PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY
SOC 410/510: ISLAM AND SOCIETY (4 credits)
Summer 2013
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this class is to provide you with an essential background to better understand the world of Islam and Muslim population. By analyzing Islam both in theory and in practice, we will examine Islam as a way of life in a socio-cultural context and study the ways by which this religion affects the individual, family, and social life in various Islamic societies.

Topics such as the emergence and development of Muslim community (ummah), variety of Muslim beliefs and practices (sufism, shi‘ism, etc.), formation and development of Islamic law (shari‘ah), tensions between tradition and modernity (changes in the status of women, punishment laws, etc.), contemporary Islamic resurgence, and other relevant topics will be discussed in class. We will also examine the current crisis in the Middle East from an Islamic point of view.

By the end of the term, you will have a better knowledge of Islam both as a spiritual faith and as a way of life for over a billion Muslims around the world, and you will have an informed understanding of the religio-social roots of contemporary developments in Islamic world.

REQUIRED READINGS


RECOMMENDED READINGS


1. ACCESS TO COMPUTER WITH INTERNET CONNECTIONS
To take this course you will need to have access to a computer with Internet connections, which can allow you to connect to our class site. Concerning a suitable web browser, I have had better experiences with Google Chrome than with Explorer.

2. AVAILABILITY OF READING MATERIALS AND DOCUMENTARIES
Textbooks for the course are available through PSU bookstore. You need your required textbooks in hand by the first day of the term in order to do your weekly assignments. It is your responsibility to purchase your textbook on time. Lack of access to the textbook cannot be used as an excuse for not doing the weekly assignments.

3. MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS
You are expected to read the assigned weekly material and have a reasonable understanding of issues discussed by your textbooks. Your comprehension of reading materials will be tested through weekly quizzes and critical thinking essays. To satisfy the course requirements, you need to complete 4 weekly quizzes and respond to 4 weekly critical thinking questions during the term. Due dates for assignments are given under Weekly Readings and Learning Activities below. Late assignments will not be accepted.

A. WEEKLY CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS: To better understand the issues discussed by your text you will write four critical thinking essays throughout the term, and for each critical thinking assignment you will respond to at least two other students' essays. Your critical thinking essays and your responses will account for 100 points or 1/3 of your total points for the course. Each essay will worth 25 points (15 for your own posted essay and the remaining 10 points for responding to at least two other essays posted by your fellow students.) Essays should be at least 750 words and have to be submitted
before the assigned deadlines. Your essays should display your comprehension of concepts covered by your textbook, which are related to your essay. In addition to your textbook you need to use at least two outside academic sources (articles from journals, Internet sites, book chapters, etc.)

You need to clearly cite the information for your outside sources (i.e. author, publication date, article name, journal name, Internet site, etc. respectively) at bottom of your posted essay. Failing to cite the above information will result in point deductions from your assignment. You need to post your essays on our Discussion page under their assigned spaces. Please preview your essays for clarity before posting them for others to see. There should be at least one space between your consequent paragraphs. Make sure your essay is not all bumped together in one bunch without spaces between your paragraphs or references. Follow the APA writing style for more clarity.

For example for posting your Critical Thinking Essay

1. Click on "Discussions" (at the top of the page);

2. Scroll down and click on "Critical Thinking Essay Question # 1." Read the given question carefully;

3. Click on "Compose." On the "Subject" box and write your name, the name that you want to pick for your essay or simply type CTE 1 (make sure your name is always included in the subject box);

4. In the "Message" box type your essay or copy and paste it from another program that you might have used to write your essay;

5. Click on "Preview" (the small icon on the lower left of message box) to see if your essay is readable and there is one space between your consequent paragraphs. Also check for possible spelling and grammatical errors. Finally make sure you have cited your references correctly according to the rules indicated above;

6. Click on "Post" (on the lower right corner of the page) when you are happy with your essay;

7. After posting your essay go back to the Discussion page and make sure your essay has been posted properly.

Note: Do not post your essay as an attachment. Attached essays are not visible in instructor's grading site, so I will not accept attached essays. You can type your essay using Word or another program and then copy and paste it to our
Discussion Board. This way you can make sure your essay is spell-checked and ready to go. Make sure to post your essay before the deadline. *Late essays will not be accepted.*

