to leave a voice mail, please follow up with an e-mail to make sure I get the message.

Cell phones and laptops:

Cell phones: I hate them. Be sure you turn yours off before class begins.

Laptops are not allowed in class. Please turn yours off before class begins.

This syllabus:

Every semester turns out a little differently than planned. Assignments may take less or more time to discuss than originally envisioned (usually more!). Conferences or other presentations may require me to rearrange things slightly. This syllabus will likely be revised over the course of the semester. Changes will be announced in class and, if changes become difficult to follow, a revised syllabus will be issued.
A final word on work-load:

Yes, it is a lot of work. Welcome to university.

**Class Schedule**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, August 26</td>
<td>First Day: Introductions and Orientation</td>
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<td>Monday, August 31</td>
<td>What do Muslims Think?</td>
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<td>*Zayed Yasin, “My American Jihad”</td>
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<td>*Polling Data</td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 2</td>
<td>The Middle East: An Orientation</td>
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<td>Monday, September 7</td>
<td>Satrapi</td>
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<td><strong>Satrapi Short Essay Draft</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 9</td>
<td>A Clash of Civilizations?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?,”</td>
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<td>*Foreign Affairs, 1993.</td>
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<td><strong>Satrapi Paper Final</strong></td>
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<td>Monday, September 14</td>
<td>Islam and Muhammad</td>
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<td>*Egger, <em>A History of the Muslim World</em>, 4-31</td>
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<td><strong>Map Quiz</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 16</td>
<td>After Muhammad</td>
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<td>“How to choose a paper topic”</td>
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<td>Monday, September 21</td>
<td><strong>Individual Meetings with Professor</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 24</td>
<td>Shias and Sunnis</td>
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<td><strong>Receive Midterm Exam Prompts</strong></td>
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<td>Monday, September 28</td>
<td>Jihad</td>
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<td>*Heck</td>
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<td><strong>Paper Proposal Due</strong></td>
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<td>Wednesday, September 30</td>
<td>Women in Early Islam</td>
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<td>*Leila Ahmad</td>
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<td>Monday, October 5</td>
<td>Slavery in Islam</td>
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<td>*Kristina Richardson, “Singing Slave Girls”</td>
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Wednesday, October 8   Losing Iraq
 *Frontline: Losing Iraq

Monday, October 13   MIDTERM

Thursday, October 15 – Sunday, October 18: No Class – Mid-Semester Break

Monday, October 19   What is Modern?
The Early Modern
 Revised Proposal and Bibliography Due

Wednesday, October 23   What is Modern?
The Late Modern

Monday, October 28   The Middle East in An Age of Nationalism
Gelvin Readings
Poster Presentation Discussion: Narratives in Communication

Wednesday, October 30   The Middle East in an Age of Authoritarianism
*King, Sustaining Authoritarianism

Monday, November 2   The Iranian Revolution in Perspective
*Abrahamian

Wednesday, November 4   The New Wave of Political Islam
*Khoury

Monday, November 9   Chic or Sheikh: Making Sense of Radicalism
*Kurzman Selections

Wednesday, November 11   Poster presentations

Monday, November 16:   Poster Presentations

Wednesday, November 18   Poster Presentations

November 23 – November 29   Thanksgiving Recess

Monday, November 30   The Syrian Civil War and ISIS
*Selections, POMEPS The Political Science of the Syrian Civil War
*McCants reading
Wednesday, December 2       Turkey’s AKP
                           *Jenny White, Muslim Nationalism and the New Turks
                           selections
                           Discussion of Paper and Exam

Monday, December 7         Israel and the Middle East
                           *Gelvin Reading

Wednesday, December 9      Last Day of Class: Conclusions and Considerations

Final Draft of Paper is Due at 5 PM on Friday December, 11

Final Exam due during regularly scheduled exam time in my office (Piskor 206)

**Additional Information**

**Academic Honesty:**

**History Department Common Statement on Academic Integrity**

Policies and sources on academic integrity

All scholarly endeavor builds on the work of others in the context of the community of learners of which both faculty and students are a part. The integrity of this community can be maintained only by the full, honest, and appropriate acknowledgement of the sources of our data and ideas. The History Department will not tolerate academic dishonesty, including plagiarism on papers, cheating on quizzes and exams, and turning in work you have already submitted in another class. The Department will uphold SLU’s policy on this.


“All students at St. Lawrence University are bound by honor to maintain the highest level of academic integrity. By virtue of membership in the St. Lawrence community, every student accepts the responsibility to know the rules of academic honesty, to abide by them at all times, and to encourage all others to do the same.”

“**Plagiarism:** Presenting as one’s own work the work of another person—words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation—without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference.”

“Responsibility for avoiding behavior or situations from which academic dishonesty may be inferred rests entirely with the students. Claims of ignorance, unintentional error, and academic or personal pressure are not excuses for academic dishonesty. Students should be sure to learn from faculty what is expected as their own work and how the work of other people should be acknowledged. Instructors are expected to maintain conditions which promote academic honesty.”
Further sources of information
We expect all of our students to familiarize themselves with the following:
• Your course syllabus and your professor’s stated expectations on class assignments.
• The full SLU policy on “Academic Integrity Procedures” (the basis of the Academic Honor Card that you signed in FYP), described in the SLU Student Handbook (http://www.stlawu.edu/resource/student-handbook)

For more information on plagiarism, see Mary Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History, 8th ed., chapter 6: “Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Avoid It.”

If, after reviewing these guidelines, you are still uncertain about anything or have questions, be sure to ask them before you turn in written assignments.

Policies on academic dishonesty
If your professor encounters a suspicious paper or exam, “s/he has the obligation to call the offending student(s) to account” (SLU Student Handbook, 63). Plagiarism cases brought before the Academic Honor Council have resulted in sanctions ranging from failure on the assignment, to failure of the course, to suspension from the University.

A final caveat: Do not underestimate your professors’ ability to detect plagiarism, or our willingness to have suspicious papers and exams investigated. If you can find it on the Web, so can we. Please don’t risk it.

Disability and Accessibility Services Office (DASO)
If you have a disability and need accommodations please be sure to contact the Disability and Accessibility Services Office right away so they can help you get the accommodations you require at: http://www.stlawu.edu/disability-and-accessibility-services. If you will need to use any accommodations in this class, please talk with me early so you can have the best possible experience this semester. Although not required, I would like to know of any accommodations that are needed at least 10 days before a quiz or test, so please see me soon.

Academic Support
This office offers opportunities to learn about time management, critical reading skills, strategies for large assignments, note-taking, academic planning, and test preparation. We also administer the early warning grading system, organize the autumn study skills workshop series, and help students with academic problem-solving. Please contact Matt McCluskey, mmccluskey@stlawu.edu or TBA, to make an appointment.

Coordinator of Academic Support: Matt McCluskey, Whitman Annex 16, mmccluskey@stlawu.edu 229-5678
Coordinator of Academic Development: TBA, Whitman Annex 1, TBA, 229-5604 or 229-5388