



WM 645-3

The Muslims and Jesus: Who do they say He is?

Semester: Spring 2015

Dates: May 4-8, 2015

Days: Mon - Fri

Room: TBA

Lab – day: N/A

Lab–Room: N/A

Number of credits: 3

Prerequisite:
none

Instructor: Wesley A. Thiessen, PhD

Email: wthiessen@ambrose.edu

Phone: none

Office: N/A

Office hours: none

Course Description:

“We believe in their prophets, why don’t they believe in ours?” These words are often spoken by Muslims of Christians. Yes, Muslims do believe in Jesus, but what exactly is it that they believe about him? This course will explore orthodox Muslim beliefs about Jesus, based on what is found in the Qur’an, and also in some traditional sayings of Muhammad. Passages in the Qur’an will be compared with biblical sources, seeking to understand not only what may differ between the two, but also to see what is in common. Also presented will be beliefs concerning Jesus commonly held by modern day Muslims not necessarily based in orthodox teaching.

Further Course Information:

In order to equip students to best understand the material to be presented, a brief introductory background will be provided on the basic background to Muslim belief and practice. No specific background or prerequisites in Islamics are required for the course.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

It is the aim of the course that students acquire the following skills:

1. The student will acquire an understanding of the basic tenets

Important Dates:

First day of classes: May 4, 2015

Registration revision period: 4:00PM of the first day of classes

Last day to request revised examination: May 8, 2015

Last day to withdraw from course: 4:00 PM on the first day of class

Last day to apply for time extension for coursework: One week after the course ends

Last day of classes: May 8, 2015

Final Exam: take home

Time: n/a

Room: n/a

and beliefs of Islam as well as the sources for traditional views found within orthodox interpretations.

2. The student will gain a clear understanding of the orthodox Muslim views of the person of Jesus, son of Mary.
3. The student will have opportunity to compare Qur'anic passages of Jesus, as well as traditional sayings about Jesus found in Islam with those found in the Old and New Testaments.
4. The student will become equipped to engage in meaningful conversation with Muslims concerning the similarities and differences in viewpoints concerning the person of Jesus found within Islam and Christianity.

Outline:

The following are main themes which will be explored in the course, however they will be presented in various ways and means, not necessarily following a linear progression.

I. Muslim Beliefs and Sources of Islam

A. Qur'ān

B. *Ḥadīth*

II. Understanding Jesus from a Middle Eastern Perspective

III. Qur'anic Passages concerning Jesus in comparison with Biblical Text

IV. *Hadith* concerning Jesus in comparison with Biblical Text

Requirements:

1. An in-class exercise of a *ḥadīth*/gospel comparative analysis of a single *ḥadīth* and gospel passage. *Ḥadīth* passages can be found in the course text. Instructions for this exercise will be provided in-class during the course.
2. A series of 5 comparisons of *aḥadīth* and gospel passages, similar to that completed as an exercise in class. These will be due one week following the completion of the class.
3. A comparative analysis of two Qur'anic passages and a corresponding passage of scripture. Instructions for this exercise will be provided during the course. This will be due two weeks following the completion of the class.
4. Participation in a roleplay or in-class presentation of Muslim beliefs. The student will choose to either present something in class (contact with the instructor prior to the course will help determine this) or participate in a roleplay on the last day of the course. Following registration in the course, the student will be contacted to determine choice for this component.
5. Participation in class at the end of each day journaling one's experience of the learning of that day. Specific questions which may help to direct a student's thoughts include: 1) What did I learn or encounter today that made a significant impact on me/surprised me? 2) What would you like to know more about? 3) What did you encounter today about which you are still struggling/not convinced? 4) How could apply what you have learned today?
6. Book Review - Students may choose one of the following three books in order to complete a book review:

Fatoohi, Louay. *Jesus the Muslim Prophet: History speaks of a human Messiah not a divine Christ*. Birmingham: Luna Plena, 2010. (not available locally; \$9.99 on Amazon)

Lawson, Todd. *The Crucifixion and the Qur'an: A study in the history of Muslim thought*. Oxford: OneWorld, 2013. (at Ambrose; BP134 .J37 L39 2009)

Siddiqui, Mona. *Christians, Muslims and Jesus*. New Haven, CT: Yale University press, 2013. (located at U of C)

This 1500-word review is composed of the following:

- i. a description of the thesis/purpose of the book and its relationship to the title and subtitle (200 words).
- ii. a summary including how the book is organized (800 words).
- iii. a discussion of what you found particularly helpful and *why* (500 words). You can also mention any weaknesses here as well, but substantiate them.

The book report must be completed prior to beginning on the final exam.

The book report will be due on June 8, 2015.

7. Final exam - This exam will be emailed to the student following the submission of the final assignment. It will be open book and any resources may be used in order to complete it. Students will be expected to provide a comparative analysis of two selected passages. Students will need to complete all assignments prior to beginning with the final exam. As this will be an open book exam, it is expected that all writing will be free of spelling and grammatical errors and that the exam will be written in a coherent and cohesive manner. This will be due on June 15, 2015.

Submission of Assignments:

All assignments and the final exam should be submitted via the Moodle interface.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend each day of week module classes. Given that this is a module course, it is extremely important that you attend all of the class time. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your course grade.

Evaluation:

- a. in-class *ḥadīth* comparative analysis - 5%
- b. after class *aḥadīth* comparative analyses - 15%
- c. Qur'anic/Gospel passage comparative analyses - (2 x 10% each) 20%
- d. roleplay/presentation - 10%
- e. journaling and class participation - 10%
- f. book review - 15%
- g. final exam - 25%

Grade Summary:

The available letters for course grades are as follows:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
A+	Excellent
A	
A-	
B+	Good
B	
B-	
C+	Satisfactory
C	
C-	
D+	Minimal Pass
D	
F	Failure

If you will be using percentages, please provide a scale which indicates how percentages in your class will be translated to letter grades. These equivalencies are at the discretion of the instructor, but **MUST** be stated in the syllabus. Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform College-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously. Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are no longer mailed out.

Textbooks:

The Arabic-English Reference Qur'an: The First Translation of the Qur'an from the Original Arabic into Modern English with References to the Tawrah, Zabur, and Injil. (available through referencequran.com)

Khalidi, Tarif. *The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and stories in Islamic literature.* Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 2001. (other editions acceptable)

Policies:

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (Cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, it is highly recommended that they forward all messages from the Ambrose account to the other account.

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty. These courses will not appear on the student's transcript. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a Request to Withdraw from a Course by the **Withdrawal Deadline**, please consult the List of Important Dates. Withdrawal from courses after the Registration Revision period will not be eligible for tuition refund. A grade of "W" will appear on the student's transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a **Revised Examination** Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "**Course Extension**" from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date, please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control".

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar in writing within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal to review final grades. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of

each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.