**Comments/Responses:** As I indicated above you also need to read the essays by other students and respond (i.e., make comments) to at least two other essays for each assignment. Your responses/comments should be substantial in content and express your understanding of issues in hand (They should go beyond simply complementing the person for their essays.) your comments should be at least 100 words each. For posting your comments simply click on "Reply" and type your comments. Always start your comments by addressing the person by name, so there is no confusion about knowing whose article you are commenting on.

**Grading Criteria for your 750-word Critical Thinking Essay and Responses:**

1. Preview them for clarity and readability before posting,
2. Make sure that there is one space between consequent paragraphs,
3. Spell-check your essay and correct your grammar,
4. Focus on the assigned topic and avoid going off on tangents,
5. Use your required text plus at least two outside sources,
6. Cite your references clearly, indicating the author(s') name(s), publication date, article's title, and the source respectively (if your article does not include author's name, either avoid that article or use it as an additional one to the two required references. You need to have at least two outside sources with complete citations including authors' names.)
7. Assignments without proper citations will lose points,
8. **Do not use “Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia”** as one of your two required outside sources. Also any other sources without author or article title will not be accepted.
   Do not trust the content of any article without a listed author. Make sure to find articles with listed authors and dates of publication,
9. Any sign of plagiarism will result in zero grades,
10. Responding to at least two other students' postings with substantial arguments of minimum of 100 words.

**B. WEEKLY QUizzES:** There will be a total of four quizzes testing your comprehension of the reading material. There will be one quiz per week for
four weeks. Quizzes are mainly multiple choice questions. Each week's quiz will cover material from the readings assigned for that particular week. Quizzes will worth 200 points (50 points for each quiz) or 2/3 of your total 300 points for the course.

To take your quiz 1:

1. Click on "Quizzes" under Student Course Tolls to the right of your Course Home page;
2. Click on "Quiz 1" under "Current Quizzes";
3. Click on "Start Quiz" on the top right and then when asked for confirmation click on "OK";
4. Select the correct answer for each question and click the "Save" box (Note: there is only one correct answer for each question);
5. When you finish answering all the questions click on "Save All Responses" box at the bottom of the test;
6. When you are ready to submit your quiz click on "Go to Submit Quiz" at lower right corner of the page;
7. When you see the "Quiz Submission Confirmation" page click on "Submit Quiz" and then confirm it by clicking on "Yes"
8. Now, you can see your score and the right answers for all the quiz questions.

Note: Please make sure to submit your quizzes before the assigned deadlines. Quizzes will automatically disappear after their deadlines and late quizzes will not be accepted.

4. GRADING CRITERIA
There are a total of 300 possible points with 200 points belonging to weekly quizzes and 100 points belonging to weekly critical thinking essays. If you have taken this course as pass/no pass, in order to pass the course you need to make the minimum points required for C grade. Grading is based on the following percentages:

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5. ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

Quizzes will become available on Thursday of each week and will remain available until their due date which is the following Sunday before midnight (Of course the first week quiz appears on the first day of the term and is due to Sunday of the same week.) So each assignment (with the exception of week 1) will remain available for a total of 10 days and will give you plenty of time to complete the assignment. This will be the case until the end of the term. Critical thinking essays are due Fridays and responses to other students' essays are due Sundays before midnight. There is NO time limit for these assignments. However, pay close attention to deadlines. Quizzes disappear exactly on their assigned deadline. You should not wait until the last moment to take your quizzes because then if you encounter computer or technical problems you might not be able to find any help. I will not accept computer or other technical problems as excuses for not taking your quizzes on time.

