This course will provide an introduction to Islam as a faith and civilization. Topics will include: the life and times of Prophet Muhammad; key themes in the Qur’an, the sacred scripture of Islam; the role of sacred memory (Sunnah) and divine law (Shariah) in everyday life; the ritual and devotional practices in Islam; the three major streams of interpretation within the world of Islam – Sunni, Shi'a and Sufi; Calligraphy as Sacred Art; and the position of Muslim women in scripture and society. The course uses the Socratic method in the classroom and interactive assignments on blackboard. We (students and instructor) will try to identify and create opportunities to meet Muslims on campus and the local mosque.

Course goals:

- To understand the basic beliefs, practices and historical development of Islam
- To become familiar with the diversity of views within the Islamic community
- To think critically about the role of religion in shaping culture and vice versa
- To acquire sufficient information about the faith of Islam to converse intelligently
- To improve reading, writing and analytical skills through course assignments

Required texts:

- The Essential Rumi, translations by Coleman Barks with John Moyne (HarperSanFrancisco: 1997)

Academic Integrity:

Syracuse University believes that promoting academic honesty is the responsibility of everyone in the Syracuse University community. We expect all students enrolled in Syracuse University programs to adhere to standards of academic integrity. All cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the relevant Dean in the home College or School for that given course. Penalties will be dependent upon the seriousness of the infraction, and can be appealed to the relevant College/School Academic Integrity Committee.

Disability:

Syracuse University is committed to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Our community values diversity and seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunities for all students. Students seeking disability-related services must contact the The Office of Disability Services at Syracuse University, Room 309, 804 University Avenue, Syracuse, New York 13244-2330.

My short version:

The penalty of plagiarism is an F grade. It’s simple: don’t copy, don’t filch, if you cite, give full credit. Essentially, plagiarism is a combination of stealing and lying. Don’t do it. To learn more: http://academicintegrity.syr.edu.

If you have a disability, it is important for you to register with the Office of Disability Services (315-443-4498). We would like to make every effort to support you and provide a positive learning environment. Please get an Authorization letter from ODS.

Texting:

If you are texting, twittering, e-mailing, surfing etc, you are not paying attention. You will distract me and nearby students. My policy is simple: I will request you to leave and count you as absent. If you want to use a laptop to take notes, you need my permission; and you must e-mail your notes to me promptly at the end of class.

Evaluation:
Attendance and Participation is mandatory 15%
Medical and family emergencies are excused but proper evidence in the form of a letter is required. Every class missed incurs a penalty of -2%.

Two Short Assignments 20%

a) A brief two-page report of a site-visit to the mosque and / or interviews of at least three Muslims from different backgrounds (race, gender, Shia or Sunni etc.) You will be given more details to assist you with this assignment. Due Thursday Oct 8, 2010

b) For this assignment, you will investigate information available online on Islam on specific topics and assess the sources you are able to find. I will give you a list of topics. You will submit a two-page report including links. Due Thursday Nov 5, 2010

Weekly Reflection Papers on Blackboard 30%
The philosophy behind this assignment is as follows:
You don’t know what you think you know until you’ve written it.
You may need to read that sentence a few times.

For this assignment you will write a short two to three paragraph (~250 words) reflection paper on the assigned readings for the week. Identify one paragraph or concept or event that grabs your attention and discuss it and make an attempt to understand it. Your Reflection Paper must be posted on Blackboard by Monday at noon.

You will then read one of your fellow student’s reflection paper and respond to the issues that it raises. You must offer a substantive response. That means you will be building upon and adding to the other student’s reflection. You may be able to connect your ideas. The Response paper must be posted on Blackboard by Thursday at noon.

At the end of the semester, for your final Reflection Paper, you will review the reflections you have written over the semester, assess your experience, and identify your best papers. Due Dec 3, 2010

The critical requirement is that a) the papers are submitted on time (late ones will not be accepted), and b) they specifically address the readings. Please note, this is not a “journal” but a serious, academic engagement with the reading. The grade for this is a Pass / Fail. In other words, you begin with 30%.

Take-home exam 35%
The Take-home exam will be on the materials covered in the course including readings, class lectures and assignments. Your focus will be on clarity of ideas, writing skills, and interpretation of subject material. You will be provided with a list of questions a week before the Take-home is due. Due Mon Dec 13, 2010
Tentative Schedule:

Note: The schedule, readings and events are subject to slight changes. Pay attention to announcements in class and check Blackboard regularly.

**The Islamic World Today**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1  | Aug 30/Sep 1 | Introduction to Course  
| 2  | Sept 6   | Labor Day – No Class                                                  |                                                                                 |
|    | Sept 8   | Islamophobia and Orientalism                                         | Diversity: Mapping the *worlds* of Islam  
T.J.Winter and John A.Williams, *Understanding Islam and the Muslims* (all) |

**The Rise of Islam in Historical Context**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3  | Sept 13/15 | Pre-Islamic Arabia & the Meccan Setting  
*Armstrong 13-89* |                                                                                 |
| 4  | Sept 20/22 | Prophet Muhammad: Life and Times  
*Armstrong 89-165* |                                                                                 |
| 5  | Sept 27/29 | Religious and Socio-Political Transformation  
*Armstrong 165-214* |                                                                                 |

**Revelation of Islamic Scripture**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6  | Oct 4/6  | The Qur’an in Islamic Arts & Ritual  
*BB: Kristina 257-261; Sells Cragg, Qur’an Selections (tba)* |                                                                                 |
|    |          | *Due: (2) Short Report Oct 8*                                        |                                                                                 |
| 7  | Oct 11/13 | The Qur’an: Form, Interpretation & Themes  
Cragg, Qur’an (tba);  
*BB: Rahman* |                                                                                 |
## Prophetic Paradigm as Islamic Tradition

| Wk 8 | Oct 18/20 | Muhammad as Model: Origins of Hadith and Sunnah  
Cragg, *Quran tba*; Schimmel 22-55 |

## Women, Veiling and Politics in Islam

| Wk 9 | Oct 25/27 | Women at the Rise of Islam  
Mysogyny and the Ab/Uses of Tradition  
Mernissi, 1-81; BB Ahmed |

| Wk 10 | Nov 1/3 | Sacred Text as Political Weapon: the Hijab  
Gender Scripts in Qur'an & Tafsir  
Mernissi, 85-189; Stowasser  

*Due: (2) Short Report Nov 5*

## Diversity of Practice and Interpretations in Islam

| Wk 11 | Nov 8/10 | Distinctions between Shi’a & Sunni  
*Nasr 147-179; Momen 11-60 (BB)* |

| Wk 12 | Nov 15/17 | Imamat: Religious Authority in Shi’ism  
*Al-Muzzafar all* |

| Wk 13 | Nov 22 | Sufism: The Mystical Tradition of Islam  
BB: Ernst; Rumi, Chapter 1-9  

Nov 24  
*Thanksgiving - No class*  
Rumi, Chapters 10-20

Wk 14 | Nov 29/Dec 1 | Conclusion  
*Due: Reflections Review: Dec 3rd*

Wk 15 | Dec 6/8 | Last Day of Classes  
Dec 10 (F) | Due: Take-home Exam  
Dec 13 (M) |