

WM 515 MUSLIM FAITH & PRACTICE

Canadian Theological Seminary

First Semester 2003-04

Instructors: Mr. Eric de Bruyn & Mr. Steve Zub

Course Objectives

The course is designed so that the student will gain a solid introductory grounding in the basics of Islamic faith, practice and history. Accordingly, the course will include the following major topics.

1. The life, teachings and significance of Muhammad both in his lifetime and throughout history until the present
2. Scripture (the *Qur'an*) and Tradition (the *hadith*) in Islam
3. A brief treatment of the history of Islam in its two major periods:
 - a) from the death of Muhammad (632) to the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate (1258)
 - b) from 1258 to the present
4. A discussion of the major theological parties/groups within Islam with respect to origins and also the similarities and the distinctives of each from the core of Islam
 - a) the Sunnis
 - b) the Shi'ites
 - c) the Kharijites
 - d) the Sufis
5. The basic elements in Muslim practice
6. The basic elements in Muslim belief
7. The pivotal role played by law (the *Shari'a*) within Islam

Course Texts

Kenneth Cragg (translator and editor). *Readings in the Qur'an* London: Collins, 1993. (The student will utilize photocopies of the relevant sections provided at the Library circulation desk).

Frederick M. Denny. *An Introduction to Islam* (2nd edition) New York: Macmillan, 1994.

Course Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation. In order to pass the course a student must attend at least 80% of the lectures

2. A careful reading of the course texts (see p. 3 for the schedule of readings)
3. Two research papers integrating material from Cragg with the relevant articles from the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition (EI2):
 - a) each paper will be 7-10 pages in length and follow an acceptable scholarly format with respect to documentation.
 - b) papers with poor spelling, grammar, and punctuation will be heavily penalized, perhaps as much as a full letter grade (eg., a "B+" paper may be reduced to a "C+").
 - c) papers that are late will be penalized one grade for every day late. Thus, a "B-" assignment one day late would receive a "C+".
 - d) assignments are due at **class time**.
 - e) assignments will not be accepted more than one week late
 - f) no extensions will be granted unless the student first consults with the instructor **48 hours before the due date**
4. Soul Integration: A practical spiritual formation exercise where the student will bring that experience back into the classroom for theological reflection.
 - Visit a local Muslim Mosque and Imam
 - Interview/dialogue with the Muslim leader in Calgary
 - Listening & discerning exercise only not debate
 - Write up your impressions and insights of this experience in light of what you are learning in the class.
 - Write up your questions ahead of time...collaborate with fellow students prior to our visit which will take place sometime in late October or early November.
5. A Final Examination, to be held during Final Exam week

Determination of the Final Grade

1st paper (due October 2)	20%
2nd paper (due November 4)	20%
Readings (due monthly)	10%
Soul Integration	10%
Final Examination	40%

All assignments/exams must be handed in in order to receive credit for the course

Paper #1

1. Using the relevant pages in Cragg, study what the Qur'an has to say about two major figures

in Biblical history: Abraham = *Ibrahim* (see the related articles on Isaac = *Ishak* and Ishmael = *Isma'il*) and Moses (*Musa*)

2. Next, consult the articles devoted to each one in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition. Using Cragg's passages as your compass, what does each article have to say about the same material? Taking both the Qur'anic accounts and the encyclopedia articles together, how does this compare with the Biblical record? (Be sure to note discrepancies in the major stories).
3. Your paper should contain both an adequate Introduction, Conclusion and also a Bibliography.

Paper #2

1. What does the Qur'an teach about '*Isa*' (Jesus) and *Maryam* (Mary)
2. Consult the relevant sections of Cragg being sure to make note of the major features of the Qur'an's account
3. Then consult the articles in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd edition. Note what major scholars have to say about the Islamic teaching on both Jesus and Mary. Again, note the main discrepancies between Biblical and Qur'anic accounts
4. Finally, as in your first paper, use the same basic format.

Readings Schedule

The student will read the text—Denny—in segments as follows:

1. September 25, pp. 1-104
2. October 30, pp. 107-214
3. November 27, pp. 219-317
4. December 9, pp. 321-65