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<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Essay 1</td>
<td>June 28</td>
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6. WEEKLY READINGS AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

WEEK 1 (June 24-30)

a. Read: Armstrong (chapter 1,2,3,4); Kheirabadi (chapters 1,2,3,4,7, and 9); and Cleary (pages 1-70);
   b. Watch the documentary: Islam: Empire of Faith: parts 1, 2, and 3;
   c. Complete the quiz 1 fifty questions;
   d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 1, and make comments on at least two other students’ essays.

WEEK 2 (July 1-9)

a. Read: Armstrong (chapter 5); Kheirabadi (chapters 5, 6, 8, and 10); Cleary (pages 71-131); and Esposito (Introduction plus chapters 1 and 2);
   b. Watch the documentary: Inside Mecca and others listed on your Discussion Board;
   c. Complete the quiz 2 fifty questions;
   d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 2, and make comments on at least two other students’ essays.

WEEK 3 (July 8-14)

a. Read: Esposito (chapter 3 and 4);
   b. Watch the documentaries listed on your Discussion Board;
   c. Complete the quiz 3 fifty questions;
d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 3, and make comments on at least two other students’ essays.

WEEK 4 (July 15-21)

a. Read: Esposito (chapter 5);
b. Watch the documentaries listed on your Discussion Board;
c. Complete the quiz 4 fifty questions;
d. Post your Critical Thinking Essay 4, and make comments on at least two other students’ essays.

7. EXTRA CREDIT OPTION:

1. Article Reviews: You can earn up to 30 extra credits by selecting up to 10 articles from your selected academic journals. Each review should be between 700 to 1000 words. Your reviews should overview and analyze the content of the reviewed articles and express your own views on issues discussed. Each review when done properly would worth 3 points. You can do as many as 10 article reviews for a total of 30 points. You need to post your reviews under Article/Book Reviews for Possible Extra Credits in our Discussion Board. I will encourage you to read the reviews posted by your fellow students and comment on their contents. This way we can generate a healthy class discussion with regard to various geographic topics.

Note: You need to reveal the exact name of the article, name of the author(s), date of publication, and the source (printed or web). You can have the citations either at the top or bottom of the page wherever you prefer. Article reviews without revealing sources will not be graded.

2. Book Reviews: Instead of article reviews you can choose two of your recommended books (listed above in your syllabus) and write reviews about them. For each book you choose write a 3000 word review discussing the main arguments presented by the author(s) and compare and contrast them with your required books. Each review when done properly would worth 15 points. You can review two books for a total of 30 points. You have also a choice of reviewing one book and five articles for a total of 30 points. Please post your reviews under the assigned place using our class site. The last day to post your reviews is July 21.

8. YOUR INSTRUCTOR
I would like to welcome you all to my class. I am an Iranian American by
ethnicity, and have lived in the US since 1976, three years in Texas and the rest of it in Eugene and Portland. My background is in both science and social science, and I teach both. I have an M.S. in Agricultural Mechanization from Texas A & I (now merged with Texas A & M) University, and M.A. and Ph.D. in geography from the University of Oregon and have taught for PSU since 1989. I believe that critical thinking is an essential part of education and I will provide my students with plenty of chances to do just that. My classes are usually interactive and students have plenty of opportunities to discuss their ideas and reading assignments in a comfortable setting. For a more effective teaching, in addition to written material, I often utilize the audio-visual equipment to enhance my students' understanding of issues covered by the course. My regional specialty and research area is the Middle East (Southwest Asia and North Africa). I am mainly interested in issues of development in developing countries. Sustainable development, international relations, world political economy, and spirituality and religion are among my favorite topics. I have written several books and various articles dealing with Islam, Middle East, and spirituality.

9. COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES
Our communication is mainly through our class site. I am usually available every day after 4 pm and check my mails once a day. If you have any questions just send me a mail. Usually you'll get a response from me within 48 hours.

10. CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM
Any type of cheating and plagiarism will lead to zero point, and if repeated you may fail the course. Your essays and other writings have to be your own words and ideas. Whenever you use other people's ideas you need to give them the due credit and reveal your sources at the bottom of your essay. Any sentence which is borrowed from another writer should be in quotation marks. Please see the following source for ways to avoid accidental/intentional plagiarism: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html